

July 24, 2025

Christian Global Health Networks Express Grave Concern Over Threat to Child Survival

Ending U.S. Support for Lifesaving Vaccines Endangers Children Globally and at Home

Christian global health networks are sounding the alarm over the United States' decision to end financial support for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. This move threatens decades of progress in child survival.

Since its founding in 2000, [Gavi](#) has helped vaccinate more than 1.1 billion children in the world's poorest countries, preventing an estimated 18.8 million deaths and contributing to a 50% reduction in global child mortality. Gavi-supported efforts have played a crucial role in controlling deadly diseases such as measles, polio, pneumonia, and diphtheria.

"This is no time to backtrack," said Doug Fountain, Executive Director of [Christian Connections for International Health](#). "Thanks in part to the hard work of many groups, including Christian organizations, governments, and secular partners, we have cut the child mortality rate in half. Ending U.S. support for Gavi, the organization that provides many of the vaccines preventing needless deaths, is not only morally wrong, it is reckless. It risks the resurgence of diseases not seen in the U.S. for years and undermines trust in one of the most effective public health interventions we have."

Vaccines are widely recognized as one of the most cost-effective health interventions, with an estimated \$54 return for every \$1 invested, according to [Gavi's evaluation of economic impact](#).

On June 25, 2025, at Gavi's replenishment summit in Brussels, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. announced via video that the United States would halt all financial support to Gavi until it "re-earns the public trust." Kennedy cited concerns about vaccine safety, referencing long-debunked claims related to the DTP (diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis) vaccine and COVID-19 vaccines, but provided no new evidence to justify the withdrawal. [Read Gavi's response](#).

This abrupt decision jeopardizes immunization programs serving the world's most vulnerable children, risks reversing gains in global health, and isolates the U.S. from a decades-long bipartisan tradition of leadership in child health.

"The U.S. Government has been a leader in Global Health Security," said Yoram Siame, Director, Advocacy, Planning and Development, [Churches Health Association of Zambia](#), and faith community representative on the Gavi Civil Society Organization Steering Committee. "Holding back support for immunization creates immunity gaps that fuel vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks. The U.S. can choose to be a part of expensive disease outbreak responses or cost-effective prevention efforts through vaccines. Dialogue on reservations on some

vaccines can be taking place with the scientific community, while vaccines the U.S. has no concerns about continue to reach communities. A vaccine delayed may be a life denied.”

Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy

It is natural to have concerns about health interventions, including immunization. To help members of faith communities express their concerns and learn the facts about immunization, CCIH developed [Promoting Vaccination: A Toolkit for Collaborating with Faith Communities](#) and an accompanying implementation guide. They are available in English, French, and Hindi.



A Nurse Demonstrates Vaccine Preparation. Africa Inland Church Tanzania, Diocese of Geita, In Nyarutefye Village. Credit: Africa Inland Church

Christian Organizations Supporting Immunizations

[Africa Christian Health Associations Platform](#)

[Christian Connections for International Health](#)

[General Board of Global Ministries | The United Methodist Church](#)

