

Maintaining the pressure

For a UK contribution to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

As we detailed last month, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is currently approaching a replenishment conference at which it will be asking developing and donor country Governments, businesses, and civil society organisations to help them fund their incredible work over the next five years. Over that period, Gavi is seeking to immunise 440 million more children, saving 6 million lives.

The UK Government has been the biggest historical supporter of Gavi and we want them to keep that up over the next five years. RESULTS, along with colleagues from across the UK campaigning sector have been calling on the UK to come forward with a bold and early pledge to Gavi, but so far none has materialised.

We need to redouble our efforts to get the UK to pledge, and pledge big. Millions of lives are on the line.

The power of vaccines

We all had them and we all remember them – those little shots to the arm that made us cry; the sugar cube given to us by a doctor; the surprisingly painful jab we had before embarking on a trip to a far-flung country. Whether we recognise them or not, vaccines have played a crucial part in every one of us being able to live healthy and productive lives.

From being guaranteed not to suffer the awful contortions of polio, to being able to run and play freely outdoors without fear of tetanus, vaccines protect us in millions of tiny ways that we may never notice.

And it isn't just us who is benefitting – successful vaccination programs have unquestionably been some of the most power and impactful public health programs ever conceived. Here are some statistics:

Smallpox – Between 1900-1979 *alone* this terrible disease was responsible for 300-500 million deaths. However, thanks to several widespread vaccination campaigns, smallpox was successfully eradicated; consigned to history.

Polio – at its height, polio was the most feared disease in the world, paralysing around 1000 children in 200 countries every day. In 1988 the Global Polio Eradication Initiative began its work. Since then more than 2.5 billion children have been vaccinated and the disease has been reduced by over 99%, and remains present in only three countries.

Measles – despite being incredibly infectious (90% of people who come into contact with an infected person will contract it) measles has also seen amazing reductions, thanks again to solid vaccination campaigns. Globally measles cases have fallen from over 4 million per year in 1980 to under 60 thousand in 2014.

The bigger picture

Even beyond these headline successes, there has been dramatic progress in expanding access to immunisation globally. Since 1980, coverage of basic vaccines has risen from 20% to 84% in 2013. During the same time, the number of children dying every year has decreased by more than half. However, despite the impressive progress, access to vaccines is by no means universal, and 1 in 5 children – or 21.8 million every year – continue to miss out on receiving even the most basic vaccines. **That is just too much human potential being wasted.**

Which children are missing out?

Unfortunately the children that routinely miss out on these vaccines are the same children who are unable to access a quality education; the same children who face severe acute malnutrition; and the same children who are most likely to face extreme poverty. These are children growing up in families in some of the world's least prosperous nations - countries without first class health systems or infrastructure.

It is the children missing out on vaccines who would also benefit the most as they also lack access to other prevention and treatment services. Ensuring every child can enjoy the full benefits of vaccination is critical to improving the health and survival of children, and the future prosperity of communities, nations, and the wider world.

What is the role of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance?

In 2000, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance was established to address the growing inequalities in access to vaccines around the world. Since its inception, global immunisation rates have risen from 73% in 2000 to 84% in 2013. In this time, Gavi have supported countries to immunise close to half a billion children, saving 6 million lives.

How does it work?

Countries that are eligible for Gavi support actively take the lead. They determine what their immunisation needs are, apply for funding and oversee the implementation of their vaccination programmes. Gavi's co-financing policy requires that recipient countries contribute towards the cost of the vaccines. This further strengthens ownership and long-term sustainability of immunisation programmes.

Which vaccines does Gavi provide?

Gavi provides vaccines against all of the leading causes of child deaths: hepatitis B, Hib (flu), measles, whooping cough, pneumococcal disease (which causes pneumonia – killer of 1.3 million children in 2010), polio, rotavirus (which causes diarrhoea in infants and 450,000 child deaths per year) and yellow fever.

The Replenishment Ask

The Gavi replenishment will culminate in a pledging conference attended by world leaders and development ministers in Germany in January 2015. In order to implement its 2016-2020 strategy, Gavi is calling on donors to fill a **US \$7.5 billion** funding gap. With this money, Gavi will support the poorest countries to immunise 300 million children, save 6 million lives, increase the proportion of children receiving all 11 recommended vaccines from 5% to 50% and generate between US \$80 and US \$100 billion in economic benefits.

At the centre of Gavi's next strategy will be reaching every child, including the hardest-to-reach and most marginalised.

The Role of the UK Government

Between 2011-2015, the UK provided a third of Gavi's total funding. As *the* global leader on vaccines, the UK Government has a critical role to play in the replenishment and ensuring Gavi is fully funded to deliver on its mission. We are calling on the **UK Government to contribute £1.2 billion** on top of existing commitments that were pledged in 2011. The total UK contribution would help to **immunise 85 million additional children and save 1.5 million lives**. By encouraging the UK to announce early, this will leverage support from other donors.

We have been working hard to get the UK to come forward with a bold, early pledge to Gavi, to begin the replenishment process and to encourage other Governments to step up their commitments. **We think the UK is close to making a decision on how much to give – we need to make absolutely sure that they know we're behind them and willing to support their investment....but they need to know now.**

We know that the Rt. Hon. Justine Greening MP, Secretary of State for International Development is supportive of Gavi, and has made some strong public statements to that effect....but this month we need to be absolutely sure she has heard us loud and clear and is willing to act.

Take action. This month we are going to be working in a range of ways to get our message out to Justine Greening that now is the time to step up and save 1.5 million lives. We need to be sure the UK is fully committed to Gavi. For full details of all the actions, see Background Sheet 1.

- 1. In your groups, hand-write and sign a letter to Justine Greening, calling on her to step up and fund Gavi.**
- 2. On November 8th, join our special webinar on Gavi, featuring grassroots campaigners from four countries**
- 3. If you haven't yet done so, take our 'e-action' on Gavi: <http://act.results.org.uk/lobby/gavi>**
- 4. Get out on social media – Tweet Justine and DFID calling on them to step up and make the pledge. Use the #vaccineswork.**
- 5. Follow up with your MP – if you asked them to take action last month and they haven't yet done so, get in touch and ask if they would be willing to reach out to Justine. If you didn't contact them, then see our October action materials for full information.**
- 6. Take the 'e-actions' of our colleagues at Save the Children, the ONE Campaign and the Global Poverty Project.**