



GLOBAL IMMUNIZATION NEWS

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Please send inputs for inclusion to: nicolash@who.int*

28 September 2007

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

POLIO

28/09/07 from Sona Bari, WHO/HQ:

Polio Eradication: Interim report highlights epidemiological progress, but funding remains critical - *Epidemiological progress thanks to renewed political engagement and tailored eradication approaches.*

An interim report on key epidemiological, operational and financial milestones shows progress towards achieving the four major milestones used to track progress of intensified eradication activities in 2007 and 2008. However, delays in securing funding for countries' activities threaten to undermine this progress. The milestones quantify progress towards a polio-free world, and were first discussed by key stakeholders at the 28 February Urgent Stakeholder Consultation in Geneva, and published by the Director-General of WHO at the end of May 2007 in her "Case for Completing Polio Eradication" document.

The interim report presents data suggesting that the programme is largely on track to meet three of the four agreed milestones by the end of the year: a 50% reduction in the number of infected districts in endemic countries; an increase in vaccination coverage in infected areas; and an end to outbreaks in re-infected countries. This progress is attributed to renewed political engagement in polio-affected areas, the introduction of new tools (e.g. monovalent oral poliovirus vaccines), and the high-quality application of new tactics in the four remaining endemic countries. The exception to this progress - and an area of singular concern for the eradication programme -- has been the southern region of Afghanistan, where deteriorating security has compromised the ability to reach children with vaccine.

Despite the generally encouraging outlook, the fourth milestone - measuring the national and international commitments to meet the programme's financing requirements - remains unmet. The target was to fill the 2007 funding gap completely by mid-2007; however, the programme is still short US\$60 million for the rest of the year. Discussions are on with a number of donors to finalize new funding decisions - if the funding gap is not rapidly filled, key eradication activities will need to be scaled back or cancelled.

For further information on the interim progress report, please visit www.polioeradication.org

VACCINE PROCUREMENT

28/09/07 from Sarah Schmitt, WHO/HQ:

Global Training Network Vaccine Procurement Workshops - an intercountry training workshop on vaccine procurement systems and national regulatory authority was held in Cairo, Egypt from 1-5 September 2007. Participants included representatives from seven countries (Afghanistan, Egypt, North Sudan, Pakistan, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen). The workshop was organized and coordinated by WHO EMRO staff. It was also attended by representatives of some UNICEF country offices, and a representative from UNICEF Supply Division in Copenhagen facilitated some sessions.

The objectives of the workshop were to familiarise the participants with the global vaccine market, the regional perspective, vaccine procurement principles and methods, and the functions of the NRA. Examples of issues discussed included accuracy of demand forecast, programmatic and technical specifications, separation of functions and stakeholders, non collaboration between EPI, finance, procurement and regulation entities, receipt and clearance procedures and function of NRAs. All countries were assisted to develop a short,

medium and long-term action plan to address their specific needs relating to vaccine procurement and NRA strengthening.

VACCINE MANAGEMENT

28/09/07 from Solo Kone, WHO/HQ: Afghanistan's **national vaccine store** has successfully implemented in the WHO-UNICEF Effective Vaccine Store Management Initiative, and achieved a high score for all global criteria. A certificate of recognition that has been jointly signed by the Director of the Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals Department of WHO and the Chief of the Health Section in UNICEF/HQ has been received as recognition of their high standard of performance. This is the third country in the world to have achieved the global certification level for national vaccine store management; the first being Oman in 2003, and the second being Moldova in 2004.

YELLOW FEVER

28/09/07 from Fenella Avokey, WHO/AFRO: Senegal and Burkina Faso have had their applications for vaccines and funding support to conduct preventive campaigns approved by the ICG. The target population for vaccination in Senegal is 3,125,307 while that approved for vaccination in Burkina Faso is 7,581,390 persons.

Togo started the first phase of its preventive campaign on 24 August 2007, and has since completed the exercise in two of its four regions. Senegal's campaign has been tentatively fixed for early December 2007.

A technical briefing for countries teams from Anglophone countries in West Africa will take place in Accra, Ghana from 1-5 October 2007. Participants will be briefed on the Yellow Fever initiative and their role in the implementation at the country level. Facilitators will be drawn from member agencies in the Yellow Fever Partnership, notably AMP, CDC and IPD, in addition to WHO and UNICEF staff.

