



GLOBAL IMMUNIZATION NEWS

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28 January 2008

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

GLOBAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VACCINE SAFETY

28/01/08 from Alison Brunier, WHO/HQ:

17TH Meeting of the Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety, 12–13 December 2007

The Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety (GACVS), an expert clinical and scientific advisory body established in 1999 to respond, independently from WHO, promptly, efficiently, and with scientific rigour to vaccine safety issues of potential global importance, held its seventeenth meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, on 12-13 December 2007. Issues discussed were: Guillain-Barré Syndrome and vaccination; the safety of immunization for immunocompromised individuals; yellow fever vaccine safety; hepatitis B vaccination and rheumatoid arthritis; the safety of the live 14-14-2 Japanese encephalitis vaccine; the safety of meningococcal B vaccines; and rotavirus vaccines and Kawasaki disease.

Information on several of the topics discussed follows.

Hepatitis B vaccination and rheumatoid arthritis

The Committee considered the potential association between hepatitis B vaccination and rheumatoid arthritis. Prior to previous discussions on this topic held in June 2006, the Committee had commissioned a comprehensive literature review. At this meeting, the Committee reviewed more recent information, particularly on genetic issues.

The Committee concluded, based on review of the limited data available, that there was no convincing evidence to support an association between hepatitis B vaccination and rheumatoid arthritis. The topic will be considered further if new findings become available.

Safety of meningococcal B vaccines

The Committee was presented with safety data relating to use of outer membrane vesicle-based meningococcal B vaccines in Cuba, France, New Zealand and Norway.

The Committee noted that several new meningococcal vaccines were being developed, at least one of which is closely related to the vaccine used in New Zealand. While affirming the importance of putting in place carefully-considered safety studies of these new vaccines, the Committee was reassured by the absence of evidence of an excess of serious adverse events following vaccination with existing meningococcal B vaccines.

Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) and vaccination

GBS has occasionally been observed in temporal association with vaccination. This association has been considered as causal in GBS cases following administration of the vaccine against Swine influenza and vaccines against rabies which have been derived from rabbit brains and other nervous tissues. Cases of GBS have also been reported in temporal association with other vaccines, including seasonal influenza, tetanus, meningococcal conjugate and diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccines. Thus far a causal relationship has not been established, other than for Swine influenza vaccine and the aforementioned rabies vaccines.

GACVS recommended large-scale studies of the incidence of GBS before and after immunization. All cases would need to be carefully ascertained and documented. Improved understanding of the pathogenesis of all forms of GBS will help in the determination of possible associations between GBS and immunization. Such studies would be particularly helpful for the investigation of such neurological adverse events following immunization with pandemic or pre-pandemic influenza vaccines.

The report of the meeting was published in the WHO Weekly Epidemiological Record on 25 January and has been posted on the GACVS web site at http://www.who.int/vaccine_safety/en/

GLOBAL IMMUNIZATION MEETING

28/01/08 from Beth Mathews, WHO/HQ: WHO is organizing the third Global Immunization Meeting in collaboration with UNICEF and the GAVI Secretariat. The GIM will be held at the Centre Internationale De Conférences Genève (CICG) from 19-21 February 2008.

The objectives of the meeting are to:

- Provide WHO and UNICEF global and regional staff, as well as immunization partner representatives, with technical updates focusing on the programmatic issues related to global immunization efforts;
- Update on progress of the Global Immunization Vision and Strategy (GIVS) and the global immunization and mortality reduction goals; and
- Share the policy decisions from SAGE and the recommendations from the Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety.

POLIO

28/01/08 from Oliver Rosenbauer, WHO/HQ:

More than 400 million children vaccinated in 2007

Most dangerous serotype beaten back, as intensified eradication effort zeros in on remaining reservoirs

More than 400 million children under the age of five were vaccinated multiple times against polio in 2007 in 27 countries, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative announced in January. In total, more than 2.2 billion doses of oral polio vaccine (OPV) were administered during 164 vaccination campaigns, primarily in the remaining endemic countries (Afghanistan, India, Nigeria and Pakistan), in re-infected countries and in high-risk areas.

