

International vaccination strategy needed to save lives, summit hears

Written by Emily Waterfield on 12 September 2019 in News
News

"We have done better than yesterday, but there is still a lot we have to do," said former President of Tanzania Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, discussing the importance of boosting international vaccination rates.



Photo credit: Press Association

Kikwete, who is also an ambassador for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, was speaking at the world's first Global Vaccination Summit in Brussels with EU and international health experts, who discussed how to improve access to and understanding of immunisation programmes.

"First, we have to have a responsive population, people who are aware and are ready to take their children for immunisation," Kikwete told the conference, adding, "But these vaccines also have to be

available in poor countries, and that is the responsibility of governments."

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that every year 1.5 million children die from diseases that could have been prevented through vaccination.

RELATED CONTENT

- [Restored faith in vaccination vital in fight against deadly disease, say EU and WHO](#) [1]
- [Inoculating against mistrust](#) [2]
- [Vaccination is a collective responsibility](#) [3]
- [Jim McMenamin: Success of vaccination programmes is based on citizens' trust in safety of vaccines](#) [4]
- [Call for EU member states to take action on 'vaccine hesitancy'](#) [5]

A recent EU survey showed an increasing reluctance to vaccinate children in developed countries, a phenomenon known as "vaccine hesitancy." But all speakers at the closing session of the summit agreed that in poor countries, the reason for low vaccination rates is not hesitancy, but rather low availability of and access to vaccines.

Elhadj As Sy, secretary general at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, said, "We talk about weak health care systems and often there is no healthcare system. There are so many children who should go to school and there is often no school."

Soraya Narfeldt, chief executive officer of African construction and logistics service provider RA International, added that there was often simply no infrastructure to deliver vaccines to poor regions. "How can we deliver vaccines in regions where there are no roads?" she asked.

Peter Salama, an executive director at the WHO, said it was vital to develop new ways of reaching the world's unvaccinated children. "We need a fundamental shift. Unless we find those unreached children, I am afraid [vaccination rates] are going to stagnate globally."

"Unless we find those unreached children, I am afraid [vaccination rates] are going to stagnate globally" **Peter Salama, WHO**

A shift in global population trends also means that the most vulnerable communities are no longer all living in remote rural areas, the conference heard.

"The unvaccinated child is no longer just found among the rural poor," said Stefan Swartling Peterson, chief of health section at the United Nations Children's Fund.

Attention also now needs to be focused on "the urban poor and the displaced," he added.

Despite the scale of the challenge, many speakers were hopeful that access to vaccination could be improved.

Seth Berkley, chief executive office of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, said there were "new technologies, new digital tools" that could in theory help get vaccines [to] where they are needed."

"There are drone deliveries, there are mobile phones," he said. "Even with crude data you can figure it out, you can reach the unreached."

He said new vaccines were starting to be made available in the developing world, some of them for the most common childhood killers like diarrhoea.

"How can we deliver vaccines in regions where there are no roads?" **Soraya Narfeldt, RA International**

But "10 million children still aren't getting vaccines," he said. "Let's find them."

Joe Cerrell, managing director for Global Policy and Advocacy at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, said the total eradication of polio was possible with the right vaccination strategy.

"We are assessing the battle plan and looking for what we need to do to go the last mile with polio," he said.

On the EU side, Marjeta Jager of the European Commission department for international cooperation and development, said the EU needed to understand the global reach of immunisation strategies.

"Every euro spent on vaccination has a broader impact on society," she said.

About the author

Emily Waterfield is a freelance journalist based in Brussels

Tags

[European Commission](#) [6]

[Health](#) [7]

[Justice and Rights](#) [8]

[Research and Innovation](#) [9]

Categories

[Health and social care](#) [10]

[Science, technology and research](#) [11]

[Society and welfare](#) [12]



The Parliament Magazine is a Dods Group plc title

Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [PM+](#)

- [Thought Leader](#)
- [Climate Crisis](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2020](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Services

[Dods PeopleDods](#)
[MonitoringDods](#)
[ResearchDods](#)
[EventsDods](#)
[Training](#)

Media & publishing titles

[Politics HomeThe](#)
[HouseThe](#)
[Parliament](#)
[MagazineHolyrood](#)
[Total PoliticsPublic](#)
[Affairs NewsCivil](#)
[Service](#)
[World](#)
[PublicTechnology](#)
[Training](#)
[JournalDods](#)
[Parliamentary](#)
[CompanionVacher's](#)
[Quarterly The](#)
[European Union and](#)
[Public Affairs](#)
[Directory](#)

Dods events

[Westminster](#)
[BriefingDigital](#)
[Health & Care](#)
[ScotlandMEP](#)
[AwardsThe Skills](#)
[SummitScottish](#)
[Public Service](#)
[AwardsPublic Sector](#)
[Procurement](#)
[SummitPublic](#)
[Sector ICT](#)
[SummitCyber](#)
[Security](#)

[SummitCyber
Security
2017Training
Journal Awards](#)

**Partnership
events**

[The Health and
Care Innovation
ExpoCivil Service
LiveCivil Service
AwardsChief
Nursing Officer for
England's
SummitWomen into
LeadershipThe
Youth Justice
ConventionSocitm
Spring
ConferenceNHSCC
Annual Members'
EventDods at Party
Conference](#)

[Privacy PolicyTerms & ConditionsAdvertisingSponsorship Subscriptions](#)

Source URL: <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/international-vaccination-strategy-needed--ave-lives-summit-hears>

Links

- [1] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/restored-faith-vaccination-vital-fight-against-deadly--isease-say-eu-and-who>
- [2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/inoculating-against-mistrust>
- [3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/vaccination-collective-responsibility>
- [4] https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/partner_article/epiconcept/success-vaccination-programm-s-based-citizens-trust-safety
- [5] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/call-eu-member-states-take-action-vaccine-hesitancy>
- [6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/european-commission>

[7] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/health>

[8] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/justice-and-rights>

[9] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/research-and-innovation>

[10] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/health-and-social-care>

[11] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/science-technology-and-research>

[12] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/society-and-welfare>