GSK and Save the Children renew award-winning partnership, with focus on ‘zero dose’ children who have never received a vaccine

PUBLISHED SEP 14, 2023
BY GSK

For media and investors only

- GSK and Save the Children renew their 10-year partnership for a further five years

- Building on learnings over the last decade, the two organisations will now focus their partnership on reducing the number of children who have never received a vaccine

- Alongside two programmes in Ethiopia and Nigeria, a new innovation incubator will be launched to pilot cutting-edge solutions to help more children receive their vaccinations

GSK and Save the Children have announced today that they are renewing their award-winning partnership for a further five years. GSK will invest £15 million in the partnership with Save the Children and they will work together to increase child vaccination rates, with a focus on reducing the number of ‘zero dose’ children in Ethiopia and Nigeria. Featured prominently in Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance's Phase 5 strategy and World Health Organization's Immunization Agenda 2030, the 'zero dose' concept refers to children who have never received any routine vaccinations. Using their combined expertise and 10 years of experience working together, GSK and Save the Children will develop, pilot and implement tailored approaches to reach zero dose children in diverse settings.

The two organisations first came together in 2013, sharing expertise, resources, reach and influence to tackle some of the leading causes of childhood deaths in lower income countries. To date, they have reached more than 3.5 million children with essential healthcare, trained and equipped more than 39,000 health workers in the most

remote and marginalised communities, and advocated at country and global level for the incorporation of stronger policies to protect children's health.

The next phase of this partnership will focus on one of the most pressing challenges in child health: zero dose children. Overstretched health systems and lockdown measures during the COVID-19 pandemic have triggered the biggest global decline in routine immunisation for 30 years, causing diseases like polio, measles and cholera to appear in places where they haven't been seen for decades. Nowhere has this been felt more starkly than in Africa. The continent has the highest number of zero dose children in the world: 8.7 million children. More than a third of these children live in Nigeria and Ethiopia, where the combined impacts of the pandemic, poverty, climate change, instability and conflict are disrupting vaccination campaigns.

Dr. Lia Tadesse, Minister of Health of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia said:

> Drastically reducing the number of children who have never had a vaccination is essential to both national and global development. The Ethiopian government remains committed to an ambitious target of reducing the number of 'zero dose' children throughout our country by 50% by 2025. None of this is possible without global partnership and we look forward to working with GSK and Save the Children in this effort. With their expertise in health, immunisation, and supply chain, we can break down the barriers that prevent children in our most vulnerable communities from being fully vaccinated.

The organisations will work together to develop two world-class programmes in Nigeria and Ethiopia, to help more children get the vaccinations they need to help stay healthy. Led by communities and working with local health centres, government and other partners, they'll develop, pilot and implement effective approaches to:

- Improve the quality of vaccination services, making sure they can keep running even in a crisis – whether that's training local health workers, or providing solar refrigerators to keep vaccines cold on their journey

- Make sure vaccination services are more inclusive and can be

accessed by all children – using data to track which communities might be missing out on vaccines and helping to reduce the time families spend travelling to access their children's vaccines

- Work with 'missed communities' – where there are many zero dose children – to raise awareness of the importance of vaccinations and debunk misinformation

- Collaborate with government, community groups and national and global NGOs, for more coordinated, comprehensive and effective vaccination campaigns.

Xavier Joubert, Save the Children's Country Director in Ethiopia said:

> No child should die from a vaccine preventable disease. Yet the number of cases and the mortality rate from such diseases, like cholera and measles, are on the rise in Ethiopia and there is an urgent need to address the barriers stopping children from being able to access routine immunisation. We're delighted to announce this new funding and the opportunity to drive change through the next phase of Save the Children and GSK's partnership. The timing could not be more apt as world leaders meet at the UN General Assembly to discuss Universal Health Coverage. This issue must be high on the agenda.

GSK and Save the Children will also launch an innovation incubator, through which they will work with community-based organisations, national NGOs, local research teams, social enterprises and tech companies to pilot cutting-edge solutions to help more children receive their vaccinations. The most promising approaches will receive the opportunity to increase their impact through financial and technical support and pilot their innovations in a live setting.

Dr Thomas Breuer, Chief Global Health Officer, GSK said: "Vaccines are some of the most impactful health interventions in existence, but many families cannot access them to benefit from the protection they provide. Working with Save the Children, we can help more children stay healthy and help more parents protect their children from preventable diseases. At GSK, we're pleased to be renewing our commitment, building on a decade of partnership that has had a significant impact on improving health outcomes for millions of the most vulnerable children."

The partnership will conduct robust research to show why and how solutions work, so others can scale up or replicate successful interventions. Working with national and global academic partners, GSK and Save the Children will share knowledge to help fill evidence gaps and catalyse global efforts to increase vaccinations and reduce the burden of infectious disease.

Find out more at: GSK x Save The Children (gsk-savethechildren.com)

GSK is a global biopharma company with a purpose to unite science, technology, and talent to get ahead of disease together. Find out more at gsk.com/company.

Save the Children exists to help every child get the chance of a future they deserve. In more than 100 countries, including the UK, we make sure children stay safe, healthy and learning – finding new ways to reach children who need us most. For a century, we've stood up for children's rights and made sure their voices are heard. With children, for children, we change the future for good.

For more information visit www.savethechildren.org.uk

Press release distributed by Wire Association on behalf of GSK, on Sep 14, 2023. For more information subscribe and follow us.

Media Assets

Embedded Media

Visit the online press release to interact with the embedded media.

https://wireassociation.eu/newsroom/gsk/releases/en/gsk-and-save-the-children-renew-award-winning-partnership-with-focus-on-zero-dose-children-who-have-never-received-a-vaccine-1744

GSK

Newsroom: https://wireassociation.eu/newsroom/gsk
Website: https://www.gsk.com/
Primary Email: corporate.media@gsk.com

Social Media

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/GSK
Twitter - http://twitter.com/GSK
Youtube - http://www.youtube.com/GSK
Linkedin - http://www.linkedin.com/company/glaxosmithkline
Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/gsk/