

**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

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**THE GLOBAL FUND TO FIGHT AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND MALARIA, AND GAVI,
THE VACCINE ALLIANCE**

Objectives of the event

The objectives of the event are to:

- discuss and highlight the issue of invisible populations and existing and emerging challenges in ensuring availability of equitable health services in countries; and
- identify how to strengthen collaborative approaches with countries in the Region.

Background

Substantial progress has been made in confronting the leading causes of death and disease in the Region. Maternal and child mortality have declined, vaccines are more widely available, the response to the HIV epidemic has made remarkable advances, the number of deaths from malaria have been halved and life expectancy has increased – these are the success stories of the last two decades.

But national averages conceal the fact that millions of individuals are disadvantaged, vulnerable and lack access to services. These communities of invisible and vulnerable populations are yet to benefit from the gains made and bear the brunt of new threats from climate change, population growth, human migration, urbanization, vaccine hesitancy and antimicrobial resistance.

One of the most effective ways to achieve the health-related targets of Sustainable Development Goal 3 is to improve the generation, allocation and use of funds for health. This requires ensuring that key areas, including primary health care and critical public goods such as health services and products, are adequately funded. And leaving no one behind means prioritizing those left farthest behind.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

The Global Fund is a partnership designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics. As an international organization, the Global Fund mobilizes and invests more than US\$ 4 billion a year to support programmes run by local experts in more than 100 countries. In partnership with governments, civil society, technical agencies, the private sector and people affected by the diseases, we are challenging barriers and embracing innovation.

Programmes supported by the Global Fund have saved 32 million lives (Global Fund Results Report 2019). The report shows great progress against some of the biggest challenges in the fight against the three diseases, while highlighting new threats. The 2019 report includes key annual results achieved in countries in which the Global Fund invests:

- 18.9 million people received antiretroviral therapy for HIV;
- 719 000 HIV-positive mothers received medicine to keep them alive and prevent transmission of HIV to their babies;
- 5.3 million people tested and treated for tuberculosis;
- 31 million mosquito nets distributed to protect families from malaria.

The achievements outlined in this year's report are the result of efforts by a wide array of actors comprising the Global Fund partnership, including implementer governments, multilateral agencies, bilateral partners, civil society groups, people affected by the diseases, and the private sector.

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

Gavi is a global vaccine alliance, bringing together public and private sectors with the shared goal of creating equal access to new and underused vaccines for children living in the world's poorest countries. In 2000, when Gavi was established, around 10 million newborns died before reaching their fifth birthday. By 2017, this number had almost halved. This is a staggering change in under two decades, especially as the number of children born each year in lower income countries has increased by 10% – and in Africa by nearly 40% – over the same period. In 2018 alone, countries immunized 66 million additional children often with more than one Gavi-funded vaccine.

With a total of US\$ 124 million invested in co-financing and US\$ 283 million in self-financed vaccine programmes, this not only represents a clear commitment by governments, but also demonstrates how the Gavi model contributes to building and funding sustainable immunization programmes.

As immunization rates rise, and the benefits of vaccination spread to a growing number of children in Gavi-supported countries, this importantly helps to build a platform to strengthen primary health care and increase access to health services.

Expected outcomes

- Greater understanding of the issue of invisible populations and existing and emerging challenges in ensuring availability of equitable health services in countries and how to strengthen collaborative approaches with countries in the Region.