Notably, more than half of the administered doses were monovalent oral polio vaccine type 1 (mOPV1), as part of strategic efforts to prioritize eradication of this serotype of poliovirus. Type 1 is widely regarded as the more dangerous of the two remaining serotypes (the other being type 3), due to its significantly higher paralytic attack rate and propensity for geographic spread. Thanks to this tactic of targeting type 1, 2007 is set to be the year with the lowest-ever recorded incidence of type 1 polio, with a decrease of 84% of type 1 cases compared with 2006. Final data will be available by March 2008.

Large areas of the remaining endemic countries now appear to be free of this serotype, including the western end of Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state and an area in which the virus has been more entrenched than anywhere else on earth.

Given this progress, the Advisory Committee on Poliomyelitis Eradication - the independent body providing strategic guidance to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative - endorsed continuing these intensified eradication efforts in 2008-2009. This will mean a significant ramping-up of both the quantity and quality of supplementary immunization activities in the remaining endemic areas in an bid to rapidly stop polio once and for all.

Full financing of the intensified phase is critical, as the increased activities come with significant budgetary implications. For 2008-2009, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative faces a global funding gap of US\$525 million. US\$175 million of this amount is needed for 2008. A full budget has now been published in the updated [Financial Resource Requirements document](http://www.polioeradication.org/fundingbackground.asp), available at www.polioeradication.org/fundingbackground.asp

YELLOW FEVER

28/01/08 from Fenella Avokey, WHO/Burkina Faso:

Risk Assessment

Data collection for the evaluation of yellow fever epidemic risk has been completed in Cameroon, Benin and Guinea, and is under way in all the six health zones in Nigeria. A risk analysis meeting at which the results obtained from the modelling exercise will be presented and validated will take place in Cameroon on 31 January 2008.

Preventive Campaigns

Mali is in the process of finalizing its operational plan for organizing a preventive campaign in 33 districts. The yellow fever vaccines and injection materials donated by GAVI have already been received in the country. Though definitive dates have not yet been announced, the campaign is planned for the first half of this year.

GAVI-RELATED INFORMATION

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

28/01/08 from the GAVI Alliance: The CSO proposal from DR Congo has been approved, and the Secretariat has received CSO proposals from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Country visits to Afghanistan and

Pakistan will take place in late January - early February 2008. Ghana is also planned to be visited in early February.

These visits aim to ensure partners and countries are aware of the CSO guidelines and funding opportunities, as well as strengthening coordination and representation of Civil Society Organizations at country level.

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING

28/01/08 from the GAVI Alliance: A GAVI HSS "Broad Forum" meeting was held from 8-9 January 2008 to share country perspectives on the HSS opportunity so far, and help guide HSS design throughout 2008. The meeting also provided the opportunity to hear from 11 bilateral donors, the EU and various other health partnerships involved with linking individual programme needs with integrated service delivery. Various discussions highlighted the need to take an integrated approach with links to the newly evolving multi-agency International Health Partnership. A report will be available shortly.

This meeting was followed by a GAVI HSS Task Team meeting which highlighted the workload for 2008 activities which will begin to prioritize supporting approved countries to monitor and implement their proposals.

REVIEW PROCESS

Next Review Dates:

PROPOSAL REVIEWS - ISS, INS, New Vaccines & Measles 2nd Dose:

First Review: The deadline for receiving applications is **8 February 2008**. The applications will be reviewed from **10-19 March 2008**.

Second Review: The deadline for receiving applications is **2 May 2008**. The applications will be reviewed from **6-15 June 2008**.

Third Review: The deadline for receiving applications is **25 September 2008**. The applications will be reviewed from **23-31 October 2008**.

HSS REVIEWS

First Review: The deadline for receiving applications is **7 March 2008**. The applications will be reviewed from **14-26 April 2008**.

Second Review: The deadline for receiving applications is **12 September 2008**. The applications will be reviewed from **3-15 October 2008**.

MONITORING REVIEW

The deadline for receiving annual progress reports is **15 May 2008**. The annual progress reports will be reviewed from **16-30 June 2008**.

