

GSK Public policy positions

CSO Procurement of Vaccines

The Issue

An effective response to healthcare challenges in the developing world embraces many elements, including improved infrastructure, increased affordability of products, increased funding, political will and appropriate health policy solutions.

Improving sustainable access to medicines and vaccines is core to GSK's overall strategy and is prioritised from the highest levels of the company. Our access strategy focuses on areas where we can make the most difference through our core business activities, skills and resources. In particular this means driving initiatives to improve affordability, to conduct and encourage more investment in R&D specifically for the developing world and to tackle the healthcare system challenges impacting access.

CSOs (Civil Society Organisations) have a key role to play in improving health and supporting development through activities ranging from education and awareness-raising to vaccination campaign implementation. GSK operates an access-driven tiered pricing approach to vaccine procurement by governments and UN agencies. This paper outlines how we interact with CSOs within our access strategy with a particular focus on accessing vaccines during humanitarian crises and on-going vaccination programmes.

GSK's Position

- CSOs play an important role in global health and development; GSK actively partners with CSOs on projects ranging from education and awareness, research and development, and improving access to vaccines.
- Vaccination programmes are most effective when they are implemented locally, are stable and sustainable. Government-led programmes offer the best opportunity for achieving this as they provide reliable procurement forecasting and stability and allow manufacturers, like GSK, to improve scalability of manufacturing and sustainability of supply, and all in the most cost efficient way.
- GSK is committed to working with governments to encourage the development of the political will necessary to implement stable, sustainable vaccination programmes that reach all those in need.
- We recognise that a crisis will sometimes compromise a government's ability to provide a sustainable and stable vaccination programme and sometimes a CSO may be more able to temporarily step in.
- Acute humanitarian crises call for rapid, efficient, and effective responses and donations are often the most efficient means for getting vaccines to those who need them as they abridge the procurement negotiation process. GSK will therefore donate vaccines, when appropriate, for use by those most in need when threatened by humanitarian crises.
- However, long-term donations of products do not offer a sustainable solution for patients and as the immediate crisis stabilises, we will collaborate with partners to develop sustainable programmes in partnership with the government.
- For CSOs implementing vaccination programmes in non-crisis environments, we encourage CSOs to work with their host government on procurement of vaccines, including in GAVI countries. We allow CSOs to include their vaccine requirements in government tenders or through any applicable GAVI, UNICEF, or WHO procurement mechanism. In this way, CSOs are able to access the tiered price available in that country.

Background

GSK's Commitment to Health

GSK Vaccines recognises that global challenges facing access and delivery of vaccination are multifaceted, whether it is the lack of infrastructure to deliver the vaccines to those in greatest need or the political will of governments to invest in national immunisation programmes. GSK has an established commitment to researching and developing vaccines and medicines addressing unmet medical needs and improving access to those vaccines. GSK works with academics, Public Private Partnerships and healthcare development organisations to navigate the complex scientific and ethical environment surrounding research and development of new vaccines and vaccines adapted to meet the needs of the developing world.

Of the 900 million doses of the vaccines we distributed in 2012, over 80% went to developing countries, which include the least developed, low and middle income countries.



- In the future this figure is likely to be even higher. In 2010 we were delivering 10 million doses of vaccine to GAVI. In 2015 it will be 110 million.
- Our drive to make vaccines available to everybody who needs them, wherever in the world they may live, is at the heart of our business strategy. As part of this, GSK operates an access-driven tiered pricing approach to vaccine procurement by governments and UN agencies that encourages provaccination policies and is based on a country's development level and ability to pay.
- We do more than just deliver vaccines. We have a strong track record of supporting countries in need to build the capacity and develop the infrastructure necessary to support high quality immunisation programmes.
- We are committed to becoming a partner in finding solutions to healthcare delivery in the least developed countries by reinvesting 20% of the profits made in these countries into local healthcare infrastructure and by supporting efforts to expand access to frontline healthcare workers.

The Role of CSOs

CSOs play an important role in global health and development through health service delivery, education and awareness building at local, national and global levels. Their advocacy efforts have also proved valuable. For example, the CSO community is widely credited with shepherding through the 1978 Alma Atta Declaration - the first international Declaration underlining the importance of primary health care, which called for all governments to protect and promote the health of all people. GSK applauds and supports the CSO's vital role of giving voice to patients and often reaching those most difficult to reach.

Our experience over many decades has taught us that working with governments and Ministries of Health offers the best opportunity to achieve the sustainability that is essential to the success of immunisation programmes. Political will is critically important to implement stable, sustainable vaccination programmes that reach all those in need. Working with governments also provides more reliable procurement forecasting and stability and will allow GSK to improve scalability of manufacturing, sustainable supply all which will lead to better affordability for governments.

We recognise that a crisis will sometimes compromise a government's ability to provide a sustainable and stable vaccination programme and sometimes a CSO may be best positioned to temporarily step in.

