

World Health Assembly 77

Statement by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

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Agenda item 11.7: Acceleration towards the Sustainable Development Goal targets for maternal health and child mortality

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, welcomes the Resolution on “accelerating progress towards reducing maternal, newborn and child mortality in order to achieve SDG targets 3.1 and 3.2” as a call to action to scale up integrated health services to support recovery of childhood vaccinations.

As we try to identify and overcome the challenges in achieving these crucial targets, Gavi underscores the pivotal role of extending immunisation coverage for improving child survival.

While we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Essential Programmes on Immunization (EPI) this year, which saved nearly 154 million lives in half a century, global vaccination coverage has not yet recovered back to pre-pandemic levels. The latest available data shows that 14.3 million children have not received any single dose of any vaccine in 2022.

Gavi also welcomes the recommendation included in the draft WHA resolution under this agenda item for countries to consider introducing malaria vaccines in endemic settings as part of national malaria control plans and programmes, ensuring a comprehensive approach to tackling malaria.

To conclude, Gavi calls upon Member States to:

1. Invest in routine immunisation, prioritise identifying and reaching zero-dose children, and actively support the Big Catch-Up initiative.
2. Introduce and scale up coverage of vaccines, as appropriate to their context, to prevent major causes of child mortality such as pneumonia and diarrhoea.
3. In view of their increased availability, consider introducing malaria vaccines in malaria endemic settings as part of comprehensive malaria control plans.