

CALL TO ACTION

Dear Colleagues,

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Vaccine preventable diseases contribute about one third to the burden of childhood illnesses in Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs). Over the last two decades, it has been shown world-wide that prompt, safe and effective immunization of children against these diseases is possible even in the remotest locations where there is paucity of infrastructures. The basic technology required is the cold chain system. This has been established in most of these countries for decades. The system is being sustained through the collaborative effort of Governments and international agencies especially the WHO and UNICEF. The responsibility for the regular supply of vaccines has also been primarily that of Governments currently aided by the special global vaccine funding agency known as the Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunization (GAVI). The third component needed for the delivery of immunization services is the health workforce of public and private institutions including the Civil Society. Lastly, information dissemination to the community is required in order to improve the demand for both routine and newly-introduced vaccines. In spite of all efforts, surveillance data have shown that coverage with effective and sustained immunization services has been unsatisfactory in many of these countries thus resulting in sub-optimal reduction of deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Paediatric Associations as the leading child health Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have the potential to strengthen their capacities in order to assist in improving equitable access to effective immunization services by contributing to the *following national*, subnational and community activities:

- Delivery of immunization services as part of child health care package
- Training of health care personnel in the delivery of effective immunization services
- Dissemination of effective and evidence-based information in order to increase demand for vaccines by the community.
- Provision of ADVOCACY to governments, agencies and the private sector in order to ensure that priority is given to childhood immunization programme
- Provision of technical assistance in the planning and implementation of immunization programme
- Monitoring and Evaluation of Immunization Programme
- Conduct of Operational Research

The International Paediatric Association (IPA) is a global non-governmental organization comprising 174 National Paediatric Associations and 7 Regional Paediatric Associations.

The IPA has set up various technical advisory committees in order to facilitate the promotion and support of priority child survival programmes at global, regional and national levels.

The IPA Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (TAGI) is one of these committees. TAGI in collaboration with the American Academy of Paediatrics, the Sabin Vaccine Institute (SVI) and the Measles-Rubella Initiative (MRI) has established a Strategic Plan and Schedule of Activities in order to mobilize support for childhood immunization in general but with emphasis on the Elimination of Measles and Rubella world-wide as our special focus. In order to realize our shared objectives, it is important that we involve our member associations at regional and national levels so as to enhance their potential to work with their governments, international

agencies and the private sector for the promotion and support of our declared focus on Measles and Rubella at these levels.

Therefore, the purpose of this document is to **CALL TO ACTION ALL MEMBERS OF THE IPA** with regards to this initiative. The strategy that will be made use of by the IPA is the harnessing of the numerous opportunities and resources that are available and accessible to us for the engagement and support of Regional and National Paediatric Organizations. The detail of how members will be involved will be communicated to all in due course.

Yours Sincerely,

Adenike Grange, Past President, IPA & Chair, TAGI

On behalf of Members of TAGI

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Lou Cooper-AAP

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