

WHO Executive Board 154

Statement by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

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Agenda Item 6 – Universal Health Coverage

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, welcomes the Director General’s report on Universal Health Coverage and shares concerns about the slow progress towards the 2030 UHC targets.

Gavi has helped countries to immunise more than one billion unique children and prevented more than 17 million future deaths over the last two decades. Routine immunisation is one of the most efficient and cost-effective health care interventions, bringing most households into contact with health systems, and serving as a gateway to co-deliver other Primary Health Care services and advance Universal Health Coverage.

Countries that provide Universal Health Coverage are better able to bridge the immunisation gap and to reach the 14.3 million zero dose children – children who have not received any vaccines – worldwide.

By ensuring everyone access to quality health services – including routine immunisation – health systems are better equipped to prevent disease, rapidly identify and address health threats, and provide treatment to those affected, ultimately strengthening the health resilience of communities.

As countries consider ways to accelerate progress towards UHC, we encourage Member States to consider the following recommendations:

- Identify and reach zero dose children and their communities by prioritizing national immunisation recovery plans especially through the “Big Catch Up” efforts to lift vaccination levels.
- Ensure domestic and international funding is sufficiently mobilized and invested in primary health care, particularly in the countries where recovery of essential health services, such as routine immunisation, has been slower after the pandemic.
- Finally, invest in the health work force to reach missed communities, and ensure that all health workers including community health workers – the majority of whom are women – are appropriately recognized, compensated, and granted safe and decent work conditions.

Thank you.