

Statement by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

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Agenda item 9 – Global road map on defeating meningitis

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Meningitis vaccine programmes are essential to reducing bacterial meningitis cases by 50% and deaths by 70%, as outlined in the Defeating Meningitis roadmap. Since 2010, Gavi has supported Meningitis A vaccinations across the meningitis belt through both prevention and routine immunisation.

All but two countries in the meningitis belt have conducted Meningitis A campaigns with Gavi's support, and 15 Gavi-eligible countries have introduced it into routine immunisation. Since the rollout of this vaccine, serogroup A has been almost eliminated from the meningitis belt. This is an incredible achievement and a testament to the efforts of the immunisation community.

Other meningococcal strains continue to cause devastating deaths and disability and are currently driving epidemics. Following the WHO pre-qualification of MenFive, a multivalent meningitis vaccine, Gavi launched a preventative multivalent meningitis programme in June 2024, and approved the first application from Niger 6 months later.

This vaccine has already been used in Gavi-supported outbreak response in Niger and Nigeria. This milestone in launching preventative campaigns intends to reduce the risk of outbreaks, disability and deaths, which remains high in the meningitis belt.

To defeat meningitis, Gavi calls on member states to:

- Introduce Meningitis A vaccines into routine immunisation, and conduct preventative campaigns for countries in the meningitis belt that have not yet introduced the vaccine.
- Consider switching to multivalent vaccines, particularly for countries at high-risk of meningitis, based on national assessments of potential public health benefits alongside the financial and programmatic sustainability.

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