



REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

October 2017

Sixty-fourth Session
Islamabad, Pakistan, 9–12 October 2017

SIDE EVENT

UPDATE ON THE SUPPORT OF GAVI, THE VACCINE ALLIANCE

Objectives of the event

The objectives of the event are to:

- inform participants of the latest decisions of the Gavi Board and new Gavi policies;
- to share and discuss country approaches to strengthening political will and country leadership and ensuring appropriate planning in order to achieve immunization coverage targets, equity and sustainable access to vaccines in line with the regional vaccine action plan and Gavi's strategic goals for universal health coverage by 2030;
- highlight regional achievements, key challenges, and the way forward for strengthening partnership for immunization.

Background

Fragility, emergencies and refugees policy

As almost all Gavi-supported countries in the Region are facing fragility/emergencies or hosting refugees, they can benefit from Gavi's new fragility, emergencies and refugees policy and operational guidelines. The new policy allows Gavi to offer greater flexibility and tailored support to these countries. The policy allows Gavi to adjust its support and processes to better meet each country's specific needs, working in close collaboration with partners and humanitarian actors.

Data quality improvements in Afghanistan

To address the disparity in data submitted to the Expanded Programme on Immunization, Afghanistan has developed a data quality improvement plan for 2016–2019 with a budget of US\$ 2.3 million, supported by Gavi. Access-based software has been developed to enable the capturing of data from health facilities. Data quality has improved and is providing more reliable information on country performance. This support has been provided to the country under Gavi's country-tailored approach.

Immunization achievements in Pakistan

In spite of delays in initiating the use of funds for health system strengthening, Pakistan has been able to utilize a significant amount of funding for 5 years within 3 years. This has helped Pakistan achieve a number of disbursement-linked indicators under the joint World Bank/Gavi-supported National Immunization Support Project to increase equitable coverage of services for immunization against vaccine preventable diseases.

Yemen reallocates funding to sustain immunization coverage

Since 2015, Yemen has been experiencing a severe crisis. In spite of expectations that the generally high levels of immunization coverage could have decreased significantly in such circumstances, only a small decrease in immunization coverage has been observed over the last two years. In spite of the many challenges, EPI targets have almost been achieved due to a judicious use of resources, including funding for health system strengthening. These funds were used to operationalize closed EPI centres, conduct vaccination through fixed centres and integrated outreach rounds and vaccinate children in high-risk and hard-to-reach areas through mobile teams.

Expected outcomes

- Consensus reached on the need for political will and appropriate planning to achieve high immunization coverage and ensure equity and sustainable access to vaccines to progress towards universal health coverage by 2030.
- Participants briefed on the latest decisions of the Gavi Board and new Gavi policies.