

# SUSTAINABLE IMMUNIZATION FINANCING

## Summary Digest

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## Sabin Vaccine Institute's first Colloquium on Sustainable Immunization Financing convenes in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Sabin Vaccine Institute's Executive Vice President, **Ciro de Quadros**, opens Sustainable Immunization Financing's first international colloquium in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the Sheraton on March 28, 2011.

From 28-29 March, 2011, more than 100 delegates and external partner counterparts gathered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for Sabin's first Colloquium on Sustainable Immunization Financing. The event gave participants the opportunity to network and showcase best practices. In his opening remarks, World Health Organization Regional Director for Africa **Dr. Luis Gomes Sambo** described how African immunization programs have cut into child mortality levels by offering pneumococcal, meningococcal and other life-saving vaccines.

"All of this must be properly financed," he stated. "African countries are already doing their part by increasing their immunization program budgets. But more must be done." The new Chairman of GAVI's Board of Directors, **Mr. Dagfinn Høybråten**, urged the delegates to make the most of the opportunity to collect best practices from 15 African, Asian and Latin American nations. A former minister of health and parliamentarian himself, Mr. Høybråten stressed the need for parliamentarians and government ministries to pull together and find innovative solutions to the financing problem.

One by one the delegates spoke about their immunization financing strategies. **Vidyadhar Mallik**, a former finance secretary from Nepal, described how a properly financed EPI program would look from the ministry of finance viewpoint.

Speaking for Uganda's Ministry of Health, health economist **Rogers Enyaku** gave the group a glimpse of Uganda's new output-based budget system and explained how it is improving immunization program performance. Parliamentarian **Hon. Hubert-Alphonse Masala Loka Mutombo**, Chair of the Budget Commission in Democratic Republic of Congo, told of his Commission's ultimately successful efforts to win a bigger 2010 immunization program budget. In all, twelve delegates from the SIF pilot countries presented experiences and lessons learned.

Delegates also learned about the evolution of immunization financing in the Americas region. The Americas panel was moderated by **Dr. Jon Andrus**, Deputy Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). **Pierce Trumbo**, Finance Officer for PAHO's Immunization Project, explained the historical evolution of immunization laws in the Americas region and presented a comparative analysis of recent legislation in Latin America and the Caribbean. Two parliamentarians, **Hon. Alejandro Northon Zapata Avendaño** from Bolivia and **Hon. Zoila Beatriz Quijada Solís** from El Salvador, shared their experiences in immunization advocacy and in passing immunization legislation.

Much of the strategizing was done in two rounds of small groups. Delegates first brainstormed about their constraints and best practices in the areas of advocacy, budget and financial management and legislation. Reporting for one of the legislation groups, Cameroonian delegate **Hon. Gaston KOMBA** outlined procedures both parliaments and governments can take to pass new immunization financing legislation. The group also described the hurdles they have faced in moving their *projets de loi*. **Dr. Nadine RAKOTOVAO**, Health Adviser to Madagascar's Ministry of Finance, summarized her group's analysis of the budgeting and financing problems the countries face. Governments and parliaments alike, the group felt, need to much more actively monitor budget preparation and execution. Speaking for one of the advocacy groups, Sri Lanka parliamentarian **Hon. Thalatha**



## Sabin Vaccine Institute's first Colloquium on Sustainable Immunization Financing convenes in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (cont'd)

**Atukorale** urged delegates to engage private firms. Their desire to project a socially responsible image makes them likely immunization contributors. The nine small group reports can be found [here](#).

In the second round of small group work, national delegations identified the short-term action points they will follow in the coming months to move their countries closer to the sustainable immunization financing goal. Among their action points, delegates from **Cambodia** identified greater engagement with provincial authorities in immunization financing. Delegates from **Kenya** listed the need to pass legislation guaranteeing a routine immunization budget pegged to the annual number of newborns. In **Liberia**, delegates will insert immunization financing into a pending health insurance bill. **Sierra Leone's** delegates will submit a white paper to the cabinet addressing advocacy, legislation and financing needs for immunization. The full set of action points can be found [here](#).

The Addis Colloquium was the first ever international meeting to address immunization financing. It was also the first occasion for delegates from the SIF Program countries to come together. Most had participated in earlier Sabin-organized national and subregional meetings. "They knew the issues well," observed SIF Program Director **Mike McQuestion**. To Sabin Executive Vice President **Ciro de Quadros**, the Colloquium showed the power of collective action for sustainable immunization financing. "This is the beginning of a paradigm shift- from paternalism to country ownership."



A significant portion of the colloquium was dedicated to brainstorming in breakout sessions. Pictured here is **Dr. Lekan Olubajo** of NPHCDA, Nigeria, who was the designated rapporteur for his group.

