



ALIMA joins global Vaccine Alliance's Civil Society Steering Committee

DAKAR, June 29, 2017 - ALIMA (The Alliance for International Medical Action) has been selected to serve on Gavi's (the global Vaccine Alliance) civil society organization (CSO) steering committee. With more than eight years of experience vaccinating children in some of the most challenging humanitarian contexts in West and Central Africa, ALIMA's unique position on the committee as a vaccine implementer will provide valuable insight on how to best work with Ministries of Health to reach children in even the most remote areas of the world with lifesaving vaccines.

"The reason we wanted to join Gavi is because we work in countries like Chad where health systems are weak and vaccination coverage is low," said Dr. Susan Shepherd, who will be representing ALIMA on Gavi's CSO steering committee. "We would like a platform to challenge the current approach, think outside the box and also explore what effective vaccination strategy looks like."

Gavi, a public-private global health partnership, is dedicated to saving lives by increasing children's access to vaccines in low income countries. The 18-member CSO steering committee is charged with guiding the work of the Gavi CSO Constituency - a network of more than 4,000 CSOs around the world that advocate for improved access to immunisation and health care.

Since its creation in 2000, Gavi has financed the vaccination of nearly 580 million children and helped strengthen health systems in more than 60 countries. Unfortunately, more than 19.4 million babies around the world still do not have access to basic vaccines, according to the World Health Organization.

"Kids in all countries should have access to vaccines, whether they live in conflict zones or on a fishing island in the middle of the Congo River," Dr. Shepherd said. "My hope is that ALIMA will be a voice for modifying some current practices and improve existing policies in order to make more vaccines available to children who are the hardest to reach."

ALIMA will serve a three-year term starting July 1, 2017.

ALIMA (The Alliance For International Medical Action) is a medical humanitarian organization that aims to provide assistance to populations in emergency situations, such as epidemics, conflicts or natural disasters. Based in Dakar, Senegal, ALIMA has treated more than 2 million patients in 12 countries since its creation in 2009 and launched 10 research projects focused on malnutrition, malaria and Ebola.

In 2016, ALIMA vaccinated more than 133,000 kids in Mali, the Central African Republic and Nigeria against diseases such as measles, meningitis, polio and tetanus. In 2017, ALIMA responded to an outbreak of measles in Guinea by working with the Ministry of Health to launch an emergency vaccination campaign in the southeastern N'Zerekore region, which reached more than 148,000 children. Medical teams in Mali, Niger, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic plan to vaccinate an estimated additional 406,000 kids by the end of 2017.

Press Contact in Senegal:

communication@alima.ngo

Phone : +221 762238153

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