

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

Gavi is a global public-private partnership, involving donor governments, recipient country governments, UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank, philanthropic organisations, civil society and the private sector. Gavi was established in 2000 with the mission to save children's lives and protect people's health by increasing equitable use of vaccines in lower-income countries.

One of the most important things about Gavi is that it is a partnership, designed to support governments to increase spending on national immunisation programmes and to help provide access to lower priced vaccines, with the overall aim of helping prevent vaccine-preventable child deaths.

Gavi's programmes have averted 13 million future deaths and helped strengthen health systems in over 60 countries.

Watch: [Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance: The greatest secret in public health](#) for more on Gavi's history and mission. For more statistics on Gavi's impact click [here](#).



World Pneumonia Day 2019



Pneumonia is a form of acute respiratory infection that affects the lungs, and is the single largest infectious cause of death in children worldwide. It is preventable and treatable but remains a leading cause of death in children under 5 years old.

[World Pneumonia Day](#) on 12 November is an opportunity to highlight the power of vaccines to prevent millions of child deaths and to celebrate the historic achievements the rapid introduction of new vaccines to combat pneumonia has had to date.

Since 2010, more than 50 developing countries have introduced the pneumococcal vaccine with Gavi support. It is one of the [11 World Health Organisation-Recommended vaccines](#).

Case study: Kenya

Kenya is a good example of how, when it comes to reducing child mortality, vaccines work. Back in 2011, it was [the first country in Africa](#) to introduce the pneumonia vaccine. By 2016, childhood cases had dropped dramatically, with a [92% reduction](#) in the number of children getting ill with pneumonia annually.

But there are still children being missed out in Kenya. [10,628 children under 5 were killed by pneumonia](#) in 2016, which is more than 1 child every hour.

Sumea's story

Sumea, six months old, from Lodwar, Kenya, is suffering from the disease parents here fear the most: pneumonia. Without treatment, she could be dead in a day or two. In Kenya, one of the countries worst affected by the disease, it claimed the lives of 22,473 people in 2015, almost all under the age of two.

But Sumea, the daughter of a businessman, is one of the lucky ones. Her mother, Fatuma Abdi, brought her to hospital when she began breathing very rapidly, a telltale sign that pneumonia has become life-threatening. In Turkana, a rural county where awareness of the symptoms is poor, her mother's quick thinking helped save her. Only half of children in sub-Saharan Africa with such symptoms are brought to a healthcare facility.



In the acute ward of Lodwar hospital's paediatric unit, Abdi sits cross-legged on a rubber mattress beneath a jaunty mural of Donald Duck. She gathers her exhausted infant in her arms. A nurse places a face mask over Sumea's nose and mouth; it is attached to a portable nebuliser to help open her airways, before she is given antibiotics.

The effect is immediate and dramatic. Moments later, Sumea opens her eyes. Her breathing quiets and she looks up at her mother, whose face breaks into a wide smile of relief. "I was so stressed, I was in a panic" says Abdi, 38. "But now, look, the child is happy. She is even looking at me."

In Turkana, an arid region in northern Kenya, close to the border with South Sudan and Uganda, the acute respiratory disease is common among pastoralists who use charcoal and wood fuel for cooking. Here, most children are offered vaccinations for pneumonia. But a severe and ongoing drought affecting the Horn of Africa has led to widespread hunger and malnutrition, which weakens the immune systems of the vulnerable, including babies.

Already, one child in every four in the country is malnourished, making them more susceptible to disease: a severely malnourished child is nine times more likely to die from pneumonia than one who is well-fed. Worse still, malnutrition makes it more difficult to treat.

Source: [The Guardian, 2017](#)

Working as an Emergency Health Officer in Turkana



Video: [Health Officer Jedidah's story](#)
(Source: Save the Children, 2017)

Save the Children and Gavi are part of the Global Coalition Against Pneumonia. Check out their [Stop Pneumonia advocacy resources](#) for more talking points and resources.