

A primer for participating countries

What to expect as a participating country in the Global Platform for Access to Childhood Cancer Medicines

Each year, 400,000 children develop cancer globally, of whom nearly 90% live in low- and middle-income countries, where survival rates can be below 30%, compared to over 80% in high-income countries

A leading cause of this inequality is lack of access to quality-assured, affordable medicines, driven by fragmented markets, weak procurement systems, frequent stockouts, and high out-of-pocket costs.

The Global Platform for Access to Childhood Cancer Medicines (Global Platform) works alongside participating countries to deliver an uninterrupted supply of quality-assured childhood cancer medicines. Countries are encouraged to view their engagement as a sustained partnership, working together to prepare health systems and facilities to safely and effectively receive, distribute, store, and administer cancer medicines. In doing so, it reinforces political commitments to childhood cancer control and supports governments to safeguard access to care for children with cancer.

Who participates in Global Platform activities?

The Minister of Health leads all country activities undertaken as part of the Global Platform. This includes convening and leading a governance mechanism that brings together key stakeholders in the national response to childhood cancer, including national regulatory agencies, participating facilities and civil society to oversee participation and monitor country-level implementation. This may leverage existing structures for childhood cancer or may be one newly created for this purpose.

The Global Platform team works directly with designated staff at the ministry of health and the national regulatory authority, as well as appropriate staff at each participating facility (e.g., paediatric oncologists, nurses, hospital pharmacists and logistics experts). This includes staff who understand clinical practice to help forecast country needs and orient the introduction of products on the Global Platform List of Medicines into clinical practice.

Which patients are eligible to receive the medicines?

Children with cancer are eligible to receive medicines at participating facilities. Expected age limits are largely determined by the country's own national standards.

Which facilities are eligible to participate in the Global Platform?

Countries are encouraged to include all facilities that meet the Global Platform's facility eligibility criteria, which broadly means facilities that have established services for treating children with cancer and that operate on a not-for-profit basis.

Eligible facilities should not be excluded from participating based on perceived readiness. If necessary, a phased approach to onboarding of facilities can be discussed with the Global Platform team in due course. For example, to allow an initial focus on a particular region.

What are the phases of Global Platform engagement?

There are four phases to a country's engagement with the Global Platform: country selection, system readiness, sustained supply, and transition.

1	Orientation & Governance	Begins once country participation is confirmed and focuses on stakeholder engagement and coordination through the governance mechanism.
2	Systems readiness	Focused collaboration to move towards readiness of the health system to receive childhood cancer medicines.
3	Sustained supply	Collaborative efforts to progress towards sustained supply of subsidized medicines to achieve uninterrupted access to quality-assured medicines.
4	Transition	Implementation of the financial sustainability policy to support long-term country ownership, continuity of supply, and accountability.

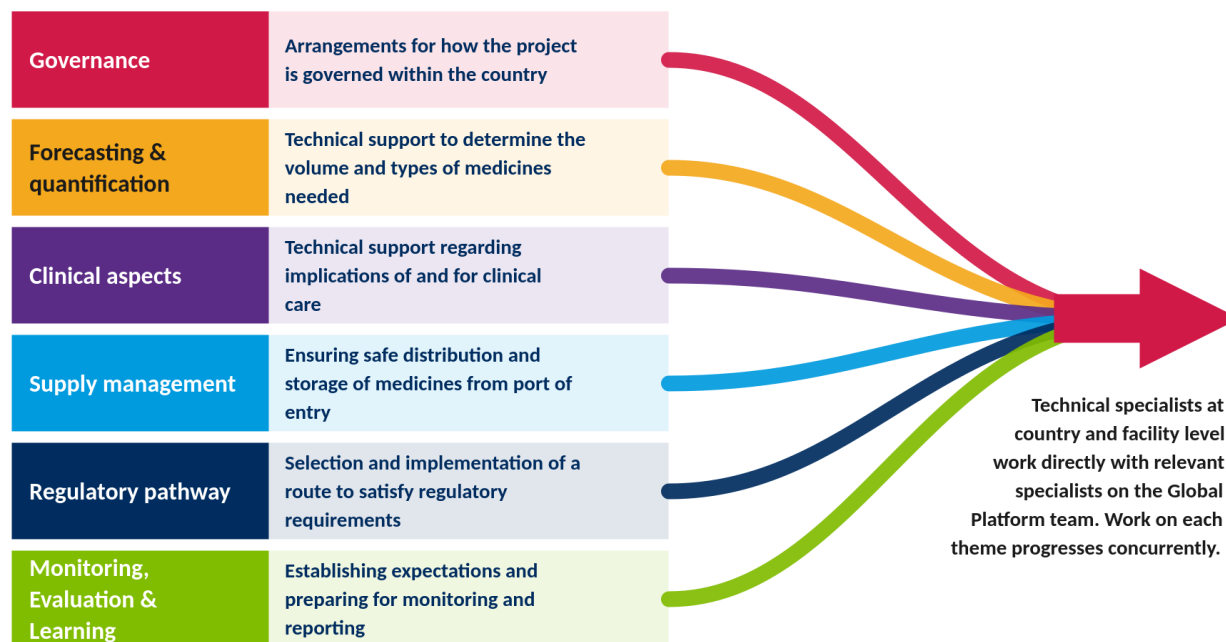
What are the expectations of Global Platform participation?

