

## STRENGTHENING GLOBAL IMMUNIZATION SYSTEMS

### WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE?

About 1.4 million children die each year from vaccine-preventable diseases because 30% of the world's children do not receive all of the vaccines currently in use in developing countries. An additional 1.1 million deaths from pneumococcal disease and rotavirus disease could be prevented, but vaccines against these diseases are available only in industrialized countries. In 2005, an estimated 28 million infants worldwide and 40 million pregnant women remained in need of immunization. Only 28 percent of developing countries reported that all districts had achieved coverage with the basic three doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP) vaccine above 80 percent among infants. Globally, child immunization programs routinely use vaccines to prevent nine diseases, preventing over 2 million child deaths each year, and an additional 600,000 hepatitis B-related deaths from liver cirrhosis and hepatoma that may otherwise have occurred in adulthood are prevented. Working together, the countries of the world have eradicated smallpox, hope to achieve polio eradication by 2008, are working to eliminate measles as per established World Health Organization (WHO) goals in 4 of the 6 WHO Regions, and are dramatically reducing measles mortality in the all regions. Because of the risk of disease importation, no country is truly free of these diseases unless all countries have effective immunization programs.

### WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

CDC is committed to improving access to sustainable and safe immunization services worldwide. Together with international partners, CDC helps to reduce illness and death caused by vaccine-preventable diseases by strengthening routine immunization activities and building a strong platform for the introduction of new vaccines in the developing world.

#### *Supporting the development of a global vision and strategy for immunization*

- Since January 2004, CDC has worked with the WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to articulate a global vision; this vision was ratified by the World Health Assembly in 2005, published as the *Global Immunization Vision and Strategy 2006-2015*, and implementation has begun.
- CDC worked with the WHO and global partners in 2006 to develop the global framework for immunization monitoring and surveillance.

#### *Strengthening Childhood Immunization Services*

- Since 2001, CDC has collaborated with international partners in projects at the country and regional levels to provide technical assistance to strengthen immunization programs; improve health information systems and use of data; and increase coordination with polio eradication and measles morbidity reduction strategies.
- CDC is providing epidemiologic and programmatic expertise and funding support for the development of standardized computer entry and analysis modules for vaccination coverage and surveillance data.

### WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS

CDC will continue to work with WHO and UNICEF in implementation of the global vision for immunization and the global framework for immunization monitoring and surveillance. CDC will provide the technical expertise necessary in the development of scientifically sound strategies to increase immunization, improve immunization infrastructure and prevent unnecessary disease and mortality. CDC will expand its work with developing countries and partners to increase access to sustainable and safe immunizations; develop and evaluate best practices to strengthen routine immunization; and use these findings to help sustain achievements towards polio eradication, measles elimination, and mortality reduction from all vaccine-preventable diseases.

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