

PRESS ROOM

PRESS RELEASES AND STATEMENTS

Bill and Melinda Gates Pledge \$10 Billion in Call for Decade of Vaccines | Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Increased vaccination could save more than 8 million children by 2020; significant funding gaps remain, others must join effort

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DAVOS, Switzerland --
Bill and Melinda Gates
announced today that
their foundation will
commit \$10 billion

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over the next 10 years

to help research, develop and deliver [vaccines](#) for the world's poorest countries.

The Gateses said that increased investment in vaccines by governments and the private sector could help developing countries dramatically reduce child mortality by the end of the decade, and they called for others to help fill critical financing gaps in both research funding and childhood immunization programs.

“We must make this the decade of vaccines,” said Bill Gates. “Vaccines already save and improve millions of lives in developing countries. Innovation will make it possible to save more children than ever before.”

Bill and Melinda Gates made their announcement at the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting, where they were joined by Julian Lob-Levyt, CEO of the [GAVI Alliance](#).

“Vaccines are a miracle—with just a few doses, they can prevent deadly diseases for a lifetime,” said Melinda Gates. “We’ve made vaccines our number-one priority at the Gates Foundation because we’ve seen firsthand their incredible impact on children’s lives.”

The foundation used a model developed by a consortium led by the Institute of International Programs at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to project the potential impact of vaccines on childhood deaths over the next 10 years.

By significantly scaling up the delivery of life-saving vaccines in developing countries to 90 percent coverage—including new vaccines to prevent severe diarrhea and pneumonia—the model suggests that we could prevent the deaths of some 7.6 million children under 5 from 2010-2019. The foundation also estimates that an additional 1.1 million children could be saved with the rapid introduction of a malaria vaccine beginning in 2014, bringing the total number of potential lives saved to 8.7 million.

If additional vaccines are developed and introduced in this decade—such as for tuberculosis—even more lives could be saved. The new funding announced today is in addition to the \$4.5 billion that the Gates Foundation has already committed to vaccine research, development and delivery to date across its

entire disease portfolio since its inception.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS DRIVE PROGRESS IN VACCINE DEVELOPMENT, DELIVERY

Bill and Melinda Gates said their pledge was inspired by the remarkable progress made on vaccines in recent years. For example:

- **Record-breaking vaccine access:** New WHO data show that global vaccination rates have reached all-time highs, rebounding from years of decline in the 1990s. Between 2000 and 2009, the percentage of children receiving the basic DTP3 vaccine in the poorest countries of the world jumped from 66 percent to 79 percent, the highest on record. The number of people who died of measles worldwide fell by 77 percent between 2000 and 2008, and in Africa, measles deaths fell by 92 percent.
- **Improved routine immunization:** Partnerships focused on reducing diseases like polio and measles are also helping build a stronger foundation for the delivery of both new and existing vaccines. Trained health workers, proper cold chain function, and surveillance are all necessary to ensure vaccines reach every child who needs them.
- **New vaccine introduction:** Important new vaccines for the two leading causes of global child deaths—severe diarrhea and pneumonia—are becoming available. Research published this week in *The New England Journal of Medicine* shows that introducing a rotavirus vaccine in South Africa and Malawi reduced severe diarrhea caused by the virus by more than 60 percent.
- **R&D momentum:** The vaccine research and development pipeline is more robust than ever. Late-stage trials have begun on a promising vaccine to protect children from malaria, and a new vaccine to prevent meningitis outbreaks in Africa is likely to be introduced this year.

Many of the recent advances in vaccine development and delivery have been driven by public-private partnerships such as the GAVI Alliance and the Rotavirus Vaccine Program at PATH, which coordinate the resources and expertise of vaccine companies, donors, UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank, and developing countries. Mr. Gates said these partnerships are “transforming the business of vaccines.”

The GAVI Alliance—launched at the World Economic Forum 10 years ago this week—has reached 257 million additional children with new and underused vaccines, and prevented 5 million future deaths. In the coming years, GAVI will focus on rapidly introducing vaccines to tackle diarrhea and pneumonia.

“Investments in global immunization have yielded an extraordinary return,” said Julian Lob-Levyt. “The GAVI Alliance was founded just 10 years ago and has already saved 5 million lives by increasing access to immunization in the world’s poorest countries. The potential to make bigger strides in the coming decade is even more exciting.”

INCREASED COMMITMENTS CRITICAL TO FUTURE SUCCESS

Today’s commitment will support a broad spectrum of vaccine-related activities, from basic research to innovations in delivery. However, billions more are needed from other donors to achieve the goal of 90 percent coverage of childhood immunization. Critical funding gaps exist at GAVI and in the global polio and measles programs, and more support is needed for the research and development necessary to produce new vaccines.

Speakers at the press conference underscored the need for major new funding from donors, governments and the private sector to:

- Rapidly scale immunization programs in order to reach all those in need
- Conduct the laboratory research and clinical trials needed to create new vaccines
- Introduce life-saving new vaccines for pneumonia and severe diarrhea, as well as other promising vaccines currently in the development pipeline
- Ensure a steady market for vaccines in developing countries, and an adequate supply from manufacturers

Commenting on the announcement, WHO Director-General Margaret Chan said, “The Gates Foundation’s commitment to vaccines is unprecedented, but just a small part of what is needed. It’s absolutely crucial that both governments and the private sector step up efforts to provide life-saving vaccines to children who need them most.”

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