Across all phases of engagement, the Global Platform is designed to deliver on the complementary expectations of countries and the Global Platform partners: a quality-assured, uninterrupted supply of medicines to the children who need them most.

What countries can expect from the Global Platform	What the Global Platform expects from governments
<p>SUPPORTIVE, STRUCTURED COLLABORATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Guidance and support to implement practical processes and policies across all phases of engagement. – Early identification and no-surprises escalation of risks and delays with co-creation of solutions. <p>RELIABLE, QUALITY-ASSURED SUPPLY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Uninterrupted supply of quality-assured childhood cancer medicines based on the WHO Essential Medicines List for Children and international treatment guidelines. <p>AFFORDABLE PROCUREMENT, PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 5 to 10 years of medicines supply: 2-4 years of fully subsidized medicines followed by 3-6 years of partially subsidized medicines, based on country's World Bank income classification. <p>FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to US\$120,000 per country within the first two years of engagement to help meet minimum standards on supply chain and clinical practices. – Model SOPs to adapt clinical and supply-chain procedures, plus signposting to partners beyond the Platform's scope. <p>ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quarterly reporting on country-level progress indicators using data from all participating facilities. 	<p>ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Active collaboration throughout, including proactive communication of implementation challenges. – Appropriate regulatory, clinical and technical staff delegated to work directly with the Global Platform team. <p>GOVERNANCE AND AGREEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sign the letter of agreement and designate at least one ministry of health focal point. – Establish an inclusive country-level governance mechanism. – Develop a country-specific technical and operational plan. <p>REGULATORY AND SUPPLY READINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide facility-level data to inform forecasting and quantification. – Designate a national regulatory authority focal point. – Ensure regulatory compliance and approvals for import. – Ensure receipt, customs clearance and in-country distribution from the port of entry. <p>ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide regular monitoring information on how Global Platform activities are progressing. – Active risk management, in collaboration with the Global Platform team

What are the core work themes for Global Platform activities?

Work across all phases of engagement is organized around six interdependent work themes, summarized below.



How is progress measured?

The Global Platform has established a Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning plan with 20 indicators in total of which seven are core country-level indicators — five output indicators (shown in grey) and two outcome indicators (shown in blue). These are designed to ensure that the Global Platform achieves its key impact goal to provide access to affordable and quality assured medicines which enable that more children complete cancer treatment, therefore significantly increasing their chances of survival. Countries report routinely against these progress indicators throughout their engagement, drawing on data from all participating facilities to monitor implementation progress.

Indicator 2.1	Total unique number of children receiving Global Platform medicines
Indicator 2.2	Number of unexpected adverse drug reactions related to Global Platform medicines
Indicator 2.3	Stock-out rate
Indicator 2.4	Number of countries with a Global Platform operational plan in place within 180 days
Indicator 2.5	Percentage of countries with a governance mechanism that meets at least quarterly
Indicator 2.6	Median number of days countries take to move medicines from the port of entry to a central distribution point
Indicator 2.7	Consumption of Global Platform medicines

Further information

This introduction is intended to provide an overview. More detailed information about the Global Platform workstreams and policies is available by contacting gpacm@who.int and gpacm@stjude.org.