

72nd World Health Assembly
Statement by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance
Agenda Item: 11.3

Polio

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance would like to congratulate WHO Member States for the universal introduction of the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV). IPV is both an essential tool to achieve eradication in support of the Polio Endgame Strategy, and the 'insurance policy' to ensure a polio-free world is maintained after global certification.

Since 2014, Gavi has worked in close collaboration with the GPEI to manage continued IPV supply constraints and support countries to introduce IPV into routine immunisation programmes under unprecedented timelines.

Gavi has officially joined the Polio Oversight Board of the GPEI and continues to strongly engage with the new Polio Endgame Strategy driving a focus on strengthening routine immunisation.

While acknowledging the progress made to stop transmission of wild poliovirus in endemic countries, Gavi remains concerned by vaccine-derived polio outbreaks in high-risk geographies due to chronically low and inequitable immunisation coverage and weak primary health care. Gavi is committed to working closely together with GPEI and countries to strengthen immunisation delivery in these settings.

In response to the current challenges with IPV supply, in June 2018, the Gavi Board approved continued support for IPV by drawing on core Gavi funding for 2019 and 2020. In November 2018, the board further approved support for IPV post-2020 and in principle support for IPV containing whole-cell pertussis Hexavalent vaccine that is

currently in development. That support would be subject to the availability of funding for the 2021-2025 period as well as alignment with the next Alliance strategy.

Gavi emphasises the importance of accelerating nationally-owned transition plans and has provided time-limited bridge-funding to facilitate transition and absorption of essential routine immunisation functions into national budgets. It is important to leverage these polio-funded assets – such as surveillance, laboratory capacity, emergency coordination, health workforce, and community engagement - to strengthen primary health care and complement IHR country capacities.

In collaboration with GPEI, countries and partners, Gavi is committed to supporting robust implementation of the new Polio Endgame Strategy and sustaining strong primary health care through transition.

Thank you.