

Asia Pacific Pediatricians' Call to Action

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We, pediatricians from Asia Pacific Region, call upon our governments to prioritise immunisation, one of the most cost-effective investments for advancing global health and reducing child mortality and morbidity in Asia Pacific

Considering that:

- Substantial progress has been achieved in reducing child mortality worldwide, yet more than 16,000 children under age five still die every day from preventable causes;
- Each year, 1.5 million children under five lose their lives from vaccine preventable diseases and even more are hospitalized, yet one in five children worldwide are still not vaccinated with basic vaccines;
- Despite encouraging progress in the Asia Pacific health sector, numerous challenges must be overcome to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030;
- With the support of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, close to half a billion additional children have been vaccinated and 7 million lives saved in the world's poorest countries;
- Increased country demand and price reduction for vaccines have accelerated new vaccine introductions, extending protection against the biggest killers of children under five – pneumonia and diarrhoea – and, through HPV vaccines, the opportunity to vaccinate millions of girls against a devastating women's cancer;
- Continued progress to improve equity in immunisation will only be achieved by strengthening health systems and services and focusing on immunisation programme sustainability;
- Increased commitment from our own governments, pediatric associations, civil society/faith-based organisations, development partners, and the private sector is necessary to ensure equitable access to and supply of life-saving vaccines and sustainability of routine immunisation programmes;
- Investing in health and education promotes economic growth and can have a significant impact on poverty reduction and overall economic development in Asia Pacific;
- Children who are immunized are healthier, more likely to attend and do well at school, and go on to be healthy and productive adults;
- APPA is committed to advocate for immunisation and continues to work with Gavi, Asia Pacific governments, civil society/faith-based organisations, development partners, and the private sector to reduce child mortality and achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.2.

In light of the above, we call upon our governments to:

- Secure sustainable financing for immunisation programmes and, where applicable, co-financing of Gavi vaccines;
- Continue scaling-up efforts to improve government expenditure allocated to health and increase national health expenditure per capita;
- Strengthen health systems and services by increasing investments in health workers, training,

infrastructure and logistics systems to support increased coverage and equitable access to and supply of routine vaccines;

- Fully implement key global policies and plans—such as the Global Vaccine Action Plan (GVAP) and the WHO/UNICEF integrated Global Action Plan for Pneumonia and Diarrhoea (GAPPD)—at the country level to ensure equitable, comprehensive health promotion and disease prevention and control programmes that include vaccines;
- Honour commitments to reduce maternal, neonatal, infant and child mortality;
- Implement and scale-up programmes to achieve the GAPPD target of ending preventable child deaths from pneumonia and diarrhoea by 2025 and SDG 3.2. target of ending preventable newborn and under-five deaths by 2030, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality <12 per 1,000 live births and under-five mortality to <25 per 1,000 live births;
- Promote health education and universal access to essential health services and commodities for all, especially the poorest and most marginalised;
- Increase pediatrician participation in health- and vaccine-related consultation processes and decision-making bodies to promote collaboration in accelerating new vaccine introduction and ensuring equitable and sustainable routine immunisation programmes;
- Foster development and manufacturing of quality low-cost vaccines funded by public, social business, or private-public models.

In light of the above, we call upon our global partners to:

- Focus on and expedite market shaping initiatives to ensure that prices paid for vaccines are affordable to low and middle income countries and account for a country's ability to pay.

In light of the above, we appeal to vaccine industry to:

- Ensure vaccine prices are affordable, particularly to promote equity within and between countries.

In light of the above, we call upon our pediatrician colleagues to:

- Unite their voices, circulate, and endorse this Call to Action, which is under the leadership of APPA, Gavi and IAP.

APPA is committed to lead a movement of National Pediatric Societies and Associations to advocate for immunisation and the future health of the children of Asia Pacific. Progress will be reviewed in 2017.
