



AAP applauds ‘historic’ U.S. pledge for global childhood vaccination efforts

June 20, 2024

Melissa Jenco, News Content Editor

Article type: [News](#)

Topics: [Infectious Diseases](#), [International Child Health](#), [Vaccine/Immunization](#)

The AAP is applauding President Joe Biden’s \$1.58 billion pledge over five years for international vaccination efforts led by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and is urging Congress to approve the increased funding.

This the first time the U.S. has pledged five years of support. The AAP has been advocating for a multi-year commitment.

“I’m thrilled to see this historic announcement,” said Heather A. Haq, M.D., M.H.S., FAAP, chair of the AAP Section on Global Health. “It’s an opportunity to show the rest of the world the U.S.’s commitment to advancing child health. This is especially important to generate momentum to get childhood vaccines back on track following the backsliding we saw during the pandemic.”

Gavi is a public-private partnership established in 2000 that has helped immunize over 1 billion children in 78 lower-income countries. The alliance estimates its efforts have saved 17.3 million lives. At a fundraising kickoff event in Paris Thursday, the group announced it is [aiming to raise \\$9 billion](#) for its 2026-’30 efforts to vaccinate 500 million children against 24 diseases. That includes 50 million vaccinations against malaria, for which there are new vaccines.

Gavi CEO Sania Nishtar, M.B.B.S., D.Sc., Ph.D., said she cannot accept that “millions of children still die from vaccine-preventable diseases.”

The fundraising efforts are about “children growing up to reach their full potential, families thriving, communities and nations building for the future,” she said. “And if the price for that is \$9 billion of new pledge for Gavi, then I think it is a small price to pay.”

The AAP and its partners have written several letters to President Biden and his administration, urging increased funding for Gavi. In a May 2024 letter, they called for at least \$1.4 billion over four years.

“Support for Gavi is more crucial now than ever,” the groups wrote. “We are fighting the largest sustained decline in childhood immunization in a generation. Sixty-seven million children missed routine vaccinations between 2019 and 2021.”

The groups said funding would help scale up HPV vaccine delivery and introduce new malaria vaccines, including the R21 vaccine that [secured WHO-prequalification in December](#). Malaria caused an estimated 580,000 deaths in Africa in 2022, primarily among children under age 5 years.

First lady Jill Biden, Ed.D., announced President Biden’s pledge of \$1.58 billion over five years in a video message during Thursday’s event and encouraged other countries and private partners to contribute as well.

“It will take all of us to make sure no more families have to lose loved ones to diseases we know how to prevent and treat, to give the world’s children the todays and tomorrows they deserve so we can keep building the future they want and need,” Dr. Biden said.

Thursday’s fundraising kickoff event also included the launch of the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator (AVMA), an effort to support sustainable vaccine manufacturing in Africa. Jean Kaseya, a Congolese medical doctor and director-general of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, said the initiative is about equity.

“We are not just talking about money. We are talking about people,” he said. “We are talking about these people who believe when they faced COVID they were left behind. Today with AVMA, there is an opportunity for them to start to dream, to see Africa manufacturing our own vaccines.”