ROTAVIRUS

28/01/08 from the GAVI Alliance:

Introduction of Rotavirus in countries of the European Region - For countries of the European region, the final report "Introduction of Rotavirus Vaccine with Support from the GAVI Alliance - Information to Assist the National Decision-Making and Application Process for countries of the European Region" is now available on the GAVI website: <http://www.gavialliance.org/support/how/guidelines/index.php>

COUNTRY INFORMATION¹ BY REGION

EAST & SOUTH AFRICA

TANZANIA

28/01/08 from Mary Kitambi, MoH Tanzania: A **vaccine management assessment** was conducted from 4-7 December 2007. The preliminary results indicated that Tanzania scores 76%.

EUROPEAN REGION

REGIONAL INFORMATION

28/01/08 from WHO/EURO:

High-level meeting on setting the immunization agenda through advocacy and communication in London

The WHO Regional Office for Europe and the Department of Health in the United Kingdom co-organized a high-level expert meeting on immunization, advocacy and communication in London on 16-17 January 2008. Representatives of sixteen western European countries participated and engaged in active discussions about key barriers to immunization, including the general public's understanding and concerns about the risks and benefits of vaccination.

UK's Chief medical Officer Sir Liam Donaldson opened the meeting with a speech, after which speakers from countries, WHO, UNICEF and ECDC highlighted country and regional experience, achievements and challenges in communication and advocacy for immunization, including dealing with anti-vaccination trends, new challenges such as the introduction of HPV vaccination, and routine communication planning to build public confidence. On the second day journalists gave their perspective on how they see their role in advocacy and communication for immunization and on how better cooperation could be achieved.

A joint statement was issued on how to improve advocacy and communication for immunization in order to achieve and maintain trust in immunization.

Participating countries included: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Also a representative of the European Commission was present.

Moldova and Tajikistan proposals to GAVI selected as best practices

Proposals to GAVI from two countries of the WHO European Region have been selected by the Independent Review Committee (IRC) as the best practices from the new proposals reviewed in October 2007. The proposal from **Moldova** and **Tajikistan** were selected as the best practices for New Vaccines Support (NVS) and Comprehensive Multi Year Plan (cMYP).

The Government of **Moldova** has requested GAVI support to introduce *Haemophilus influenzae* type b vaccine into its routine immunization schedule in the form of DPT-Hib (tetraivalent vaccine). Of all the proposals submitted for vaccines during this round, Moldova was the most comprehensive and well developed.

Moldova's request for Hib vaccine was accompanied by a strong comprehensive multi-year plan for immunization (cMYP), which provides a straight-forward assessment of the strength and weaknesses of system, various costing scenarios for Hib introduction, and a detailed appraisal of national and sub-national cold chain capacity. The cost-effectiveness study conducted before the decision was made to introduce the Hib vaccine, demonstrated the economical benefit because of the reduction in morbidity and mortality plus the reduction in the total expenditure by the use of a tetraivalent (DPT-Hib) as opposed to monovalent (Hib vaccine).

Tajikistan's proposal demonstrated the positive impact that GAVI's comprehensive MYP for immunization has had on budgeting for vaccines. The cMYP in Tajikistan provided not only a holistic framework activities and expenditures, but also became a powerful advocacy tool to lobby the central government for significantly increased funding.

¹ HSS= Health Systems Strengthening;
ICP = Inter Country Programme;
ISS = Immunization Services Support;
INS = Injection Safety Support;
NVS = New Vaccine Support;
DQA = Data Quality Audit;
DQS = Data Quality Self Assessment;
FSP = Financial Sustainability Plan;
RED = Reach Every District;
cMYP = Fully costed multi-year plan;

