

# GLOBAL VACCINATION SUMMIT



European  
Commission



World Health  
Organization

## BACKGROUND PAPER ROUNDTABLE 3

*Vaccines protecting everyone, everywhere: galvanising a global response to ensure health, security and prosperity through immunisation*

*Panel participants are invited to discuss how to improve the role of immunisation as a public health priority and a universal right. The discussion will highlight achievements in the current global status of vaccine-preventable disease (VPD) control, and ignite commitment to the vision and strategy for the coming decade. The strategy is designed to address persistent shortcomings, including the changes that will be needed to achieve equitable vaccine uptake and the resulting control, elimination or eradication of VPDs.*

*The Roundtable will focus on how a changing world (demographic shifts, climate, population movement, communities, and technologies) will influence and drive changes to vaccination programmes to cement the hard-won gains of past decades and achieve collective global VPD goals for the coming decade. Roundtable participants will highlight the specific innovations and changes which they are leading, and which they believe will be needed to achieve the goals for 2021-2030.*

## VACCINES: ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES OF MODERN TIMES

Vaccination programmes exist in every country in the world, with 86% coverage (measured globally) for infant vaccines. Thanks to widespread vaccination, smallpox has been eradicated, all countries but two are now free of wild polio virus, elimination of other VPDs is on the horizon, and new vaccines are being developed to address priority diseases, including those with outbreak potential. Year after year, immunisation prevents over 2.5 million deaths worldwide and reduces treatment costs to families, communities, insurers, and governments. Massive commitment, innovation, and investment in vaccines and immunisation programmes over the past two decades have resulted in the vaccination of record numbers of infants (116 million in 2018), the rapid scale-up of new, life-saving vaccine introductions (new vaccines sustainably introduced into 116 out of 139 lower and middle income countries in 2010-2018), 47 countries eliminating maternal and neonatal tetanus, and the development of first-in-class vaccines for diseases such as HPV, malaria, and Ebola. Following over 30 years of development, a malaria vaccine is now being deployed for the first time in routine immunisation through pilot programmes in Ghana, Malawi and Kenya. These achievements have been made possible by the commitment of national governments to making vaccines a priority, by donors – particularly through Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance – willing to fund large-scale programmes to support vaccine access and programme development, and by manufacturers willing to supply vaccines.

## DESPITE THIS, MAJOR VACCINE AND IMMUNISATION GOALS OF THE PAST DECADE HAVE NOT BEEN ACHIEVED

In spite of the brilliant track record of immunisation programmes, there is still some way to go. No global region has achieved and sustained measles elimination, polio has not yet been eradicated, there are as yet no highly effective vaccines for several high-priority pathogens such as HIV and tuberculosis, outbreaks of previously

controlled diseases are on the rise, coverage backsliding is occurring in some places, and nearly 20 million children are still completely unimmunised or under-immunised. These children and their families are not randomly distributed around the world or throughout communities: inequity in access to vaccines and immunisation services is greatest among those in most need of the protection vaccines afford. Those left out come disproportionately from the poorest families and communities and from marginalised ethnic or religious groups, or live in conflict or humanitarian emergency settings or places which often lack other health and development services.

## **THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) CANNOT BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT PROGRESS ON VACCINE AND IMMUNISATION PROGRAMMES**

At least 14 of the 17 SDGs are linked to a successful vaccine and immunisation agenda. The world is undergoing demographic shifts (ageing populations except in Africa, the global population shifting more to Asia), development (middle-income countries will be home to most of the world's poor people), population movements (refugees, crisis-affected communities, climate change impact), and technological advances (access to social media and mobile communication devices). The design of vaccines and immunisation programmes must take account of these realities. There is an urgent need of lifecourse vaccine programmes (including for older adults), products that are less dependent on cold chain technology, delivery devices other than injections, and data systems and analytics that are designed to drive programme optimisation. Responses to health emergencies will need to be more closely paired with preventing those health emergencies in the first place through robust essential immunisation programmes. Stronger domestic commitment to immunisation programmes using the economic and social perspective is essential to foster awareness of the global, national and local value of vaccines among many competing health and non-health priorities. Vaccines protect against poverty and are an essential sustainable development intervention. The challenge of organising vaccination programmes in countries with very weak health systems, fragile infrastructure, conflict situations, and migrant populations has not yet been overcome and will need new approaches.

## **THE WAY FORWARD: ACHIEVING VACCINE AND IMMUNISATION GOALS FOR 2021-2030 WILL REQUIRE CHANGES IN HOW WE WORK AND WHO WE WORK WITH, IN EVERY COUNTRY**

The second and third objectives of the Global Vaccination Summit are about creating new political commitment and opportunities for immediate impact on vaccination coverage, and galvanising vaccination action. Achieving these objectives will mean forging unwavering commitment to a new 2021-2030 worldwide strategy for vaccines and immunisation. The strategy is focused on the seven priority areas Immunization for Primary Healthcare and Universal Health Coverage (cross-cutting priority), Equity and Access, Ownership and Accountability, Outbreaks and Emergencies, Lifecourse and Integration, Research and Innovation, and Availability and Sustainability. The successes of the past decade built on effective development cooperation, and the demands of the new decade will require even more cooperation between global health initiatives. Each country's immunisation programme is in some way interconnected with the programme success of other countries in terms of vaccines, health and beyond. Pathogens and vaccines, programme policies, social norms, media and beliefs all cross borders and create impact beyond their perceived local reach. Immunisation delivery will need to change, including a move towards greater programme agility designed to address service quality, clinical timing, location, availability and access, including transport and gender-related barriers. Ownership of immunisation programmes will need to increasingly rest with families and communities who are resistant to misinformation and who understand the health, security and prosperity benefits of vaccines. Continuous innovation in vaccine product development and immunisation programmes will be needed to meet as yet unknown, but expected, future challenges. Novel approaches to how all actors in all sectors can better work together to achieve the 2021-2030 vaccine and immunisation goals will also drive the primary health care agenda, since immunisation often forms the backbone of primary health care, the intervention with the broadest reach and most equitable impact of all.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Identify actions that can be taken now to enhance the use and uptake of vaccines in the decade ahead, including in fragile and humanitarian emergency settings;
2. Reinforce the importance of accountability in a successful vaccine programme at all levels and by all people;
3. Emphasise the importance of vaccines across the life course;
4. Draw attention to the fact that vaccination is a gateway to the success of primary health care (PHC) and universal health coverage (UHC), with each leveraging the progress of the other, especially in weak health systems where new approaches and synergies are needed.