




An introduction to the Global Immunization Vision and Strategy



The World Health Organization estimates that 2.5 million children under the age of five die from vaccine-preventable diseases each year.

This translates to more than 6800 child deaths every day.

Immunization: proven achievements, clear benefits

Immunization is one of the most successful and cost-effective public health interventions ever. It has eradicated smallpox, lowered the global incidence of polio by 99% since 1988 and achieved dramatic reductions in diseases such as measles, diphtheria, whooping cough (pertussis), tetanus and hepatitis B. Immunization has a promising future with new vaccines in development and immunization services increasingly being used to deliver other health interventions. Immunization stimulates the development of health systems, and represents a sound economic investment.

But more remains to be done

There are still millions of people who are not protected by immunization. They are at risk of life-threatening illness every day. The consequences of failing to immunize all people at risk cannot be overstated: the re-emergence of diseases that were formerly under control, the spread of diseases to countries where they had been eliminated, and the continuing toll taken on millions of people — in terms of illness, disability and death — mostly in developing countries.

Main challenges

- > Vaccinating more people with existing and new vaccines
- > Financing newly introduced vaccines
- > Meeting increasing demand for immunization
- > Reducing vulnerability to epidemics and emergencies



Global Immunization Vision and Strategy

New vigour has recently been invested in the drive towards universal immunization. One such initiative is the Global Immunization Vision and Strategy (GIVS) developed by the World Health Organization and UNICEF in collaboration with other immunization partners. The GIVS is the first ever ten-year framework which is helping tackle challenges in immunization and fight vaccine-preventable diseases globally. It covers the period 2006 to 2015.

In 2005, governments present at the World Health Assembly adopted a resolution welcoming GIVS, which was also supported by the UNICEF Executive Board.

GIVS is based on four key strategic areas:

- immunization of more people against more diseases;
- development and introduction of a range of newly available vaccines and technologies;
- integration of other critical health interventions with immunization;
- management of vaccination programmes and activities within the context of global interdependence.

GIVS provides over two dozen strategies from which countries can choose for implementation, according to their specific needs.

Every child, adolescent and adult should have equal access to immunization.



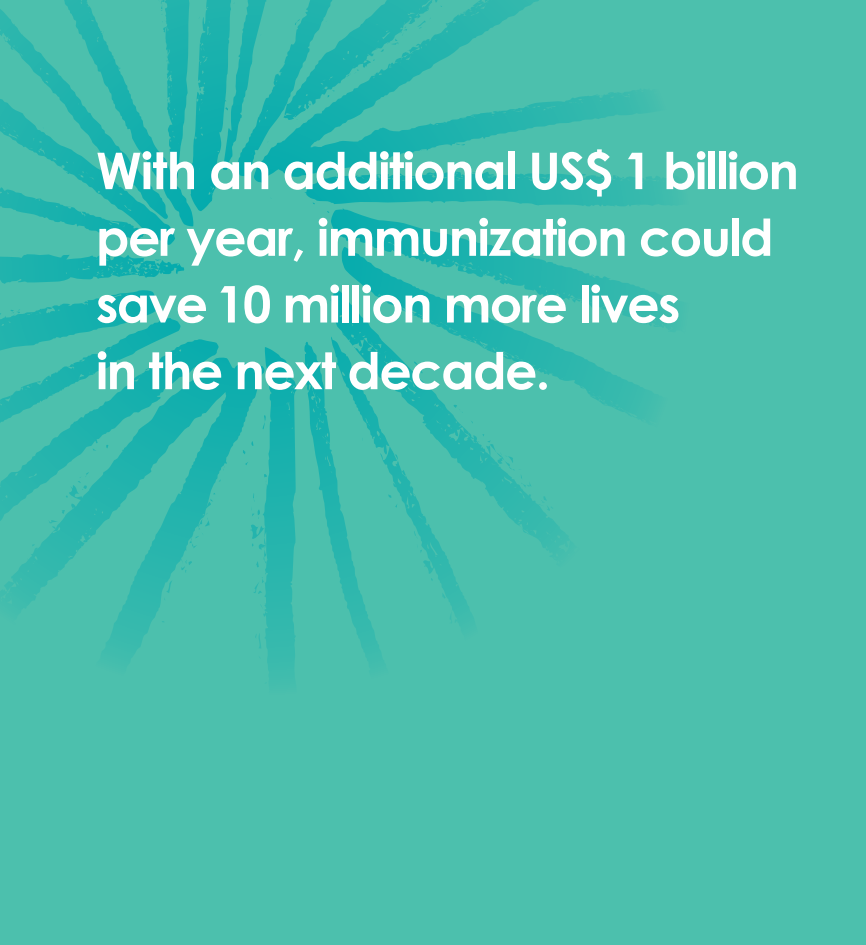
GIVS sets a number of ambitious immunization goals

To achieve the GIVS goals, governments around the world must keep immunization high not only on their health agendas, but also on their political, financial and economic agendas. These goals include, ensuring that:

- deaths due to vaccine-preventable diseases are reduced by at least two thirds compared to 2000 levels by 2015;
- national vaccination coverage levels reach at least 90% and vaccination coverage in every district reaches at least 80% by 2010 or earlier; and
- measles deaths are reduced by 90% compared to 2000 estimates by 2010 or earlier.

If countries achieve these goals, by 2015, more than 70 million children who live in the world's poorest countries will receive each year life-saving vaccines against 14 major diseases: tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, rubella, yellow fever, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b, hepatitis B, polio, rotavirus, pneumococcus, meningococcus, and Japanese encephalitis.

With the availability of new vaccines, such as those preventing cervical cancer, more people can be protected against disease.



With an additional US\$ 1 billion per year, immunization could save 10 million more lives in the next decade.



The cost of immunization programmes

More resources are needed if the GIVS goals are to be realized. A WHO/UNICEF study examined the cost, financing and impact of childhood immunization programmes in low-income countries.

It estimated the total cost for immunization activities for 2006-2015 in these countries at US\$ 35 billion.

Several funding mechanisms have been established to support low-income countries to strengthen and sustain national immunization programmes and to ensure a reliable global supply of quality vaccines. For example, the GAVI Alliance is a public-private partnership which promotes large-scale immunization in the poorest countries of the world. It supports the introduction

of new and under-used vaccines, improvements in injection safety and strengthening health systems that deliver routine immunization services.

Immunization programmes are benefiting from resources generated through the International Finance Facility for Immunization (IFFIm), an innovative financing mechanism. A number of donor countries are supporting the IFFIm with an anticipated investment of approximately US \$4 billion dollars.

The world's return on this investment includes not only lives saved, but also increased productivity and reduced poverty leading to stronger economies.



The way forward

The World Health Organization, UNICEF and partners are assisting governments in designing and implementing strengthened, sustainable national immunization programmes. Local governments, leaders and civil society organizations are essential allies on the ground, especially in efforts to vaccinate the hard to reach, improve district performance, leverage resources and achieve optimal coordination.

The world needs to fulfil the promise of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. Immunization and the delivery of linked health interventions to all are vital to achieve the goals of substantially reducing child and maternal mortality.



PROTECTING MORE PEOPLE AGAINST MORE DISEASES

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It is available on the Internet at: <http://www.who.int/immunization/givs>

Other useful links:

www.who.int/immunization • www.unicef.org/immunization
www.gavialliance.org • www.iff-immunisation.org

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