PUBLICATIONS

WHO PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS

28/09/07 from Mario Conde, WHO/HQ: A new publication has come out on *Human Papillomavirus and HPV vaccines* (WHO/IVB/07.05). This document provides technical information for policy-makers and health professionals, which reviews the evidence on the burden of HPV-related cervical cancer, the safety and efficacy of HPV vaccines and the cost-effectiveness of HPV vaccines.

The document provides decision-makers who may consider HPV introduction with current technical information, and complements the recently produced document "Preparing for the introduction of HPV vaccines. Policy and programme guidance for countries" (WHO/RHR/06.11).

This document can be found under the following link: <http://www.who.int/vaccines-documents/DocsPDF07/866.pdf>

GAVI-RELATED INFORMATION

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

28/09/07 from Ariane Manset, GAVI Alliance: Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Pakistan were visited by CSO Task Team members in September 2007 to raise the profile of the GAVI Alliance support to Civil Society Organizations and to strengthen CSO representation and coordination at the country level.

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING

28/09/07 from Tom O'Connell, WHO/SEARO: The WHO/SEARO Regional Workshop on "Preparation of Project Proposals for GAVI Health Systems Strengthening Funding" was held in Beruwala, Sri Lanka from 29-31 August 2007. Country delegations from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste participated, with a mix of panel discussions and small group work to assist proposal development.

Presentations were given by representatives from the WHO/SEARO, WHO/HQ, UNICEF/ROSA and the GAVI Secretariat. Participants discussed how HSS support could be an opportunity to support priority national health system components essential to providing a range of Maternal and Child Health (MCH) interventions, and which also contribute to sustaining high immunization coverage levels. Six countries will submit applications to GAVI for HSS support: two by October 2007, and four by March 2008. An intensive workshop for proposal review and finalization is tentatively planned for January 2008, to assist SEAR countries submitting applications in 2008 for HSS support from GAVI as well as to disseminate Regional experiences in implementing HSS proposals.

28/09/07 from Ahmadu Yakubu, UNICEF/ESARO and Ariane Manset, GAVI Alliance: The HSS Task Team met in Nairobi, Kenya from 4-5 September 2007. This was followed by the second GAVI HSS meeting with regional focal points was hosted by UNICEF in Nairobi, from 6-7 September 2007. The meeting brought together regional focal points from WHO and UNICEF and the core GAVI HSS Task Team members that include WHO, UNICEF, the World Bank, USAID, NORAD, DFID, country and civil society representatives. Better coordination and collaboration at regional and country levels was an underlying theme of the discussions. The structure of the meeting facilitated the sharing of the diverse regional experiences from Africa, Central Europe, Middle-East and Latin America - to enhance implementation of best practices identified thus far. Regional Focal Points underscored the efforts being made by countries preparing to submit proposals during the upcoming GAVI HSS application round in October 2007. Two additional application rounds are planned in 2008. Discussions also included the flow of funds issues and strengthening the 2008 workplan.

A need for HSS capacity building at regional, sub-regional and country levels was emphasized in the meeting's presentations. The meeting also reviewed the 2008 HSS global and regional workplans. The discussions on technical assistance to countries were focused on how to ensure quality and balance between use of in-country and international consultants.

In conclusion, participants agreed that the series of GAVI HSS review meetings will continue to serve as platform for partners, including recipient countries, to harmonize efforts and assure the attainment of results outlined in GAVI funded proposals. With \$265 million already committed to support 16 countries since the launch of the HSS window in September 2006, the Nairobi meetings marked the transition from a focus on proposal development towards support to implementation.

IMMUNIZATION SERVICES STRENGTHENING

28/09/07 from Ariane Manset, GAVI Alliance: The evaluation of the GAVI's Immunization Services Strengthening support (ISS) has been completed, and the recommendations will be discussed by the Board. Institutions are now being selected for a few upcoming studies, including the GAVI Phase 1 (2000-2005) evaluation, the evaluation on GAVI's support on Immunization Safety, and an evaluation of various available methods for measuring immunization coverage.

REGIONAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

28/09/07 from Ariane Manset, GAVI Alliance: GAVI participated in two regional committee meetings held in AFRO and WPRO. The purpose was to present and facilitate the discussion on the proposed process for designing and developing GAVI's new vaccine investment strategy.

