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Japan's Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited has announced a partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support global polio eradication in developing countries.

With this funding, Takeda will develop, license and supply at least 50 million doses per year of Sabin-strain inactivated poliovirus vaccine (sIPV) to more than 70 developing countries. The vaccine will be manufactured at Takeda's facility in Hikari, Japan. This effort is aligned with Takeda's strategy to utilize innovation and partnerships to address critical unmet needs in global public health, and the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in September 2015.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Gates Foundation will provide a \$38 million grant to Takeda to leverage its innovative vaccine manufacturing platform to develop and license a safe and effective Sabin-strain inactivated polio vaccine, and make at least 50 million doses per year available at an affordable price for developing countries receiving Gavi support. Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, brings together public and private sectors with the shared goal of creating equal access to new and underused vaccines for children living in the world's poorest countries. Takeda's sIPV was originally licensed from the Japan Polio Research Institute, which is now a part of RIKEN.

Chris Elias, President, Global Development at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation stated, "In 2016, the world is closer than ever to eradicating polio. To eradicate polio we need to ensure every last child is protected from the disease - this partnership will help to ensure that the world has enough vaccine to get the job done and maintain a polio free world."

"Takeda's polio program demonstrates our commitment to tackle the most important public health problems and promote access for the populations in greatest need, joining our programs in dengue, norovirus, and hand, foot and mouth disease," added Dr. Rajeev Venkayya, President of Takeda's Vaccine Business Unit. "We're excited about this partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the potential to reach hundreds of millions of children around the globe as part of the final push to eradicate polio."

Christophe Weber, President and CEO of Takeda said, "Takeda is honored to partner with the Gates Foundation to support the polio endgame. This represents a major commitment by a Japanese company to the health of children in developing countries around the world."