30 April 2020

The Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600

cc. Senator the Hon. Ms Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women
The Hon. Mr Alex Hawke MP, Minister for International Development and the Pacific
The Hon. Mr Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health

Dear Prime Minister,

Re: Joint letter calling for an increase in Australia’s contribution to Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance

We, the undersigned concerned Australian health and medical bodies, not-for-profit organisations, research institutions and civil society coalitions welcome Australia’s ongoing commitment to Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance (Gavi).

Since its creation in 2000, Gavi has helped to vaccinate more than 760 million children globally, 44% of them (340 million) in our region. With investments from a range of donors (including Australia) and co-financing from implementing countries themselves, in that time Gavi has prevented an estimated 13 million deaths.

Gavi:
- supports routine immunisation programmes and prevention campaigns for 17 vaccines – including against diarrhoea, measles, pneumonia, polio and tetanus;
- works in 73 low-income countries, 16 of which are in the Indo-Pacific;
- assists countries to strengthen their health systems and thereby contributes to a healthier, safer and more secure region. The current COVID-19 outbreak highlights the critical importance of stronger health systems in all countries for containing disease outbreak. The Gavi Board has recently agreed that countries receiving Gavi’s health system support can immediately reallocate up to 10% of their grant to respond to the COVID-19 threat;
- has made it possible for young women in low-income countries to receive the HPV vaccine, thus protecting the next generation of women from cervical cancer;
- shapes vaccine markets leading to significantly lower prices by aggregating demand, guaranteeing payment and negotiating long-term contracts with pharmaceutical companies;
- supports emergency stockpiles including for cholera which are then available immediately in outbreak situations (e.g. Cox’s Bazar in Bangladesh) in the quantities needed;
- creates markets – for example, by guaranteeing purchase of the Ebola vaccine while it was under development and then building a stockpile. This is a role the Gavi Board have agreed Gavi could also play in the development of a COVID-19 vaccine.

In June 2020, as it does every five years, Gavi will once again be seeking to mobilise the resources it needs from donors, implementing countries and vaccine manufacturers to support its work for the period 2021-2025. The target for this ‘replenishment’ is commitments totalling US$7.4 billion. With these funds Gavi aims to reach a further 300 million children and save an additional 7-8 million lives.

In 2015 Australia pledged $250 million to Gavi for the years 2016-2020. For the forthcoming replenishment we, the undersigned, are seeking an Australian pledge of $300 million.

Australia’s future championing of, and financial support for, Gavi’s work sends a strong message about our commitment to improving the lives of children in our region through better health. For every dollar we invest in Gavi, it spends $5 in the Indo-Pacific. This kind of support aligns closely with the Australian Government’s foreign policy objectives, including those of the Indo-Pacific Health Security Initiative.
Countries have already begun pledging: since the beginning of 2020 Germany has committed €600 million over the five-year period, the United States has pledged US$1.16 billion for the period 2020-2023 and yesterday the UK announced £1.65 billion in support for Gavi over the next five years.

We therefore call on the Australian Government to commit $300 million to Gavi’s third replenishment and contribute to saving the lives of an additional 7-8 million children globally.

If you have any questions or require any further information please feel free to contact Negaya Chorley (CEO, RESULTS Australia) via negaya.chorley@results.org.au.

Yours sincerely,

Signed on behalf of the following organisations:

Negaya Chorley, Chief Executive Officer
RESULTS International (Australia)

Martin Laverty, Secretary General
Australian Medical Association

Paul Ronalds, Chief Executive Officer
Save the Children Australia

Sarah Meredith, Country Director
Global Citizen Australia

Tim Costello AO, Executive Director
Micah Australia

Greg Hughes, Chairperson
Immunisation Foundation of Australia

Professor Anthony Kelleher, Director
Kirby Institute

Professor Ben Marais, Coordinator
Sydney Global Child Health Network