In both regions, the strategy was welcomed; the discussions provided inputs and gave guidance on the country consultation process. In WPRO, countries mentioned the need for more emphasis on solid proof of new vaccine cost effectiveness when compared to other child health interventions; they also suggested GAVI to support them with strong burden of disease studies before introducing new vaccines.

REVIEW PROCESS

Next Review Dates:

THIRD REVIEW 2007: ISS, INS, New Vaccines & Measles 2nd Dose: The deadline for receiving applications is **28 September 2007**. The applications will be reviewed from **17-26 October 2007**.

THIRD REVIEW 2007: HSS Applications: The **deadline** to receive applications for HSS is **5 October 2007**. The applications will be reviewed from **26 October – 7 November 2007**.

MONITORING REVIEW: The Annual Progress Reports will be reviewed from **24-28 September 2007**.

VACCINE INTRODUCTION SUPPORT INITIATIVE

28/09/07 from Ariane Manset, GAVI Alliance: The GAVI Alliance is developing a proposal to strengthen support to countries and Alliance partners for the introduction of new vaccines, and especially pneumococcal and rotavirus vaccines. All ideas and contributions should be sent to rlewis@gavialliance.org

COUNTRY INFORMATION¹ BY REGION

EAST & SOUTH AFRICA

UGANDA

28/09/07 from Issa Makumbi, EPI Manager for Uganda: The country completed the following activities in July-August 2007:

- **RED evaluation** by a team of seven people from WHO, BASICS, CDC and UNICEF.
- An **MNT data validation** was conducted by a WHO/UNICEF team.
- There was a data collection on **comprehensive EPI inventory** of 1900 health facilities.
- The country hosted a **GAVI mission**.

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

REGIONAL INFORMATION

28/09/07 from EMRO: An **Intercountry Workshop on Rotavirus Surveillance Network** was conducted in Cairo, Egypt from 9-11 September 2007. Participants from 12 countries and members of the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Rotavirus Surveillance Network attended the meeting, in addition to representatives from NAMRU-3 (the regional reference lab), CDC Atlanta and the Rotavirus Vaccine Programme at PATH. The participants reviewed progress and results of implementation of the surveillance activities in each country; identified strengths, weaknesses and constraints at all operational levels (regional, national and facility levels) and developed national plans for addressing the constraints and improve the ongoing activities.

The Eastern Mediterranean Rotavirus Surveillance Network (EMRSN), established in 2005, covers 72 sentinel sites in 12 countries. Its main objective is to support evidence-based decision on introduction of rotavirus vaccines through assessing burden of rotavirus gastroenteritis in different countries and identifying the circulating genotypes. Six countries have successfully completed one year of surveillance, and will publish their data on virus detection and genotypes soon.

EUROPEAN REGION

REGIONAL INFORMATION

28/09/07 from EURO:

Meeting starts planning of third European Immunization Week - Recapturing the lessons learnt of European Immunization Week 2007 and the planning of next year's Immunization Week was the focus of a meeting held in Copenhagen on 11-12 September 2007. Fifty-one participants from 21 Member States and partners joined the meeting.

The meeting officially started the planning process for the third European Immunization Week, scheduled to take place on 21-27 April 2008. It provided an opportunity to discuss ways of consolidating, developing and strengthening European Immunization Week in the future, and to agree on milestones towards the next Immunization Week.

It was agreed that the European Immunization Week had been successful, not only in developing information materials, but also in organizing a range of events to engage key target groups - school lessons, trainings and festive launch events.

Based on this year's experience, Member States agreed to initiate an early planning, strengthen the analysis of the respective target groups for the initiative, and to enhance the use of indicators to strengthen evaluation. A representative from Vaccination Week Americas from WHO/PAHO, participated in the meeting, and a strategic partnership between the two vaccination initiatives was discussed.

¹ HSS= Health Systems Strengthening;
ICP = Inter Country Programme;
ISS = Immunization Services Support;
INS = Injection Safety Support;
NVS = New Vaccine Support;
DQA = Data Quality Audit;
DQS = Data Quality Self Assessment;
FSP = Financial Sustainability Plan;
RED = Reach Every District;
cMYP = Fully costed multi-year plan;

REGIONAL INFORMATION

28/09/07 from WPRO:

GAVI Regional Working Group Meeting - A GAVI Regional Working Group meeting was organized on 18 September 2007. Participants from JICA, PATH, the World Bank, and WHO were present at the meeting. The status of GAVI applications for different funding windows, implication of pneumococcal vaccine support and co-financing policies, injection safety issues and setting-up of surveillance systems to quantify the disease burden and monitoring the impact of new vaccines were the key agenda items. The next meeting is planned in February 2008.

