

OVERVIEW

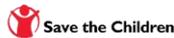
FIGHTING FOR BREATH:

The Global Forum on Childhood Pneumonia

current at 17 January 2020, subject to change

29-31 January 2020, Barcelona, Spain at CosmoCaixa

photo credit: Save the Children's Fighting for Breath report



ISGlobal, Save the Children, UNICEF, Every Breath Counts, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, “la Caixa” Foundation, USAID, Unitaid and Gavi have joined forces to address one of the greatest and gravest health challenges facing children around the world - pneumonia. Pneumonia causes more deaths among children under five than any other cause - an estimated 800,000 in 2017 alone - and more than HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined.¹ Despite this death toll, pneumonia has never attracted the levels of support commensurate with its disease burden and has been called the **forgotten killer of children** by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF,² and the **missing piece** in the global infectious disease agenda.³

The Fighting for Breath Global Forum on Childhood Pneumonia will be the first time governments in high-burden countries, UN and multilateral agencies, the private sector, academic and research institutions, donors and civil society organisations have come together to accelerate progress to the global target of three child pneumonia deaths per 1,000 live births.⁴ Currently just two of the 20 countries losing more than 10,000 children to pneumonia each year are on track to achieve this target,⁵ and if the current rate of progress continues the world will lose 11 million more children to pneumonia by 2030. As a result, many countries will fail to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for child survival.⁶

Objectives: The overarching objective of the Global Forum is for governments with very large populations of children at heightened risk of death from pneumonia to commit to developing “pneumonia control strategies”. These strategies would describe exactly how to drive child pneumonia deaths to SDG-achievement levels by strengthening prevention, diagnosis and treatment services, especially at the primary health care level, and by targeting investments to the children at greatest risk of death. Countries would set specific national targets to reduce the major risk factors for pneumonia (e.g. child growth failure, air pollution and preterm birth/low birth weight) as well as targets to increase vaccine coverage, careseeking and access to appropriate diagnosis and treatment with pulse oximetry, antibiotics, oxygen and/or therapeutic foods. The strategies would be financed as part of national universal health coverage systems, supported when necessary by well-coordinated international development assistance aligned according to the **Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All**.⁷

Speakers: The Global Forum will be opened by leading representatives from the Spanish Government and “la Caixa” Foundation, with welcome messages from the **UN Under-Secretary General and Special Adviser on Africa to the UN Secretary-General**, the **UNICEF Executive Director**, the **WHO Director General** (video), the **Save the Children UK CEO** and a **youth survivor** from Nepal. Government Ministers and leading health departmental representatives confirmed to speak include (in alphabetical order):

Afghanistan

Bangladesh

Burkina Faso

Chad

¹ Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), *Global Burden of Disease, 2017*,

² World Health Organization and UNICEF, *Pneumonia: the forgotten killer of children, 2004*.

³ JustActions, *The Missing Piece: why continued neglect of pneumonia threatens the achievement of national health goals, 2018* and Research Investments in Global Health (ResIn) Study, *Sizing Up Pneumonia Research: assessing global investments in pneumonia research 2000-2015, 2018*.

⁴ In 2013, WHO and UNICEF released the *Integrated Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Pneumonia and Diarrhoea*, which set a target of less than three child pneumonia deaths per 1,000 live births in every country by 2025.

⁵ Bangladesh and Indonesia will achieve the target according to estimates provided by Save the Children, *Fighting for Breath: a call to action on childhood pneumonia, 2017*.

⁶ Sustainable Development Goal 3.2 requires every country to achieve a Child Mortality Rate of at least 25 deaths per 1,000 births by 2030.

⁷ World Health Organization, *Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All: Strengthening collaboration among multilateral organizations to accelerate country progress on the health-related Sustainable Development Goals, 2019*.

