Statement by WHO Director-General, Dr Margaret Chan

21 September 2015 - The World Health Organization welcomes the appointment of the Chair-elect of the Board of **Gavi**, the **Vaccine Alliance**, **Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**. She will take up the position of
Chair from January 2016
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Dr Okonjo-Iweala is a renowned development economist and former Nigerian Finance Minister. She brings more than 33 years of development and financial expertise to the Gavi Board at a critical period for immunization in developing countries.

Earlier this year, WHO warned that vaccines are not being delivered equitably or reliably and that only 1 out of the 6 key vaccination targets for 2015 is currently on track – the introduction of under-utilized vaccines, a target to which Gavi has contributed significantly.

In taking up the position of Board Chair, Dr Okonjo-Iweala will succeed Dagfinn Høybråten, a former Norwegian Minister of Health and current Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers. She will also work closely with Dr Flavia Bustreo, WHO Assistant Director-General for Family, Women's and Children's Health, who is Vice Chair of Gavi.

Since 2000, Gavi has supported the immunization of more than half a billion additional children, leading to seven million future deaths being averted.

WHO is one of the founding members of Gavi, a public-private partnership formed in 2000, to address global inequities in access to and coverage of available lifesaving vaccines. Over the next 5 years, WHO will continue to lead collective efforts to achieve and sustain universal vaccination coverage as outlined in the Decade of Vaccines Global Vaccine Action Plan. WHO plays a critical role providing global recommendations on immunization, ensuring that vaccines are safe and of assured quality, and providing support to countries to implement immunization

programmes.

Related links

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala appointed Chair-elect of Gavi Board

Decade of Vaccines Global Vaccine Action Plan

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