

# International Coordination Group on Vaccine Provision for Cholera

**Report of the Annual Meeting** 

Geneva

19 September 2018

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## List of abbreviations

AFRO WHO Regional Office for Africa

CFR Case fatality rate

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

GTFCC Global Task Force on Cholera Control

ICG International Coordinating Group

MSF Médecins sans Frontières

OCV Oral cholera vaccine

SD Supply Division of UNICEF

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

WaSH Water, sanitation and hygiene

WHO World Health Organization

# **Executive summary**

The meeting of the International Coordinating Group (ICG) on Vaccine Provision for Cholera was held on 19 September 2018 in Geneva as part of three days of back-to-back meetings from 18–20 September. The aims of the meeting were for partners and stakeholders to: review relevant epidemic response activities in 2017 and 2018, including lessons learned in terms of campaign implementation; discuss the anticipated demand for OCV and stockpile size for the coming years; and exchange information with the extended group of ICG partners and stakeholders, including vaccine manufacturers.

After the opening remarks, participants were updated on the epidemiological situation and vaccine shipments from the ICG cholera stockpile. This included an overview of recent campaigns, including missed opportunities, and a presentation on monitoring and evaluation activities during emergency campaigns. UNICEF-SD gave its update on vaccine shipments during 2017 and 2018, and the ICG Secretariat a review of its key performance indicators. WHO Headquarters then presented progress towards implementing its 2030 roadmap, while Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, shared its vaccine demand forecast and details of its vaccine investment strategy for cholera. After lunch, UNICEF-SD presented its procurement update and availability timeline. This was followed by a discussion by participants on the size of the global cholera stockpile and the minimum size of the reserve for emergency campaigns. Vaccine manufacturers then gave their production forecasts for the period 2018–2022. Finally, the ICG Secretariat presented the results of the recent external evaluation of the ICG mechanism, and its proposals for its Governance and Oversight Committee and new ICG Mechanism Accountability Framework.

During, 2018 cholera outbreaks occurred in a number of countries including the DRC, Malawi, Nigeria, Niger and Zimbabwe, in addition to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Bangladesh. A total of 10 requests were made from January to August for a total of 7,891,326 vaccine doses. Of these, nine requests for 4,295,750 doses were approved for response to outbreaks and humanitarian emergencies in the DRC, Malawi, Bangladesh, Nigeria, South Sudan and Lao PDR. The ICG's key performance outcomes in 2018 were comparable with the previous two years.

All participants agreed that ICG and UNICEF Supply Division (SD) should establish a working group on delivery lead times and to identify and evaluate bottlenecks in the procurement and delivery process. Importantly, ICG members and partners recommended that the stockpile of OCV should contain a revolving buffer of 8 million doses, of which 3 million available at all time. (as a lowest acceptable level)

It was also agreed that presentations from countries participants on campaign implementation and use of vaccines on the ground should be part of the annual meeting. The participants also highlighted the need for vaccination campaigns to take place as part of multi-sectorial strategies integrating long-term measures for risk reduction—particularly in known "hotspots" where outbreaks are predictable and recur on a regular basis.

Efforts are also underway to implement the recommendations of the external review of the ICG, which was presented to the ICG Secretariat in October 2017. The ICG has established its new Governance and Oversight Committee and is beginning to implement the ICG Accountability Framework, which will be effective from 2019 onwards.

### Introduction

Cholera is an acute diarrhoeal infection caused by the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*. While control measures include treatment of cases with rehydration therapy, treatment with antibiotics and use of oral cholera vaccines (OCVs), improving water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) conditions is essential for a sustained reduction in risk.

The ICG brings together four founding agencies: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO). It also consults with extended partners including technical experts and vaccine suppliers. Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is the principal funder of the three vaccine stockpiles.

#### The ICG's objectives are:

- To rapidly deliver vaccines in response to infectious disease outbreaks.
- To provide equitable vaccine allocation through careful and objective assessment of risk, based on epidemiological and operational criteria
- To coordinate the deployment of limited quantities of vaccines and other essential medicines.
- To minimize wastage of vaccines and other supplies.
- To advocate for readily-available, low-cost vaccines and medicines.
- To work with manufacturers through UNICEF SD and WHO to guarantee availability of vaccine emergency stock supplies at the global level.
- To follow standard operating procedures and establish financial mechanisms to purchase emergency vaccine supplies and ensure the sustainability of stocks.

The 2018 annual meeting of the ICG on Vaccine Provision for cholera was held on 19 September in Geneva. Participants included representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters (HQ), including ICG Secretariat, the WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), with participants both from HQ and the Supply Division (SD), Médecins sans

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