

Annual measles death below 100,000 for first time: UN

26 October 2017

The number of annual measles deaths worldwide fell below 100,000 for the first time in 2016, but a push for universal vaccine coverage has "stalled", the UN said Thursday.

In its annual report on the virus, the World Health Organization estimated that [measles](#) killed 90,000 people last year.

"This marks the first time global measles deaths have fallen below 100 000 per year", WHO said in a joint statement with other leading health agencies, including the [vaccine](#) alliance GAVI, the US Centers for Disease Control and the UN's children's agency UNICEF.

Measles deaths have fallen 84 percent since 2000, the statement said.

The deployment of 5.5 billion vaccine doses since 2000 has been essential in driving down fatalities, but vaccinations still need to roll out further, the report said.

"The world is still far from reaching regional measles elimination goals," it added.

"Coverage with the first of two required doses of [measles vaccine](#) has stalled at approximately 85% since 2009, far short of the 95% coverage needed to stop measles infections, and coverage with the second dose, despite recent increases, was only 64% in 2016," the agencies said.

Nigeria, India and Pakistan are the countries with the highest number of unvaccinated children.

Measles is a highly contagious virus that spreads through air with symptoms ranging from fever, to rashes to sore throat.

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