

COVID-19: Millions of children risks missing life-saving vaccines

- Gavi Alliance plans to deliver two billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines by end-2021
- COVID-19 has set back 25 years of progress in immunization coverage in 25 weeks
- In developing countries, 80 million children under age one at risk of contracting vaccine preventable diseases

On Thursday, Gavi Alliance CEO Dr Seth Berkley said in the Development Committee Gavi would deliver two billion doses of safe, effective COVID-19 vaccines by 2021.

In the debate, MEPs questioned how the Gavi Alliance was planning to respond to the delayed routine immunization, which had had a huge impact on children under age one in developing countries. MEPs asked Dr Berkley about the plans of the alliance to progress on the delivery of eventual COVID-19 vaccines to refugees camps, and about supply-chain and cold storage for the distribution of future vaccine in developing world.

While welcoming the alliance's work in advancing COVID-19 vaccine, they stressed that future vaccines should be of high quality. Other MEPs asked for intellectual property rights derogation to allow developing countries to produce their own vaccines as global public good. Some MEPs asked how the growing anti-vaccine movement could undermine rollout of future vaccine against COVID-19.

Dr Berkley stressed that to end this pandemic, we need safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines which are manufactured at scale and made available to people all across the world. "COVID-19 has shown that no one is safe until everyone is safe and that the scale of the global challenges we face today can only be solved through solidarity and international cooperation". He pointed out that health infrastructure, including cold chain storage in the developing countries are good.

Gavi intends to deliver two billions doses by 2021, and developing countries will not receive inferior vaccines, Dr Berkley said, adding that Gavi intended to support resumption of routine vaccinations in developing countries as soon as possible. At the same time, it plans to embark on awareness raising campaign to build confidence in the future COVID-19 vaccines.

Dr Berkley expressed gratitude to the EU for its financial support, and underlined the importance of continued EU global leadership in building solidarity to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

Tomas Tobé (EPP, Sweden), chair of the Development Committee

"Efforts to make COVID-19 medicine and vaccines accessible and affordable to all must be stepped up. Solidarity and collaboration must be at the heart of the global health response".

Background

The Gavi Alliance is an international organisation created in 2000 to improve access to new and underused vaccines for children living in the world's poorest countries. It coordinates [COVAX](#), the aim of which is to accelerate the development and manufacture of COVID-19 vaccines and to ensure fair and equitable access for every country.

More than 9.4 million confirmed COVID-19 cases and 162,245 deaths have been reported in Gavi Alliance-eligible countries.

Developing countries are reporting greater COVID-19 related disruptions in health services, with routine immunisation being one of the most frequently disrupted areas. This may lead to a secondary health crisis with at least 80 million children under age one at increased risk of contracting vaccine preventable diseases such as diphtheria, measles and polio.

Further information

[Gavi - The Vaccine Alliance](#)

[COVAX Facility](#)

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[Development Committee Webpage](#)

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