Regional Committee Meeting and GAVI Side Meeting - The 58th Western Pacific Regional Committee Meeting was organized in Jeju in South Korea from 10-14 September 2007. One of the agenda items included "improving child survival - maternal and child health, including immunizations". The agenda item focused on the importance of new vaccines in furthering the goals of child survival. A GAVI side-meeting was organized on 12 September, including representatives from all the GAVI eligible countries. Dr. Craig Burgess presented the GAVI new vaccine investment strategy to seek countries' input on it.

Technical Workshops to increase Hepatitis B birth dose coverage - Technical assistance is being provided to the Philippines and Papua New Guinea in September and October 2007 to improve the hepatitis B birth dose coverage in hospital settings. In country technical workshops were organized involving paediatricians and obstetricians followed by assessment of practices in selected hospitals. Expansion of birth dose coverage will greatly help both of these countries - currently hyper-endemic for hepatitis B - in achieving the regional goal of reduction of chronic infection rate to less than 2%.

Certification guidelines for achievement of Hepatitis B control goal - Having set a regional goal of reduction of hepatitis B chronic infection rates to less than 2% by 2012 among children five years of age or older, certification guidelines have been developed to validate the achievement of goal in different countries. The guidelines were endorsed by an expert hepatitis B group meeting in March 2007.

Measles - China is conducting measles SIAs in Shaanxi Province from 18-28 September 2007, targeting 5.6 million children aged eight months to 14 years. Sichuan Province will conduct an SIA from 19-21 September, targeting 6 million (39%) of a total of 15.4 million children aged eight months to 14 years old. Countries conducting SIAs later in the year include Mongolia from 1-10 October, targeting 440,000 children aged 2-10 years; Viet Nam from November to December, targeting 3.7 million persons aged 1-20 years; and Lao People's Democratic Republic, from 12-18 November, targeting 2.2 million children aged nine months to 14 years. Papua New Guinea will be conducting a SIA in the first and/or second quarter of 2008 targeting 1.3 million children aged six months to six years old.

Polio - On 13 July 2007, the regional polio reference laboratory in Melbourne, Australia, had reported isolation of type 1 wild poliovirus, from a stool sample of a 22 year old Pakistani man who had returned to Australia on 1 July 2007 to continue his studies. Genetic sequencing of the poliovirus isolated from the student has confirmed that it is related to virus in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), one of the last remaining polio-infected areas in Pakistan. Pakistan is one of four polio "endemic" countries where circulation of indigenous wild poliovirus has never been interrupted (the three other countries are Afghanistan, India and Nigeria).

The risk of onward spread of the poliovirus was considered low due to a number of factors, particularly Australia's strong routine immunization system and excellent sanitation infrastructure. The Government of Australia still undertook a number of additional steps in response to this importation, including enhancing disease surveillance and distributing a public health alert to public health institutions across the country. No further wild polioviruses were found.

This was the first event reported under the new International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) which came into force on 15 June 2007.

Assistance for GAVI Hib Vaccine Applications - Technical assistance was provided to Kiribati and the Solomon Islands in responding to the issues raised by the GAVI Independent Review Committee on their applications for Hib vaccine introduction in the April 2007 round. Both countries will be submitting their responses to GAVI by 28 September 2007, and hope to introduce the vaccine by July 2008. With this, four of the seven GAVI eligible countries in the Western Pacific Region would have introduced Hib vaccine into their national schedules. In addition to GAVI eligible countries, 17 other countries and areas are providing Hib vaccine.