LIST OF MEETINGS & KEY EVENTS RELATED TO IMMUNIZATION

Regional Meetings & Key Events Related to Immunization: January 2008 onwards					
Title of Meeting	Start	Finish	Location	Responsible Partner	Region
Feb-08					
GAVI Regional Working Group for the Western Pacific Region	Feb	Feb	tbd	WPRO	WPR
Workshop on "Improving Vaccination Coverage in hard-to-reach populations in eastern Europe	11-Feb	12-Feb	Sofia, Bulgaria	EURO & ECDC	EUR
CCEE Measles/Rubella Laboratory Network Meeting	19-Feb	21-Feb	Cyprus	EURO	EUR
Global Immunization Meeting	19-Feb	21-Feb	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
PAHO Sub-Regional Meeting on Pneumococcus with Colombia and Peru	28-Feb	29 Feb	Colombia	PAHO	PAHO
Mar-08					
Russian Federation Rubella Programme Meeting	March	March	Moscow, Russian Federation	EURO	EUR
WHO Regional Meeting on HPV Vaccine: Towards Comprehensive Cancer Control: HPV Vaccine Policy and Planning Meeting for the Region of the Americas	03-Mar	07-Mar	Brazil	PAHO	PAHO
EPI Managers' Meeting for the West African Block	03-Mar	07-Mar	Ouagadougou	AFRO (W&C)	AFR
GAVI West & Central African Sub-Regional Working Group Meeting	07-Mar	08-Mar	Ouagadougou	AFRO (W&C)	AFR
GAVI Independent Review Committee Meeting for ISS, INS, NVS and Measles 2nd Dose proposals (Deadline: 8 February 2008)	10-Mar	19-Mar	Geneva	GAVI	Specific
EMRO MNT Elimination Inter-Country Meeting	11-Mar	13-Mar	Sana'a, Yemen	EMRO	EMR
EPI Managers' Meeting for the Central African Block	17-Mar	21-Mar	Libreville	AFRO (W&C)	AFR
EMRO Meeting of Policy-Makers & Programme Managers on strengthening cervical cancer prevention through HPV vaccine reduction	25-Mar	27-Mar	Morocco	EMRO	EMR
WPRO Training Course on New Vaccines	25-Mar	27-Mar	Manila, Philippines	WPRO	WPR
East & South African EPI Managers' Meeting	27-Mar	29-Mar	Tanzania	AFRO (E&S)	AFR
Apr-08					
Pre-GAVI Application workshop for West & Central African countries	07-Apr	11-Apr	tbd	AFRO (W&C)	AFR

Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) meeting	08-Apr	10-Apr	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
GAVI Independent Review Committee Meeting for HSS proposals (Deadline: 7 March 2008)	14-Apr	26-Apr	Geneva	GAVI	Specific
GAVI Eastern Mediterranean Regional Working Group Core Meeting	15-Apr	16-Apr	Cairo, Egypt	EMRO	EMR
Immunization Week in the Americas	19-Apr	26-Apr	Region-Wide	PAHO	PAHO
European Immunization Week	21-Apr	27-Apr	Region-Wide	WHO/EURO	EUR
May-08					
EMRO 23rd RTAG Meeting	04-May	08-May	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	EMRO	EMR
GAVI South East Asian Regional Working Group Meeting	12-May	12-May	Katmandu	SEARO	SEAR
SEAR EPI Program Manager and ITAG Meeting	12-May	15-May	Katmandu	SEARO	SEAR
Jun-08					
GAVI Independent Review Committee Meeting for ISS, INS, NVS and Measles 2nd Dose proposals (Deadline: 2 May 2008)	06-Jun	15-Jun	Geneva	GAVI	Specific
EMRO 25th Inter-Country EPI Managers Meeting	14-Jun	18-Jun	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	EMRO	EMR
GAVI Monitoring Review (Deadline: 15 May 2008)	16-Jun	30-Jun	Geneva	GAVI	Specific
New and Under-Utilized Vaccines Implementation Meeting	23-Jun	25-Jun	Geneva	WHO	Global
WPRO Pacific Immunization Strengthening Meeting	June	June	tbd	WPRO	WPR
Global Vaccine Research Forum 2008	29-Jun	02-Jul	Paris	WHO	Global
Jul-08					
WPRO Regional Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting	July	July	tbd	WPRO	WPR
Aug-08					
PAHO Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on Vaccine-Preventable Diseases	18-Aug	21-Aug	tbd	PAHO	PAHO
Sep-08					
GAVI South East Asian Regional Working Group Meeting	22-Sep	23-Sep	Bhutan	SEARO	SEAR
Oct-08					
PneumoADIP and Hib Initiative Surveillance Networks Investigators	4Q 2008	4Q 2008	tbd	WHO/HQ	Global
GAVI Independent Review Committee Meeting for HSS proposals (Deadline: 12 September 2008)	03-Oct	15-Oct	Geneva	GAVI	Specific
EMRO Measles Inter-Country Meeting for Priority Countries (GAVI Eligible, Iraq and Lebanon)	21-Oct	23-Oct	Dubai, UAE	EMRO	EMR

