

## **New Plan Underway to Increase Global Access to Vaccines**

Global health agencies and partners are already working to implement the landmark [Global Vaccine Action Plan \(GVAP\)](#), a roadmap to prevent millions of deaths by 2020 through more equitable access to existing vaccines for people in all communities.

The GVAP, which was endorsed by the World Health Assembly in May, was coordinated by the [Decade of Vaccines Collaboration](#), a group of leading international vaccine experts, and represents the collective vision of hundreds of global health stakeholders to extend the full benefits of immunization to all people, regardless of where they are born, who they are or where they live.

The plan is one of the topics being discussed this week at the GAVI Partners' Forum in Tanzania, which is holding sessions guided by the main principles of the GVAP, including country ownership, shared responsibility and partnership, equity, integration, sustainability and innovation. More than 700 global health and government leaders are attending the immunization meeting.

Currently, four out of every five children receive at least a basic set of vaccinations during infancy that allow them to lead healthy, productive lives. However, this means 20 percent of children still do not benefit from basic immunization.

"Vaccines are available to most, but not yet all, people and our task now is to deliver on the promise of universal access to immunization," said Dr. Ciro de Quadros, Executive Vice President of the Sabin Vaccine Institute and co-chair of the Decade of Vaccines Collaboration's steering committee. "We are now much further along the road to achieving the vision of the Decade of Vaccines now that the GVAP has been approved and WHO member states agreed to report back every year at the World Health Assembly on progress made."

After its approval by the World Health Assembly in May 2012, the GVAP is in the process of being adapted for implementation at the regional and country level. Country involvement in this process reinforces a key strategic objective of the GVAP, which is to increase national ownership of immunization programs.

"Countries need to ensure they dedicate adequate resources, develop supportive health systems and infrastructure and support and train health workers to vaccinate all people, especially remote and marginalized populations," said Prof. Pedro Alonso, Director of the Institute for Global Health of Barcelona (ISGlobal) and co-chair of the Decade of Vaccines Collaboration's steering committee. "All stakeholders that developed the GVAP need to continue the collaborative process that was started as we move to implementation and do their best to ensure that the countries are in the driving seat to meet their immunization goals."

“The Decade of Vaccines will continue through 2020 and beyond, but it will not succeed unless all those present at this GAVI Partners Forum, and those partners and stakeholders in the countries, do their part,” said Dr. de Quadros.

The GVAP involves four mutually reinforcing goals: strengthening routine immunization to meet vaccination coverage targets; accelerating control of vaccine-preventable diseases with polio eradication as the first milestone; introducing new and improved vaccines; and spurring research and development for the next generation of vaccines and technologies. The plan is expected to reduce global childhood mortality, surpassing the targets of the United Nations [Millennium Development Goal 4](#). The GVAP also has six strategic objectives:

- The benefits of immunization need to be equitably extended to all people.
- All countries must commit to immunization as a priority.
- Individuals and communities need to understand the value of vaccines and demand immunization as both their right and responsibility.
- Strong immunization systems must be an integral part of a well-functioning health system.
- Immunization programmes should have sustainable access to predictable funding, quality supply and innovative technologies.
- Country, regional and global research & development (R&D) innovations are necessary to maximize the benefits of immunization.

A large and diverse group of stakeholders representing 290 organizations – including representatives and elected officials, health professionals, academics, manufacturers, global agencies, development partners, civil society, media and the private sector in more than 140 countries – contributed their expertise to the development of the GVAP in a year-long consultation process.

Key representatives from the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the GAVI Alliance, the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the African Leaders Malaria Alliance had central roles in the DoV Collaboration Leadership Council and working groups.

Members of the Leadership Council are: Dr. Seth Berkley, CEO, GAVI Alliance; Dr. Margaret Chan, Director General, WHO; Dr. Christopher Elias, President, Global Development Program, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director, US NIAID; Dr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director, UNICEF; and Ms. Joy Phumaphi, Executive Secretary, African Leaders Malaria Alliance. A Steering Committee was the driving force behind the development of the GVAP, guiding the consultation process of working groups on Delivery, Global Access, Public & Political Support and Research & Development. The steering committee was co-chaired by Prof. Pedro Alonso, Director, Institute for Global Health of Barcelona (ISGlobal) and Dr. Ciro de Quadros, Executive Vice President, Sabin Vaccine Institute.