

# Civil Society: partnering for impact

Ensuring the right to health with the power of vaccines is at the heart of the GAVI Alliance’s partnership with civil society

From delivering vaccines to the hardest to reach in some of the world’s poorest countries, to influencing global health and development policies, civil society organisations (CSOs) help to advance GAVI’s vision of a world where vaccines are available to all.

## A history of engagement

CSOs have a long history of involvement in public health and have proven to be successful in finding innovative ways to reach marginalised and hard to reach populations, particularly where government delivery channels are weak or non-existent.

CSOs comprise more than just non-governmental organisations; they include advocacy organisations, a range of professional and community associations, faith-based organisations and academia.



## A vibrant constituency

Through their active participation in GAVI’s governance, CSOs provide input to ensure that the Alliance’s programmes and policies are robust. CSOs have a seat on the GAVI Alliance Board and participate in its committees and task teams.

The GAVI CSO Constituency, under the leadership of the CSO Board member and the guidance of a 20-member Steering Committee, represents a diverse constituency of over 200 CSOs supporting the Alliance’s mission.



**For civil society organisations fighting for children’s right to health, the central issue is equity – and this is vital when it comes to immunisation.**

Jasmine Whitbread,  
CEO, Save the Children International

## A strong partnership

As a public private partnership, GAVI represents the sum of its partners’ individual strengths. As an Alliance member, civil society plays an important role in bridging the gap between communities and governments or global health actors such as GAVI, by advocating on behalf of communities and the issues that affect them.

Civil society is important in:

- strengthening health systems and advancing health equity;
- influencing national health policy formulation and global health and aid policy debates;
- supporting resource mobilisation for child health and sustainability of national immunisation programmes; and,
- ensuring transparency and accountability.

**Faith-based organisations have a long history of impact as advocates for child health and immunisation. For generations, we have worked to improve health in remote communities by providing health education and immunisation services.**

Fred Riley,  
Manager, Special Services Division, LDS Charities

### GAVI support for CSOs

Between 2007 and 2010, GAVI invested US\$ 30 million as a pilot programme of support to CSOs. Current CSO support includes:

- enhancing CSO engagement in national health sector planning and policy processes;
- strengthening involvement of CSOs in the implementation of health system strengthening support, presently through the Health Systems Funding Platform (HSFP); and, in rare and exceptional circumstances, providing direct support to CSOs on a country-by-country basis.

## AFGHANISTAN

### Civil society drives health improvements



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indicators have improved rapidly over the past decade. Immunisation coverage increased from 24% in 2000 to 66% in 2010. During the same period, child mortality dropped by over 10%.

“We would never have succeeded in making this progress unless we had close collaboration between the Afghan Government, the civil societies and communities. By working with CSOs at grass-root level, our work is owned by the people and sustained by the people,” says Afghanistan’s Minister of Public Health, Dr Suraya Dalil.

As is the case in many fragile states, Afghanistan’s civil society organisations do much of the work of providing basic health services to the population.

Despite the fact that Afghanistan is still one of the world’s poorest countries, some of its basic health

### Immunisation coverage in Afghanistan



Source: WHO/UNICEF, 2011

**Vaccination is an essential cornerstone for child health and development. So by investing in vaccination, we invest in development.**

Dr. Guelaye Sall  
Paediatrician, Senegal

### Links:

<http://www.gavialliance.org/about/partners/cso/>  
<http://www.gavicoconstituency.org>

Information current as of November 2012



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