

Global immunization strategy

The Sixty-first World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on the global immunization strategy;¹

Applauding the remarkable investments in human and financial resources made by Member States and partner agencies in support of vaccines and immunization as well as the launch of innovative financing mechanisms such as the International Finance Facility for Immunization, and the advance market commitment for a pneumococcal conjugate vaccine through the GAVI Alliance;

Recognizing the immense contribution that immunization has made to the control of the common communicable diseases in the countries where it has been effectively applied;

Recognizing that continued efforts are also required to strengthen surveillance of communicable diseases and ensure the quality of the production, management and administration of vaccines;

Recalling resolution WHA56.20 on reducing global measles mortality, and commending Member States' and their partners' success in exceeding the goal of reducing deaths worldwide due to measles by 50% by the end of 2005 compared with the 1999 level;

Commending also Member States' and their partners' progress in increasing the availability, affordability and uptake of hepatitis B vaccine worldwide;

Recognizing the availability of new and underutilized vaccines that could have significant impact on the health of the peoples of the world, including the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals;

Encouraged by the progress in molecular biology and genetics that is accelerating the discovery and development of new vaccines and by the increasing number of developing-country manufacturers producing vaccines that meet WHO requirements for vaccines of assured quality;

Concerned that many developing countries are not on track to meet the internationally agreed targets in the health-related Millennium Development Goals, particularly the target of reducing the under-five mortality rate;

¹ Document A61/10.

Concerned that there are insufficient resources available for introduction of new and underutilized vaccines, especially in low-income and middle-income countries, and given the costs related to procurement and introduction of these vaccines, and taking into account the need to expand the number of manufacturers, particularly in developing countries, that can produce to the standards required to attain and maintain WHO-prequalification and to create a competitive market place for these vaccines;

Stressing the vital role that vaccine and immunization programmes can play in reducing under-five mortality and in facilitating the delivery of a package of life-saving interventions,

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to review national strategy and programme performance, to identify areas for improvement and to implement fully the strategy for reducing measles mortality in order to achieve the goal set in the Global Immunization Vision and Strategy 2006–2015 of a 90% reduction in the global measles mortality rate between 2000 and 2010;

(2) to enhance efforts to improve delivery of high-quality immunization services in order to achieve the target of equitable coverage of at least 80% in all districts by 2010 set in the Global Immunization Vision and Strategy 2006–2015;

(3) to stimulate rapid introduction and uptake of life-saving vaccines into national immunization schedules in accordance with national priorities and to expand coverage of these vaccines in order to accelerate the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals;

(4) to further expand access to, and coverage of, available, affordable and cost-effective new life-saving vaccines of assured quality and desired efficacy, while maintaining efforts to strengthen regular vaccination programmes in accordance with the burden of disease and national priorities, for all target populations in order to accelerate the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals, and to promote and strengthen long-term financial and programmatic sustainability;

(5) to develop, strengthen and/or maintain surveillance systems for vaccine-related adverse events, linked with systems for monitoring compliance with safe injection practices;

(6) to strengthen efforts to protect, promote and support early and effective breastfeeding, in order to boost the development of infants' overall immune systems;

(7) to strengthen surveillance systems for vaccine-preventable diseases and monitoring of vaccination programmes;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to work and increase collaboration with Member States in order to sustain political commitment at all levels for achieving high immunization coverage rates with all available cost-effective vaccines;

(2) to collaborate with international partners and intergovernmental partners in order to provide technical support to expand the number of manufacturers, particularly in developing

countries, that can meet the standards required to attain and maintain WHO-prequalification standards;

(3) to collaborate with international partners, intergovernmental partners and donors as well as vaccine producers to mobilize necessary resources to support low-income and middle-income countries with the aim of increasing the supply of affordable vaccines of assured quality;

(4) to work with UNICEF and the GAVI Alliance to build on existing international efforts and partnerships and facilitate the development of a consensus among developing and developed countries for meeting the financial gaps and other requirements for the attainment of the health-related Millennium Development Goals through immunization;

(5) to take measures, as appropriate, to assist developing countries to establish and strengthen their capacity for vaccine research, development and regulation, for the purpose of improving the output of vaccine production with the aim of increasing the supply of affordable vaccines of assured quality;

(6) to provide guidelines and technical support to Member States in order to establish integrated surveillance of adverse events following immunization and to minimize unnecessary vaccine-related adverse events;

(7) to facilitate scientific, technical and financial investments in the research and development of safe and effective vaccines against poverty-related and neglected diseases;

(8) to monitor progress towards achievement of global immunization goals and report on such progress to the Sixty-fourth World Health Assembly;

(9) to accelerate the implementation of the global framework for vaccine-preventable disease surveillance and immunization programme monitoring, through the gathering of the comprehensive epidemiological data required to guide immunization programmes, and to strengthen national capacity for making evidence-based policy decisions to adopt new vaccines.

Eighth plenary meeting, 24 May 2008
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