

NEW INTERNATIONAL FINANCE FACILITY FOR IMMUNISATION COULD SAVE 10 MILLION LIVES

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown – with colleagues from France, Spain, Italy and Sweden, Graca Machel and Dr Lee Jong-Wook – today launched a new International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm)

Alongside additional contributions recently announced by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the innovative new initiative will ensure the provision of an additional \$4 billion over the next ten years to tackle some of the deadliest diseases in some of the world's poorest countries. The additional resources could save 5 million children's lives by 2015 and a further 5 million lives thereafter by tackling immunisable diseases.

The additional resources will support the work of the Vaccine Fund and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) to improve access to underused vaccines and speed up the development and introduction of new vaccines in poorer countries.

The new finance facility will use up-front long-term financial commitments from donors to provide additional resources quicker and in a more predictable way. By frontloading resources the facility will allow for 2 million more lives to be saved that would otherwise have been possible. And the more predictable and stable

aid will provide more certainty for manufacturers to invest in new and under-used vaccines and accelerate the reduction of vaccine prices – helping to save a many more lives than would otherwise have been possible.

Speaking at the launch the Chancellor said:

“Today, by matching the capacity of medical advance with the power of long-term finance we are launching an initiative capable of saving ten million lives – sparing millions of families across the world from the avoidable pain of a son or a daughter needlessly dying.”

Graca Machel said:

"GAVI and the Vaccine Fund have shown that immunisation saves children's lives. IFFIm will provide long term predictable funding that is urgently needed to save the lives of millions more. This turns promises into action".

Supporting the new initiative, Bill Gates said:

“The commitments announced today provide a major boost to GAVI’s work to ensure that all children - no matter where they are born - have access to lifesaving vaccines. I commend the U.K., France, Italy, Spain, and Sweden for their generosity, and Gordon Brown for his tireless work to make this announcement possible.”

“The IFFIm will provide major new resources for GAVI to extend the reach of its programs. These funds are urgently needed - it’s unacceptable that each year, 27 million children go without immunizations that are taken for granted in rich countries. The IFFIm is a bold and innovative approach to financing critical global health programs.”

Secretary of State for International Development, Hilary Benn commented:

"Today's launch of the International Finance Facility for Immunisation - IFFIm - will help poor children in the developing world get the vaccines that children in the developed world take for granted."

DETAILS

1. In recent years, immunisation efforts have suffered from a lack of stable, predictable and coordinated cash flows. The new financing mechanism will use long-term, legally binding donor commitments to leverage additional money from international capital markets for immediate use as grants to developing countries to support immunisation programmes.
2. The first disbursement from IFFIm is expected at the end of 2005 or the start of 2006. The IFFIm money will finance two major strategic approaches to reducing the number of deaths among children under five in more than 70 of the world's poorest countries. New resources will be used to invest in the introduction of new and underused vaccines including combination vaccines for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, hepatitis B and Hib. Money will also be targeted towards the strengthening of immunisation delivery systems, including support for increasing routine immunisation coverage in the poorest countries and for conducting mass immunisation campaigns to rapidly reduce mortality from measles and tetanus.
3. The investment is estimated to save the lives of 5 million children under five by 2015, and a further five million adult lives after 2015, in addition to the 1.5 million lives that will be saved if GAVI support continues at the current level of resources.

4. The individual pledges are as follows:
 - United Kingdom has pledged 35% of the total resources required for a \$4 billion IFFIm, which is equivalent to \$130m a year;
 - France has pledged 25%, equivalent to \$100m a year;
 - Italy has pledged 10%, equivalent to \$30m a year;
 - Spain has pledged 3%, equivalent to \$12m a year; and
 - Sweden has made a total pledge of \$27m.

5. The recently announced Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation contribution of \$750m over 10 years to the Vaccine Fund will be provided alongside the resources from Government donors to the IFFIm. These contributions are joined together in a global campaign to deliver immunization, and these funds will be jointly managed to maximize financial efficiency and ease of access for recipient countries.

6. The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) brings together all major stakeholders in global immunisation. These include governments in industrialised and developing countries, UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank, non-governmental organisations, foundations, vaccine manufacturers, and public health and research institutions. The Vaccine Fund was created by GAVI partners to help build and maintain additional financial support for the Alliance.

7. Since its inception in 2000, GAVI has reached more than 78 million children with new and under-used vaccines, and almost 10 million additional children with basic vaccines, preventing more than 1 million deaths in the poorest countries. GAVI has also accelerated introduction of new vaccines and is strengthening vaccine delivery systems.

8. Graca Machel is the chair of the Vaccine Fund board. Dr Lee Jong-Wook is the Director-General of the World Health Organisation and the chair of the GAVI board.

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10. Non-media enquiries should be addressed to the Treasury Correspondence and Enquiry Unit on **020 7270 4558**, or by e-mail to public.enquiries@hm-treasury.gov.uk

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