

Make #VaccinesWork for every child

Support the UK's funding for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

Vaccination saves millions of lives each year and is one of the best ways to prevent childhood illnesses such as pneumonia, measles and polio. Since 2016 Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance has immunised 198 million children. However, all of the targets for disease elimination are behind schedule, and many children still die from easily preventable, treatable and curable diseases. Gavi is an international organisation that provides equal access to vaccines for children living in the world's poorest countries. In June 2020, the UK will be hosting a conference at which international donors will be asked to make financial commitments to enable Gavi to continue its vital work – US \$7.4 billion is needed for the period 2021-2025. The UK is a strong supporter of Gavi, and to continue this, at current exchange rates, £1.64 billion is needed to maintain the UK's 25.5% share of Gavi's funding. Please write to DFID Permanent Secretary Matthew Rycroft, asking for the UK Government to ensure that the UK maintains its 25.5% share of Gavi at the 2020 Gavi replenishment, to increase vaccine coverage.

The importance of vaccination

Child mortality more than halved between 1990 and 2015, and vaccination has played a big role in this. Vaccines save millions of lives every year and are one of the most effective ways to prevent childhood illnesses. The world is closer than ever to ensuring that everyone is protected from vaccine-preventable diseases such as pneumonia, measles and polio.

But progress is stalling

Although investment in immunisation programmes in developing countries has dramatically increased over the past two decades, all the targets for disease-elimination are behind schedule, and over the last two years, rates of diseases that were falling such as measles are now [on the rise again](#). Too many children still die from diseases that are easily preventable, treatable and curable. Only 11% of children receive all 11 of the WHO's recommended vaccines before their first birthday. Global immunisation coverage has only increased 2% since 2010, as children around the world continue to be left behind, mostly the poorest, most marginalized and conflict-affected communities.

Why invest in vaccines?

Immunisation saves 2-3 million lives each year and plays an important role in poverty reduction. It is one of the most cost-effective health interventions, with every [\\$1 invested yielding up to \\$54 in return](#). Immunisation services are often central to a country's health system,

as well as providing immediate protection from diseases. [Vaccines do far more than protect health](#); they also protect people's incomes and savings, and promote economic growth. Children who are vaccinated get less sick, less often. As a result, their parents and carers spend less time nursing them through sickness. As fewer people have to look after sick children and can go to work, communities do better economically, contributing to greater national economic growth.

Children who get sick less often attend school more and achieve better results. Higher achievement at school leads to better employment prospects and the chance to earn more in adult life. Children born to the poorest families with the lowest levels of education and living in the hardest to reach areas are disproportionately unable to access basic vaccines.

Vaccination and Universal Health Coverage

In September, the UK signed a political declaration at the UN to accelerate progress on achieving [Universal Health Coverage](#) (UHC). The goal of UHC is for everyone to have access to the health services they need without being forced into financial hardship. Currently, the high cost of healthcare around the world leads to around 8.6 million deaths per year, and pushes approximately 100 million people into poverty each year.

2019 and 2020 provide a unique window of opportunity to put words into action. Over the next nine months, we

have the chance to ensure that [all the bricks of the global health infrastructure are fully financed](#). Investment in vaccination, nutrition, and tackling infectious diseases are some of the best ways to save lives and prevent illness. Countries must intensify their efforts to ensure that all children receive all the life-saving vaccines they need to fully protect children, families and communities.

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

[Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance](#) is one of the world's biggest multilateral health partnerships, whose mission is to address stagnating coverage of life-saving vaccines. The creation of Gavi in 2000 dramatically increased the funding available for immunisation. Since 2016, Gavi has immunised 198 million children, including 66 million in 2018 alone. However, the effects of population growth and displacement, climate change and increasing fragility, coupled with recurrent disease outbreaks, are threatening these hard-won gains.

It will be vital for Gavi to be fully replenished in 2020 to continue its work toward global vaccination targets. In its [investment case](#), Gavi asks international donors for renewed commitment to help countries continue to prevent disease, protect their communities and prosper. In the period 2021–2025, Gavi plans to help the world's poorest countries reach a further 300 million children and save an additional 7–8 million lives. To achieve these ambitious plans, Gavi will need at least US \$7.4 billion in additional resources.

World Pneumonia Day

[World Pneumonia Day](#) (12 November) is a great time to raise awareness of the importance of immunisation, and to make it clear that we expect the Government to continue its leading role supporting vaccinations for all. More than 900,000 children die each year from

pneumonia, more than from any other disease. Many of these children could be saved by simple interventions such as vaccination against the most common causes of pneumonia and treatment with antibiotics. Thanks to Gavi and its partners, [vaccines against pneumococcal disease](#), the leading cause of pneumonia, are reaching children at an increasing pace.

The UK's support for vaccination

Through funding Gavi, the UK has helped immunise 67.1 million children against vaccine-preventable diseases, saving 1.4 million lives. During Gavi's last replenishment in 2015, the UK contributed a direct pledge of £1.1 billion, which helped make it Gavi's largest donor with a share of 25.5%. Without past and current UK support, the remarkable achievements the world has made in immunisation would not have been possible.

In June 2020, the UK will host Gavi's next replenishment conference. As conference host, the UK will have a strong interest in ensuring an ambitious replenishment to make progress towards enabling children to receive all 11 WHO-recommended vaccines. [This year is the critical time](#) for the UK Government to commit to maintain the UK's current 25.5% share of Gavi funding (at current exchange rates, £1.64 billion) for the period 2021-2025, to help it increase immunisation coverage to reach everyone with the full recommended course of vaccines.

It's election time! If you have plans to talk to candidates about vaccination and other global health issues, read [our guide](#) on how to do this impartially. In the meantime, the work of DFID goes on! Please write to DFID Permanent Secretary Matthew Rycroft, asking the UK Government to maintain its 25.5% share of Gavi at the 2020 Gavi replenishment, and to brief the new ministerial team to that effect after the election.

Take action!

1. Please write to DFID Permanent Secretary Matthew Rycroft, asking the UK Government to maintain the UK's 25.5% share to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance in 2020.

2. Why not multiply your impact by getting others to write letters too? An 'advocacy evening' is a great introduction to RESULTS, where new people can take their first campaign action! Background Sheet 3 gives some ideas for how to run an advocacy evening.

Contact details: Matthew Rycroft, Permanent Secretary, Department for International Development, 22 Whitehall, London SW1A 2EG. Email: DFIDCorrespondence@dfid.gov.uk

Please let us know that you've taken action by emailing Dela at delanderson@results.org.uk.