## Latin American parliamentarians share experiences in passing immunization legislation

On 1 March 2011, three Latin American parliamentarians met with Sabin and Pan American Health Organization counterparts at Sabin Headquarters in Washington, DC to analyze their legislative efforts for sustainable immunization financing. Represented were Bolivia, Colombia and El Salvador. The meeting generated material the legislators later presented at the [Sabin Colloquium on Sustainable Immunization Financing](#), which took place on 28-29 March, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

African and Asian countries have much to learn from the evolution and success of Latin American immunization programs. In 1992, Latin America became the first WHO region to eradicate polio. In all, over \$120m was invested over the period 1985-1991 to knock out the virus. The effort forced national EPI programs to become efficient and effective but left governments highly donor-dependent. In the succeeding decade, countries progressively assumed greater shares of their routine immunization budgets. Today, countries in the Americas Region support 99% of the cost of national programs, an achievement that has allowed for maintained polio eradication, the elimination of measles and rubella, and the introduction of new vaccines. It was the adroit crafting and passage of national immunization laws that made this transition possible.

"Immunization in my country is considered a right", remarked Hon. Zoila Beatriz Quijada Solís, who chairs the Health Commission in El Salvador's National Assembly. Representative Quijada Solís is now spearheading the effort to pass El Salvador's first immunization legislation. The proposed vaccine law has three objectives: 1) to guarantee sufficient public resources to meet the country's annual vaccine bill (US\$20.5m in 2010); 2) to oblige the state to make vaccination accessible to every Salvadorean citizen; and 3) to establish sanctions for parents who do not get their children vaccinated (fines, no school entry).

Immunization is not always perceived as a priority, particularly in countries where larger political issues are being contested. Hon. Alejandro Northon Zapata Avendaño, who represented Bolivia in the Addis Colloquium, described his efforts to recruit supporters for Bolivia's *Ley 3300*, which guarantees the right of every Bolivian citizen to be immunized. "In the end, we were but ten *diputados*, remarked Zapata Avendaño, "and that was enough to get the law passed."

Colombia, the third Latin American case, has a high-performing immunization program with an interesting history. In 1993- a year after polio was eradicated- the country experimented with privatizing immunization services as part of a larger health sector reform. Vaccine coverage levels soon dropped. In 2001, *Ley 100* was superseded by *Ley 715*, which returned immunizations to the public domain. This year, Colombia will spend \$ 96.8m to fully immunize approximately 900,000 infants at a cost of US\$100 per child. That relatively high figure reflects in part the efforts of Rep. Luis Salas, who represents a coastal area around Santa Marta. Hon. Salas told the group: "We learned about the new vaccines against pneumococcal and rotavirus, and how many more lives could be saved. So we went to work. It took us two years but we got la *Ley 1373* passed. It guarantees the funding to immunize all children under five with these newest vaccines."



## Sabin participating in cMYP updates

In 2005, WHO and UNICEF unveiled a new tool to help countries plan their immunization programs. The comprehensive Multi-Year Plan (cMYP) analyzes program expenditures for a given baseline year, then uses these baseline data to project financing needs for the coming five years in light of a particular program's unit costs, strategies and objectives. Comparing projected costs to sources of finance- government and external- gives an idea of how sustainably a program is financed. Since 2006, cMYP plans have been prepared for 77 WHO Member Countries, including all 15 SIF Program pilot countries. These first wave cMYPs are now being updated with new information. SIF Senior Program Officers are participating, ensuring that the latest advocacy strategies, activities and objectives are inserted into the revised plans. Here are some examples:

In DR Congo last August, Helene Mambu-Ma-Disu joined her ICC counterparts to produce a 2011-2015 cMYP update which includes the creation of a national immunization trust fund. For the first time, members of parliament (Budget Committee) actively participated in the exercise. A second new activity is to carry out a systematic national and subnational advocacy effort aimed at enlisting financial support for EPI from private firms and mobilizing other new stakeholders.

This past March, Devendra Gnawali and his Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee counterparts (Ministry of Health and Population, of Nepal, WHO, UNICEF, other external partners) inserted two new advocacy activities into draft Nepal's 2012-2016 cMYP: passage of a National immunization Act and the writing of new legislation to create a national immunization trust fund. The draft cMYP is in finalization process.

Sabin and WHO co-funded the cMYP update for Cameroon last March. The Sabin funding allowed representatives from the country's ten provinces (*mairies*) to participate. SIF Program Officer Jonas Mbwangue has been working with these officials to design a revenue-sharing national immunization fund. In Cameroon, decentralization provides the strategic framework for developing subnational immunization budgets. The updated 2012-2015 cMYP now emphasizes this new financing strategy.

Commenting on her experience, Dr. Mambu-Ma-Disu said: "Before the cMYP was not really being used. Now I think we will all be using it. People here see now that they have to be their own advocates."

## Sabin Sustainable Immunization Financing Program Partners Group meeting marks midpoint



Sabin, GAVI, WHO, World Bank and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation counterparts met to review SIF Program progress and discuss future program efforts.

