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[Melinda Gates](#)

Co-chair, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

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All Children Deserve Vaccines

Posted: 06/ 6/11 02:39 AM ET

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I have believed for more than a decade now that children in the poorest parts of the world should have access to the same life-saving vaccines available to children in rich countries. That's why I'm excited that the [GAVI Alliance](#) announced today they will be able to bring life-saving vaccines to millions more children.

Now that several vaccine manufacturers are offering their vaccines at much lower costs, GAVI will be able to roll out the rotavirus vaccine, as well as other vaccines, for the first time ever in many of the poorest countries. This tremendous milestone means that we'll be able to save the lives of millions of children regardless of how poor they are.



Getting poor children vaccines is an issue of equity, plain and simple. GAVI has been a key foundation partner in the fight to save the lives of the world's poorest children who are dying every day from preventable deadly diseases like rotavirus, a diarrheal disease which barely registers on the radar of parents in developed countries like the United States and throughout Europe.

I think you'll agree that the numbers tell the story. More than 500,000 children in developing countries die every year from rotavirus. In the United States, 20 children die each year from the same disease. But the access to more affordable vaccines will give GAVI the ability to vaccinate 50 million of the world's poorest children against rotavirus. These immunizations, in addition to the pneumococcal and other vaccines, could save up to 4 million children's lives over the next five years.

All children - regardless of where they live - deserve the chance to live a healthy, productive life. Bill and I passionately believe that vaccines are one of the best ways to give them a healthy start to life. Today's [amazing announcement](#) shows that the global community believes all children's lives are worth saving.

More to Explore:

- [GAVI Alliance](#)
- [The foundation's Work in Vaccines](#)
- [Video: Crying Baby Symphony](#)