Acute Humanitarian Crises

In acute humanitarian crises such as the 2004 Southeast Asian Tsunami, Haiti Earthquake, and political conflict or war, CSOs have shown their vital role in offering immediate help to those in need. We applaud their important contribution often partnering with governments to reach patients and stepping in in times of crisis when governments are unable to offer full support or no government exists.

Acute humanitarian crises call for rapid, efficient, and effective responses. Time wasted may cost lives or further suffering. In times of immediate crises, victims often need a wide range of support. GSK therefore has standing partnerships with a number of crisis relief organisations that can coordinate the most effective response from all groups offering help. Donations are often the most efficient means for getting vaccines to those most in need when threatened by humanitarian crises, whether caused by climate, political, or man-made disasters, rather than traditional procurement. We are committed to ensuring that our donation programmes are managed in a responsible way, are needs-based and should not disrupt or undermine healthcare provision in recipient countries. However, we believe that this should be viewed as a temporary solution and the aim should always be partnering to transition to a stable and sustainable government supported programme. GSK donations are therefore made in accordance with an established framework of legal obligations and internal processes, and in line with World Health Organisation (WHO) Guidelines on Product Donations and we stand ready to collaborate with the WHO if they step in to coordinate crisis or disaster response. Thus during acute humanitarian crises, GSK will offer donations for vaccines as appropriate based on our humanitarian donations guidelines.

Crises often strike suddenly causing great disruption and threat to health but it may persist even after the emergency abates, even on occasion becoming an intractable health challenge. However, in common with many other stakeholders, such as the European Union, WHO and Oxfam, GSK does not believe that long-term donations of products offer a sustainable solution for patients or to the healthcare challenges facing many of the countries to which we donate. As the immediate crisis stabilises but the threat to health continues, we will collaborate with partners to develop sustainable programmes in partnership with the government.



Non-Crisis CSO Programmes

CSOs play a vital role in the health and development of many countries and regions. Recognising this important contribution as well as the need to urge governments to fulfil their obligation to their citizens, we encourage CSOs to engage with their beneficiary countries with the aim of developing post-emergency plans focussed on activities to help build sustainable, government supported programmes. It is critical that CSOs work with the host government to ensure their programmes have the necessary political backing to ensure continuity and sustainability and overall alignment with government vaccination programmes. This will then allow GSK to work with the CSO and host government to develop and supply high quality vaccines ensuring consistent access for patients.

Our access programmes are core to our business strategy as our goal is to ensure that our vaccines are accessible to all those who need them, no matter where they live or their ability to pay. We believe that a tiered pricing approach which recognises a country's ability to pay (based on per capita Gross National Income; GNI) and supports pro-vaccination policies through incentivising commitment to vaccination for the long-term with programmes aimed at reaching large proportions within the target population through lower prices, is the most responsible way to drive access and we have therefore embedded these principles in our tiered pricing model. It reflects the fundamental value of immunisation as an investment in health and wealth and GSK's desire to enable countries to maintain and expand upon their commitment to immunisation as their economies grow. Of note, the model is designed to favour those countries which commit to vaccination for the long-term and to implementing programmes aimed at reaching large proportions of the target population. Our tiered pricing approach is progressive in offering lower prices to small countries implementing pro-vaccination policies than a large country in the same GNI per capita tier that is not as ambitious in its pro-vaccination policies.

We believe that governments should be the stewards of sustainable vaccination programmes and that tiered pricing is the most equitable approach to drive access. We encourage CSOs to include their vaccine requirements in government tenders or through any applicable GAVI, UNICEF, or WHO procurement mechanism. In this way, CSOs are able to access the tiered price available in that country.

UNICEF

UNICEF is the largest global vaccines provider (both in terms of volume and value) and GSK has been the leading vaccines supplier to UNICEF for the last decade. This partnership covers four different types of programmes:

1. all UN programmes related to children
2. supplies for GAVI countries
3. country programmes where UNICEF, on request, is acting as the procurement agency for the government
4. the Global Polio Eradication Initiative - a global initiative aimed at meeting the WHO objective to eradicate polio by 2018. GSK is committed to meeting at least 30% of the Initiative's polio vaccine requirements (approximately 1.5 billion doses).

Through these different programmes, UNICEF has been able to develop reliable forecasting which contributes to the sustainability of this long-lasting partnership. To further these benefits, GSK encourages CSOs to work with UNICEF on procurement when possible and appropriate.

CSOs operating in GAVI countries

As a partner to GAVI, we recognise the special needs of developing countries. In addition to partnering with GAVI, we support their policy on CSOs working in GAVI countries. CSOs operating in GAVI countries should align themselves with and join with the local government's vaccines procurement request to GAVI and thereby access the tiered pricing available in that country for their own vaccine programme.

GSK's Continuing Commitment

GSK is committed to work as partners in public health with countries and health care providers to expand their commitment to immunisation programmes. We stand ready to partner with global stakeholders as we attempt to address global health challenges and protect patients around the world through vaccinations leading to better, healthier lives.

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