## Addressing the environmental impact of GAVI-supported immunisation activities

### GAVI Secretariat environmental statement

Vaccines are cost-effective, offer lifelong protection and are fundamental to development. In supporting the roll out of large scale immunisation programmes, the GAVI Alliance also needs to prioritise the importance of minimising adverse environmental impact of the activities it funds.

**Issue**:
When there is an absence of appropriate environmental mitigation mechanisms, such as improper disposal of hazardous medical waste or expired stock, it may create a variety of human and environmental risks. Reuse and accidental contact with infected sharps exposes health-care workers and the community to pathogens. Incineration of medical waste (whether through improperly managed incinerators or open burning) can result in incomplete waste destruction, inappropriate ash disposal and dioxins emissions.

**The GAVI Alliance's approach to environmental impact**:
The GAVI Alliance works with partner countries through WHO and UNICEF, to facilitate the roll-out of immunisation programmes at country-level. This partnership encourages countries and our technical partners to implement immunisation safety and waste management practices within the broader health system plans to address safety.

**GAVI procedures**:
GAVI will continue to support and monitor countries' efforts to develop and implement health care waste management safety policies and plans through the Annual Progress Report (APR). Specific indicators will be included in the future HSFP grant monitoring as recommended by the Independent Review Committee (IRC).

We are keen to demonstrate our social responsibility to the environment. As the GAVI Secretariat strives to build on the current progress, it commits to continued improvement of its own procedures and the successful partnership and cooperation of the Alliance.