China
Cote d'Ivoire
Democratic Republic
of Congo
Ethiopia

Ghana
India
Indonesia
Malawi
Mali

Mongolia
Nigeria
Pakistan
Rwanda
Senegal

Somalia
South Sudan
Tanzania
Uganda

The **African Union** will be speaking and there will be strong representation from multilateral health agencies including **Gavi**, the **Global Financing Facility**, the **Global Fund**, the **Islamic Development Bank**, **Unitaid** and the **World Bank**. Civil society representatives will include **ALIMA**, **Amref**, **CARE**, **Malaria Consortium**, **MSF** and more. Leading academic and research institutions (e.g. **FIND**, **icddr**, **ihme**, **ISGlobal**, **KEMRI-Wellcome Trust**, **NIH**, **Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute**, **University College London** and **University of Toronto**), and companies (e.g. **GSK** and the **Serum Institute of India**) with a stake in pneumonia prevention, diagnose and/or treatment will also appear on the program. Several celebrities will make appearances including Nigerian music star "**DJ Cuppy**". Youth advocates from Spain, Nepal and India will feature prominently on the program and will announce a Youth Statement calling for action to fight the leading infectious killer of children. The event will be moderated by a high-profile Spanish journalist.

Sessions: The Global Forum will present eight sessions addressing, (1) the latest data on childhood pneumonia mortality and risk factors, (2) the centrality of national government leadership to ending preventable child pneumonia deaths by 2030, (3) the critical role of primary healthcare, (4) the value-add of international partnerships when aligned with national health strategies, (5) specific challenges in humanitarian settings, (6) financing pneumonia control in the context of universal health coverage, (7) filling research gaps and (8) identifying breakthrough innovations, including a focus on the new sub-national African estimates of child pneumonia from the IHME.⁸ Keynote addresses will be given by the **Nigerian Federal Minister of Health**, Professor Harry Campbell from the **University of Edinburgh** and Professor Heather Zar from the **University of Capetown**. Multiple formats will be used in these sessions including traditional panels, dialogues, TED-talks, flash-talks and debates, and there will be many opportunities for audience participation in "townhall" settings.

Events: The Global Forum will host a "Power of Prevention" reception in partnership with **Gavi** and "**la Caixa**" **Foundation** on the first evening of the Global Forum to discuss innovative ways to incentivize investment in immunisation with a specific focus on the pneumonia-fighting vaccines. The event will showcase the partnership between Gavi and "la Caixa" Foundation, and the innovative financing mechanisms that have enabled increased coverage of the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV). Through the Matching Fund formula donations are multiplied by four, with "la Caixa" adding one euro and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation another two to each euro donated. The event will provide an opportunity for national governments to reaffirm their commitment to sustain and increase their domestic investments in immunisation and for Gavi donors to signal their support for the pneumonia-fighting vaccines. Currently PCV coverage rates vary widely across the countries with the largest numbers of child pneumonia deaths and are below 10% in India, China, Indonesia, Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and Somalia, which together account for 32% of all child pneumonia deaths.

Announcements: The Global Forum will announce several new initiatives including the Nigerian Pneumonia Control Strategy presented by the Nigerian Minister of Health, the \$US43 million Unitaid investment to improve access to pulse oximetry and related diagnostic tools in nine countries in partnership with **PATH** and the **Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute** (India, Kenya, Myanmar, Senegal and Tanzania), and **ALIMA** and the **Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale** (INSERM) and **Solthis and Terre des Hommes** (Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Niger). A list of Pneumonia Research Priorities 2020-2030 will be presented by the **Malaria Consortium** and **University College London**. Other announcements relate to the new, more affordable, PCV vaccine from the **Serum Institute of India**, pneumonia vaccine introduction and **Gavi** replenishment.

Outcomes: The Global Forum will invite participants to endorse a Declaration based on the **Call to Action** that was released on World Pneumonia Day, 2019. Participants will be held accountable for the action items in the Declaration in the countdown to 2030.

A summary of the 2.5 day program is available at [Fighting for Breath: The Global Forum on Childhood Pneumonia](#).

⁸ Reiner, R.C., Welgan, C.A., Casey, D.C. et al. *Identifying residual hotspots and mapping lower respiratory infection morbidity and mortality in African children from 2000 to 2017*. *Nat Microbiol*, 2019.

