

Press release

For immediate release: **26 February 2021**

New partnership to help vaccinate the most vulnerable

UNOPS and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance will work together to strengthen health systems and support vaccination efforts globally

- UNOPS will support Gavi to **strengthen national health systems and support the immunization of children** in hard-to-reach areas, under a new Memorandum of Understanding.
- UNOPS will **support Gavi's overall immunization mission and operations globally**, including in their role as co-lead of the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) initiative.
- UNOPS will focus on **strengthening health infrastructure, logistics and procurement**, key to ensuring successful vaccination programmes.

A new memorandum of understanding (MoU) will see UNOPS - the UN's infrastructure and procurement specialists - support Gavi to strengthen national health systems, improve access to health and support vaccination programmes, particularly in hard-to-reach areas.

Under the MoU - signed on 26 February 2021- UNOPS will support Gavi's immunization mission and operations globally, including in their role as co-lead of COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator.

The agreement is a positive step towards creating the partnerships required to guarantee fair and equitable access to vaccines - including for COVID-19 - for every country in the world.

Speaking on the announcement, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UNOPS, Grete Faremo said:

"Vaccines are key to transforming lives and making the world safer for everyone. Making sure that vaccines - including for COVID-19 - reach the most vulnerable requires better

health systems, supply chains and infrastructure. Partnerships are key to achieving this. We look forward to working together with Gavi to help those most in need.”

The agreement brings UNOPS operational expertise, particularly in challenging environments, to support Gavi’s mission to save lives, reduce poverty and protect the world against the threat of pandemics.

Anuradha Gupta, Deputy CEO of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, said:

“Over the last two decades, we have made enormous progress in boosting vaccination coverage in many of the world’s poorest countries. But millions of children are still missing out on basic vaccines, many of them living in fragile settings.

“In addition, this pandemic is threatening to reverse the years of progress we have made. Therefore, we must double our efforts to maintain focus on routine immunisation as the most sustainable way to improve child health and strengthen health systems.

“That is why we are delighted to partner with UNOPS to help create a healthier and safer future for everyone – including people living on the frontlines of humanitarian crises.”

In particular, UNOPS will focus on health infrastructure, logistics and procurement to help improve the effectiveness and delivery of vaccinations, strengthen health systems and support more robust supply chains in hard-to-reach locations.

ENDS

Notes to the editors:

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About UNOPS

UNOPS mission is to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development. We help the United Nations, governments and other partners to manage projects, and deliver sustainable infrastructure and procurement in an efficient way. Read more: www.unops.org



About Gavi:

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance is a public-private partnership that helps vaccinate half the world's children against some of the world's deadliest diseases. Since its inception in 2000, Gavi has helped to immunise a whole generation – over 822 million children – and prevented more than 14 million deaths, helping to halve child mortality in 73 developing countries. Gavi also plays a key role in improving global health security by supporting health systems as well as funding global stockpiles for Ebola, cholera, meningitis and yellow fever vaccines. After two decades of progress, Gavi is now focused on protecting the next generation and reaching the unvaccinated children still being left behind, employing innovative finance and the latest technology – from drones to biometrics – to save millions more lives, prevent outbreaks before they can spread and help countries on the road to self-sufficiency. Learn more at www.gavi.org and connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

The Vaccine Alliance brings together developing country and donor governments, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, the vaccine industry, technical agencies, civil society, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other private sector partners. View the full list of donor governments and other leading organizations that fund Gavi's work [here](#).