

Dr. Sania Nishtar, CEO, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance



Appointed by the Board of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance on 11 January 2024, Dr Sania Nishtar is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. Dr Nishtar, most recently a Senator in her home country of Pakistan, joined Gavi as its CEO on 18 March 2024.

A trained medical doctor, Dr Nishtar has built an outstanding career over 30 years as a national and global leader. In Pakistan's national government, she served between 2018 and 2022 as Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, a role with the status of a Federal Minister. During this time, she founded a social protection programme and chaired the Council on Poverty Alleviation and the Benazir Income Support Program. In 2013, during Pakistan's Caretaker Government, she served as a Federal Minister with responsibility for re-establishing the country's Ministry of Health among other roles, winning acclaim for transparency and accountability during her time in office.

During her career, Dr Nishtar has fulfilled several leadership positions in civil society and international organisations. She founded the non-profit NGO think tank Heartfile, which campaigns for health reform in Pakistan. She was the inaugural Chair of the UN Secretary-General's Independent Accountability Panel (IAP) for women's and children's health; and, among other roles, served as Co-Chair of the WHO Independent High-level Commission on Noncommunicable Diseases, WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity, World Economic Forum Global Future Council on Health and Healthcare and US National Academy of Sciences' global study on health care quality in low- and middle-income countries. Dr Nishtar served as Chair of Gavi's Evaluation Advisory Committee from 2011 to 2014, and in 2016 served as an independent member of Gavi's Board. A prolific thought leader, she has co-authored dozens of academic papers and books, including Pakistan's first compendium of health statistics; and she has been published in many leading national and international newspapers.

Dr Nishtar graduated from Khyber Medical College as the best graduate in 1986 and joined the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences as a cardiologist in 1994. She worked at Guy's Hospital and studied Medicine, graduating in 1996 from King's College London – which awarded her a PhD in 2002 and an honorary Doctorate in Science, *Honoris Causa*, in 2019. She is listed among the notable alumni of King's College and in 2020 was among the BBC's 100 Women, a list of inspiring and influential women from around the world. Dr Nishtar has received many international awards for her work, including the European Association for Population Studies Award, Pakistan's prestigious Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Star of Excellence) and The Rockefeller Foundation's Global Innovation Award.