

# Media Update

18 April 2019

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## UNICEF

PRESS RELEASE

### UNICEF launches #VaccinesWork campaign to inspire support for vaccines

*Amid growing outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases, UNICEF's campaign will use social media to show that most parents trust vaccines to protect their children*

**NEW YORK/Islamabad, 18 April 2019** – UNICEF is launching a [new global campaign](#) on 24 April to emphasize the power and safety of vaccines among parents and wider social media users.

The campaign will run alongside World Immunization Week from 24 to 30 April to spread the message that together communities, including parents, can protect everyone through vaccines.

#VaccinesWork has long been used to bring together immunization advocates online. This year, UNICEF is partnering with the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#), the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), and [Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance](#) to encourage even greater reach. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will contribute USD\$ 1 to UNICEF for every like or share of social media posts using the hashtag #VaccinesWork in April, up to USD\$1 million, to ensure all children get the life-saving vaccines they need.

Vaccines save up to 3 million lives yearly, protecting children from potentially deadly, highly infectious diseases such as measles, pneumonia, cholera, and diphtheria. Thanks to vaccines, fewer people died from measles between 2000 and 2017 and polio is on the verge of being eradicated. Vaccines are one of the most cost-effective health tool ever invented – every USD\$1 spent on childhood immunization returns up to USD\$44 in benefits.



“We want the awareness that #VaccinesWork to go viral,” said Robin Nandy, UNICEF’s Chief of Immunization. “Vaccines are safe, and they save lives. This campaign is an opportunity to show the world that social media can be a powerful force for change and provide parents with trustworthy information on vaccines.”

The campaign is part of a global, week-long celebration under the theme, [Protected Together: Vaccines Work](#), to honour Vaccine Heroes – from parents and community members to health workers and innovators.

“More children than ever before are being reached with vaccines today,” said Violaine Mitchell, Interim Director of Vaccine Delivery at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “We are delighted to work with UNICEF and all the global and country partners around the world who are working tirelessly to ensure all children, especially those in the world’s poorest countries, can be protected from life-threatening infectious diseases.”

Despite the benefits of vaccines, an estimated 1.5 million children died of vaccine-preventable diseases in 2017. While this is often due to lack of access to vaccines, in some countries, families are delaying or refusing to vaccinate their children because of complacency or skepticism about vaccines. This has resulted in several outbreaks, including an alarming surge in measles, especially in higher-income countries. Uncertainty about vaccines on digital and social media platforms is one of the factors driving this trend.

That is why the centerpiece of this UNICEF campaign is a 60-second animated film, “Dangers,” which, along with illustrated animations for social media posts and posters, is based on the relatable insight that kids, by their very nature, are little daredevils who are constantly putting themselves in danger. Available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Hindi, Russian, Spanish and Tagalog, the video explains that while parents can’t prevent all the dangers their kids get themselves into, they can use vaccination to help prevent the dangers that get into their kids.

In addition, UNICEF experts will be [answering questions](#) about vaccination, including how vaccines work, how they are tested, why children should receive vaccines, as well as the risks of not vaccinating children in a timely manner.

[Additional quotes from campaign supporters:](#)

Angélique Kidjo, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and Grammy Award-Winning Singer:

“Today nine in ten children receive immunizations, but we cannot leave anyone behind. We must reach every child with life-saving vaccines.”

[Maisa Silva](#), 16-year-old, Brazilian TV hostess and actress: "I accepted the invitation to participate in this campaign because I know the importance of vaccines for children's health. It is a way to protect children from various hazards we already know. Health is a very serious matter and we must not forget that vaccines work and are necessary. "

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### Notes to editors

Download photos and broll [here](#), including the “Dangers” video, which is embargoed till 24 April. Learn more about the campaign [here](#). For more information on UNICEF’s work on immunization, [click here](#).

### About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. For more information about UNICEF and its work for children, visit [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org).

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