The third meeting of Sabin's SIF Program Partners Group took place on 29 March 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Representing the partners were Violaine Mitchell (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation), Miloud Kaddar (WHO), Santiago Cornejo (GAVI) and Chris Lovelace (World Bank). Sabin Executive Vice-President **Ciro de Quadros** welcomed the participants and gave an overview of SIF Program activities over the past year. Each of the five SIF Senior Program Officers in

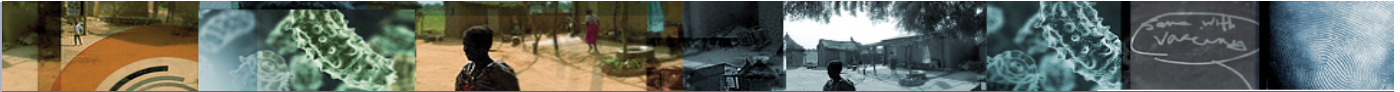
turn briefed the partners on their work in the fifteen SIF pilot countries. Now at its halfway point, the Program has engaged networks of parliamentarians and government officials, all working toward sustainable immunization financing solutions for their countries. This collective action was evident during the just concluded Sabin Colloquium on Sustainable Immunization Financing (see related story). "These networks are a powerful new tool for immunization financing", commented Santiago Cornejo. The partners agreed to develop more collaborative activities at country level. Summarizing, de Quadros said "In the next three years the SIF Program will maintain its vision of coaching countries from dependency to self-reliance and self-sufficiency." For the full report of the meeting, click [here](#).



**Diputado Alejandro Zapata**, President of Bolivia's commission on Education and Health (left) and Hon. **Diputada Zoila Beatriz Quijada Solis**, chair of El Salvador's National Assembly's Health Commission (right) go over their respective presentations.

More images from Sabin's first Colloquium on Sustainable Immunization Financing. To Access more photos visit the [SIF website](#).





## SIF Sabin News Highlights

• Sabin held a press conference during Day I of its first Colloquium on Sustainable Immunization Financing. Members from both the local and international press were invited, with twenty-two journalists attending. Reporters from WARI/TV5 (West Africa), Madagascar Matin, The Daily Monitor (Ethiopia), Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency, and The Point Newspaper (Gambia) gave their reports, some of which can be found on our [event site](#). Please visit this site for a list of press clippings and links relating to our event. To view a compilation of our updated country fact sheets, please click [here](#).

• Sabin has hired the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to review and evaluate its Sustainable Immunization Program. The midterm evaluation began in March and will conclude in May. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess Program operations and processes, both at headquarters and in the field. The BCG team visited Uganda, Cameroon and Liberia and conducted detailed reviews of SIF projects in DR Congo and Cambodia. Two BCG evaluators also attended the recent Sabin Colloquium in Addis where they interviewed members of parliament, delegates from ministries of health and ministries of finance and external partner representatives. In all, 81 informants were interviewed in the course of the evaluation. Results will be presented in early May.

## SIF Immunization Champion



Dr. Sudhir Khanal of Nepal.

For this Summary Digest, we would like to highlight Dr. Sudhir Khanal as our immunization champion. A graduate of Medicine and holder of a Masters in Public Health from Bangladesh, he received the Hubert Humphrey fellowship to pursue his Masters at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in the United States.

Dr. Khanal currently works as a Child Health and Survival Program Specialist at UNICEF Nepal's country office where he has been collaborating with Nepal's Ministry of Health and other partners to achieve MDG 4. He has been playing an instrumental role in fostering collective action among parliament, civil society, government agencies and partners to reach sustainable immunization financing in Nepal. Sabin's Kathmandu's 9-11 February 2010 parliamentary symposium produced the "Kathmandu Declaration." The success of this meeting was largely due to Dr. Khanal's help in planning this event.

Dr. Khanal also helped organize the first ever meeting of civil society (Rotary Clubs), parliament, government institutions (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance) and partners to advocate for sustainable immunization financing. The meeting jointly sponsored by Sabin and UNICEF ("Countdown to 2015 and Sustainable Immunization Financing: Role of Civil Society") highlighted the important role both private sector and civil society can play in mobilizing domestic resources for immunization. Dedicated individuals such as Dr. Khanal are helping to bring countries closer to their sustainable immunization financing goals.

## Sustainable Immunization Financing Program Outputs This Period

Milestone/Activity (1.I.11 - 31.III.11)	Achieved this quarter	Cumulative (1.IX.09–31.III.11)	Details:
Visit to field countries	8	45	Mali, Cambodia (2), Liberia, Madagascar, Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda
National Parliamentary briefing	5	39	Cameroon (5), Mali, Cambodia, Madagascar, Kenya
Sub-regional Parliamentary briefing	0	10	None added this quarter
International Partners Meetings	7	34	ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Seminar (Phnom Penh, 2/11) • International Colloquium for MPs (Addis Ababa, 3/11) • Decade of Vaccines Delivery Group (Geneva, 1/11) • EPI managers meeting W Africa (Ouagadougou, 2/11) • Central Africa (3/11 Libreville) • East and Southern Africa (Harare 3/11)
Advocacy activities inserted into cMYP	3	12	Cameroon, Nepal, Sierra Leone
Peer exchanges involving SIF target countries	1	28	13 SIF countries participated (Addis Ababa, 3/11)
National routine EPI budget increased	3	9	Senegal, Cambodia, Sierra Leone

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