GAVI Independent Review Committee Meeting for ISS, INS, NVS and Measles 2nd Dose proposals (Deadline: 25 September 2008)	23-Oct	31-Oct	Geneva	GAVI	Specific
EMRO Measles Inter-Country Meeting for Remaining Countries	26-Oct	28-Oct	Dubai, UAE	EMRO	EMR
EMRO 24th RTAG Meeting	29-Oct	29-Oct	Dubai, UAE	EMRO	EMR
Nov-08					
Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) meeting	03-Nov	05-Nov	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
EMRO Bacterial Meningitis and Pneumococcal Regional Surveillance Networks Follow-Up meeting	11-Nov	13-Nov	Amman, Jordan	EMRO	EMR
GAVI Eastern Mediterranean Regional Working Group Meeting	18-Nov	20-Nov	Cairo, Egypt	EMRO	EMR
Dec-08					
EMRO Rotavirus Regional Surveillance Network Follow-Up Meeting	16-Dec	18-Dec	Morocco	EMRO	EMR
2009 Meetings					
Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) meeting	07-Apr	09-Apr	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
PAHO Sub-Regional Meeting of the Central American Region, Mexico and the Spanish Caribbean on Vaccine Preventable Diseases	08-Jun	11-Jun	tbd	PAHO	PAHO
PAHO Sub-Regional Meeting of the Andean and Southern Cone Regions on Vaccine Preventable Diseases	10-Aug	13-Aug	tbd	PAHO	PAHO
Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) meeting	27-Oct	29-Oct	Geneva	WHO/HQ	Global
Meeting of the Caribbean Expanded Program on Immunization Managers	16-Nov	20-Nov	tbd	PAHO	PAHO

LINKS RELEVANT TO IMMUNIZATION

GLOBAL WEBSITES

Department of Immunization, Vaccines & Biologicals, World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/immunization/en/>

WHO New Vaccines Hib website

<http://www.who.int/nuvi/hib/>

GAVI Alliance Website

<http://www.gavialliance.org/>

IMMUNIZATIONbasics (JSI)

www.immunizationbasics.jsi.com

PATH Vaccine Resource Library

<http://www.path.org/vaccineresources>

UNICEF Supply Division Website

http://www.unicef.org/supply/index_immunization.html

UNICEF Supply Division Product Menu for GAVI Vaccines

http://www.unicef.org/supply/files/Product_Menu_2007.PDF

Hib Initiative Website

<http://www.hibaction.org/>

Japanese Encephalitis Resources

http://www.path.org/vaccineresources/japanese_encephalitis-resources.php

Malaria Vaccine Initiative

<http://www.malariavaccine.org>

Meningitis Vaccine Project

<http://www.meningvax.org/index.htm>

PneumoADIP

www.preventpneumo.org/

RotaADIP

<http://www.rotavirusvaccine.org/>

RHO Cervical Cancer (HPV Vaccine)

<http://www.rho.org>

WHO/ICO Information Center on HPV and Cervical Cancer

<http://www.who.int/hpvcentre/en/>

SIGN Updates

www.who.int/entity/injection_safety/sign/en/

Technet

<http://www.technet21.org/>

REGIONAL WEBSITES

New Vaccines in AFRO

<http://www.afro.who.int/newvaccines/>

PAHO's website for Immunization

<http://www.paho.org/english/ad/fch/im/Vaccines.htm>

Vaccine Preventable Diseases in EURO

<http://www.euro.who.int/vaccine/>

New Vaccines in SEARO

<http://www.searo.who.int/en/section1226.asp>

Immunization in WPRO

http://www.wpro.who.int/health_topics/immunization/

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