LIST OF MEETINGS & KEY EVENTS RELATED TO IMMUNIZATION

Regional Meetings & Key Events Related to Immunization: October 2007 to 2009					
Title of Meeting	Start	Finish	Location	Responsible Partner	Region
Oct-07					
Regional Committee for the Americas: Fifty-Ninth Session	01-Oct	05-Oct	Washington DC	PAHO	PAHO
SEARO Regional WHO GTN Course on Vaccine Management	15-Oct	19-Oct	Khon Kaen, Thailand	SEARO	SEAR
GAVI Review for ISS, INS, NVS & Measles 2nd Dose Applications (Deadline: 28 September 2007)	17-Oct	26-Oct	Geneva	GAVI Secretariat	Specific
Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean: Fifty-Fourth Session	20-Oct	23-Oct	Cairo, Egypt	EMRO	EMR
GAVI Review for HSS Proposals (Deadline: 5 October 2007)	26-Oct	07-Nov	Geneva	GAVI Secretariat	Specific
GAVI Eastern Mediterranean Regional Working Group Meeting	28-Oct	29-Oct	Tripoli, Libya	EMRO	EMR
EMRO ICM on Measles and Rubella	30-Oct	01-Nov	Tripoli, Libya	EMRO	EMR
Nov-07					
EMRO RTAG Meeting	02-Nov	02-Nov	Tripoli, Libya	EMRO	EMR
Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) meeting	06-Nov	08-Nov	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
Caribbean EPI Managers Meeting	12-Nov	16-Nov	Tobago	PAHO	PAHO
European GAVI Regional Working Group Meeting	14-Nov	14-Nov	tbd	EURO	EUR
SEARO Global Training Network Workshop on Vaccine Lot Release	19-Nov	23-Nov	Kasauli, India	WHO/SEARO	SEAR
HPV Planning Policy Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean	26-Nov	29-Nov	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	PAHO	PAHO
GAVI South East Asian Regional Working Group Meeting	27-Nov	28-Nov	Thimphu	SEARO	SEAR
Joint GAVI Alliance & Fund Board Meetings	27-Nov	30-Nov	Cape Town	GAVI Secretariat	Specific
EURO TAG Meeting	tbd	tbd	tbd	EURO	EUR
Dec-07					
AFRO Task Force on Immunization	11-Dec	14-Dec	Antananarivo, Madagascar	AFRO	AFRO
Global Advisory Committee of Vaccine Safety (GACVS) Meeting	12-Dec	13-Dec	CICG	WHO/HQ	Global
2008 Meetings					
Sub-Regional Laboratory Network Meeting for Countries of Central and Eastern Europe	08-Jan	11-Jan	tbd	EURO	EUR
GAVI Regional Working Group for the Western Pacific Region	Feb	Feb	tbd	WPRO	WPR
Global Immunization Meeting	19-Feb	21-Feb	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) meeting	08-Apr	10-Apr	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
European Immunization Week	21-Apr	27-Apr	Region-Wide	WHO/EURO	EUR

Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) meeting	03-Nov	05-Nov	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
2009 Meetings					
Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) meeting	07-Apr	09-Apr	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) meeting	27-Oct	29-Oct	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global

LINKS RELEVANT TO IMMUNIZATION

GLOBAL WEBSITES

Department of Immunization, Vaccines & Biologicals, World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/immunization/en/>

WHO New Vaccines Hib website

<http://www.who.int/nuvi/hib/>

GAVI Alliance Website

<http://www.gavialliance.org/>

PATH Vaccine Resource Library

<http://www.path.org/vaccineresources>

UNICEF Supply Division Website

http://www.unicef.org/supply/index_immunization.html

UNICEF Supply Division Product Menu for GAVI Vaccines

http://www.unicef.org/supply/files/Product_Menu_2007.PDF

Hib Initiative Website

<http://www.hibaction.org/>

Japanese Encephalitis Resources

http://www.path.org/vaccineresources/japanese_encephalitis-resources.php

Malaria Vaccine Initiative

<http://www.malariavaccine.org>

Meningitis Vaccine Project

<http://www.meningvax.org/index.htm>

PneumoADIP

www.preventpneumo.org/

RotaADIP

<http://www.rotavirusvaccine.org/>

RHO Cervical Cancer (HPV Vaccine)

<http://www.rho.org>

WHO/ICO Information Center on HPV and Cervical Cancer

<http://www.who.int/hpvcentre/en/>

SIGN Updates

www.who.int/entity/injection_safety/sign/en/

Technet

<http://www.technet21.org/>

REGIONAL WEBSITES

New Vaccines in AFRO

<http://www.afro.who.int/newvaccines/>

PAHO's website for Immunization

<http://www.paho.org/english/ad/fch/im/Vaccines.htm>

Vaccine Preventable Diseases in EURO

<http://www.euro.who.int/vaccine/>

New Vaccines in SEARO

<http://www.searo.who.int/en/section1226.asp>

Immunization in WPRO

http://www.wpro.who.int/health_topics/immunization/

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