**FACT SHEET**

**Background:** In 2010 the global health community recognized the need for widespread commitment to immunization and called for a Decade of Vaccines (DoV).

**Vision and Mission:** The vision of the DoV is to extend, by 2020 and beyond, the full benefits of immunization to all people, regardless of where they are born, who they are or where they live.

**Global Vaccine Action Plan:** To make this vision a reality, more than 100 experts participated in the development of a roadmap, called the Global Vaccine Action Plan (GVAP). The resulting plan was refined further during a global consultation process involving input from **more than 1,100 individuals in 140 countries** (representing 290 distinct organizations).

**Approval:** On 25 May 2012, the World Health Assembly, composed of the 194 Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO), approved the GVAP and its accompanying resolution. (See <http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA65/A65_R17-en.pdf> for details). All countries committed to apply the DoV’s vision and the GVAP’s goals and strategic objectives to develop the vaccines and immunization components of their national health strategies and plans, to allocate adequate human and financial resources to achieve the immunization goals and to report back yearly through the WHO Regional Committees and the World Health Assembly on progress made.

**Why Vaccines Are Crucial:** Immunization continues to be one of the most cost-effective health interventions available, preventing 2.5 million deaths and untold illnesses each year.

**Recent Progress:** Significant progress has been made in recent years to expand immunization coverage rates. Polio has been reduced by 99 percent since 1988 and we are now poised to rid the world of this debilitating disease; Vaccines have reduced measles deaths by 74 percent; and routine immunization for diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP) reached 109 million children in 2010. Despite these successes, a sizeable gap remains in the number of children who are unimmunized or under-immunized.

**Challenges:**

* There are global disparities in immunization rates. Nearly 15 percent of newborns each year remain unvaccinated for DTP. Ninety six percent of those children live in low- and middle-income countries.
* Disparities exist within countries as well. In some countries, coverage of measles vaccine in rural areas is 33 percent lower than in urban areas. The measles vaccine coverage rate for the poorest fifth of the population in some countries is up to 42 percent lower than for the richest fifth.

**Ambitious Goals:** We have the political will and a broad array of scientific, logistical and financial tools available to close these gaps by the end of this decade. Through implementation of the GVAP during the Decade of Vaccines we will:

* Achieve a world free of polio.
* Meet global and regional disease elimination targets (such as targets for neo-natal tetanus, measles and rubella).
* Meet vaccination coverage rate targets in every region, country and community (90 percent national and 80 percent in district or its equivalent).
* Develop and introduce new and improved vaccines and technologies.
* Meet or exceed the Millennium Development Goal for a two-thirds reduction in global child mortality by 2015.

**Strategic Objectives:** The GVAP identifies six strategic objectives that must be achieved in order to realize the DoV vision.

* The benefits of immunization need to be equitably extended to all people.
* All countries must commit to immunization as a priority.
* Individuals and communities need to understand the value of vaccines and demand immunization as both their right and responsibility.
* Strong immunization systems must be an integral part of a well-functioning health system.
* Immunization programmes should have sustainable access to predictable funding, quality supply and innovative technologies.
* Country, regional and global research & development (R&D) innovations are necessary to maximize the benefits of immunization.

**Monitoring & Evaluation/Accountability Framework**: Indicators defined for each GVAP goal and strategic objective will be used to collect data throughout the decade and to review progress at national, regional and global levels. Existing immunization review mechanisms will be strengthened and expanded to include the DoV and the GVAP’s indicators, using Interagency Coordinating Committees, Immunization Technical Advisory Groups and the WHO Strategic Advisory Group of Experts. Mechanisms already established for the UN Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health Accountability Framework are being evaluated for possible use to encourage and monitor commitments made by all stakeholders. Technical experts are also developing a set of specifications to track resources.

**Research & Development:** The GVAP challenges the R&D community to produce new vaccines against malaria, HIV/AIDS, TB, and a universal influenza vaccine, as well as other vaccines that will address currently non-vaccine preventable diseases. The GVAP also challenges the community to produce platform technologies such as thermostable vaccines and a research-based global regulatory agenda. Further focus is placed on operational and implementation research, new manufacturing technologies and basic research.  Progress on R&D will be reported every two years.

**Leadership:** The World Health Organization, UNICEF, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the GAVI Alliance and the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases are the principal organizations that have led the Decade of Vaccine Collaboration, with input from many other experts and organizations. A Steering Committee was the driving force behind the development of the GVAP, guiding the consultation process of working groups on Delivery, Global Access, Public & Political Support and Research & Development. The DoV Collaboration Secretariat was responsible for preparing and managing the consultation process in close coordination with the Steering Committee and the Working Groups.

**Leadership Council:** Members of the Leadership Council are: Dr. Seth Berkley, CEO, GAVI Alliance; Dr. Margaret Chan, Director General, WHO; Dr. Christopher Elias, President, Global Development Program, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director, US NIAID; Dr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director, UNICEF; and Ms. Joy Phumaphi, Executive Secretary, African Leaders Malaria Alliance.

**Steering Committee:** The steering committee was co-chaired by Prof. Pedro Alonso, Director, Institute for Global Health of Barcelona and Dr. Ciro de Quadros, Executive Vice President, Sabin Vaccine Institute.

Members of the Steering Committee of the Decade of Vaccines Collaboration include: Dr. T. Jacob John, Professor and Head, Departments of Clinical Microbiology and Virology, Christian Medical College, Vellore, India (Retired); Dr. Zulfiqar Bhutta, Founding Chair, Division of Women and Child Health, Aga Khan University; Dr. Lola Dare, CEO, The Centre for Health Sciences Training, Research and Development; Ms. Helen Evans, Deputy CEO, GAVI Alliance; Dr. Lee Hall, Chief, Parasitology and International Programs Branch, Division of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID); Dr. Lucky Slamet, Deputy for Therapeutic Products, Narcotic, Psychotropic and Addictive Substance Control, National Agency of Drug and Food Control, Indonesia; Dr. Anne Schuchat; Director, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, Centers for Disease Control (CDC); Dr. Gina Tambini, Area Manager, Family and Community Health, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); Dr. Nicole Bates, Senior Program Officer, Global Health Policy and Advocacy, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Dr. Peter A. Singer, Director, Sandra Rotman Centre for Global Health, University Health Network and University of Toronto; Dr. Jean-Marie Okwo-Bele; Director, World Health Organization (WHO) Department of Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals; Dr. Jos Vandelaer, Chief, Immunization, Programme Division, UNICEF; Prof. David Salisbury, Director of Immunization, United Kingdom Department of Health; Dr. Orin Levine, Executive Director, International Vaccine Access Center, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; and Ms. Sandy Wrobel, CEO and Managing Director, Applied Strategies.