

# GAVI Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee Meeting

19 January 2010  
Geneva, Switzerland

## FINAL Minutes

Finding a quorum of members present<sup>1</sup>, the meeting commenced at 9.05 Geneva time on 19 January 2010.

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### 1 Welcome and Expectations

Julian Lob-Levyt, CEO, thanked the participants noting that although GAVI has performed evaluations in the past, they were not as deliberately planned. He welcomed this opportunity to implement, with strong Board oversight and support, a more structured evaluation framework to examine GAVI's overall strategy and implementation approaches. He expressed the belief that this shall support organisational learning and lead to improved performance. Discussion followed:

- It is understood that the Evaluation Advisory Committee reports to the Board and its role is to provide independent, expert input retrospectively on past evaluations and prospectively on the development of future evaluations as well as on Monitoring and Evaluation (M/E) policy and frameworks (Doc #1 in the committee pack). The Committee will not involve itself in management tasks best suited for the Secretariat.
- Whilst the Committee will not set policy, it will play a critical role in strategically informing the deliberations of the Board, including by ensuring that reviews and evaluations commissioned by the Secretariat are adequately designed, appropriately conducted and meet accepted standards for quality.
- Some of the key topics the Committee may deliberate on from time to time include:
  - Metrics to accurately and effectively measure country-level performance of GAVI programmes
  - Partner accountability for delivery
  - Evaluation of market impact to ensure sustainable introduction of vaccines (including assessment of procurement practice and principles)
  - Criteria to measure the added value of the Alliance
  - The extent to which GAVI remains "country driven" as opposed to "top-down" organisation
  - Possible steps that can allow countries to engage more meaningfully with GAVI with regard to monitoring and evaluation

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### 2 Introduction and Overview

Nina Schwalbe, Managing Director of Policy and Performance, reviewed the mission, goals, objectives and new governance structure of the GAVI Alliance. She also gave an overview of the evaluation framework (Doc #2) Discussion followed:

- Under the previous system, accountability was complicated by GAVI's management of three separate streams of financing (vaccines and health systems support, partner funding, and separately budgeted administrative spending). In 2010, GAVI is moving

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<sup>1</sup> Attendees are listed in Attachment A.  
GAVI Alliance Secretariat, 2 March 2010

towards an integrated business plan which should have a strong monitoring and evaluation component to improve accountability.

- The fact that GAVI does not itself hold some of the necessary data to perform a robust evaluation is another complicating factor. As a result, information is often not immediately accessible, nor always maintained in a structure or format compatible with the evaluation questions important to GAVI.

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### 3 Priority Streams of Work in Monitoring

Peter Hansen, Head of Monitoring and Evaluation, provided an overview of the priority streams of work identified in monitoring. Discussion followed:

- There is broad agreement that the current monitoring and evaluation systems in GAVI are not optimal. Gaps in the current systems make information less accessible and hinder decision-making. However, a balanced, consistent monitoring and evaluation system can help to manage risk, set strategy, and make better informed decisions on programmes and policies. The focus should be on:
  - Developing an integrated system to meet GAVI's core data and information needs that relates to how data is collected, managed and used on a routine basis.
  - Reviewing, and strengthening as necessary, the performance monitoring processes, indicators, and data sources used for each of GAVI's windows of support to countries.
  - Supporting improvements to country monitoring and evaluation systems and capacities.
- A critical role for the committee will be as an independent voice that reviews evaluations to determine whether the appropriate performance metrics are in place to assess and manage partner performance and accountability.
- The Committee has no comparative advantage in overseeing the development of an underlying IT platform to support the monitoring system. This role and responsibility should remain with the Secretariat.

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### 4 GAVI Evaluation Policy

Abdallah Bchir, Senior Programme Officer, Evaluation presented the essential elements of GAVI's Evaluation Policy (Doc #3). Discussion followed:

- The Committee agreed that steering committees can be useful within the context of specific evaluations. The Committee will not be in a position to guide all products directly. Accordingly, GAVI should consider using steering committees both to reinforce independence and for technical guidance of specific evaluations.
- Criteria that define which evaluations will be examined by the Committee, and which should be evaluated by a steering committee should be better defined. Also, the "value added" of evaluations to the organisation should be clearly articulated in the relevant assessment reports.
- The Secretariat will manage vendor contracts with evaluation consultant teams, but can seek technical assistance and expert leadership from the Committee on specific studies or elements within studies.
- The Committee will focus on high level approaches to evaluation within the GAVI Alliance (as opposed to a focus on processes).
- The Committee agreed that it is appropriate to start thinking about improving the Evaluation policy. However, the consensus was that that the Committee should plan and

prepare for a review to be undertaken towards the end of the year. This would include a review of the interface of the Evaluation Policy with GAVI's internal auditor.

- All GAVI evaluations reviewed by the Committee will be placed in a prominent location for public access.

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## 5 Completed and Planned Evaluations

Abdallah Bchir presented an overview of completed and planned evaluations and the efforts to make all evaluations relevant and responsive to important issues (Doc #4). Discussion followed:

- The Committee will define the priority questions to be addressed moving forward. This will involve input from Board members and stakeholders to better understand the perception of these questions, the major risks for GAVI, and the main questions and challenges for GAVI for the mid- and longer term future.

The Committee felt that a strict separation of Monitoring and Evaluation does not make sense since monitoring information is often used to answer evaluation questions. Accordingly, future plans should seek to strike the correct balance between the two arms of the policy.

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## 6 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Peter Hansen presented the inputs, processes, and outputs that could underpin the future monitoring and evaluation framework. Discussion followed:

- The issue of specificity in the selection of indicators to measure performance against clear targets was discussed. Choosing the right indicators and linking them to GAVI's goals and objectives is critical.
- The evaluation policy, M&E system and evaluation designs should clearly reflect their intended use and users. This means clarifying the extent to which GAVI is committed to organizational and stakeholder learning, including among partners and participating countries, i.e. for purposes other than accountability/reporting.
- It is also important for GAVI to remain open to evaluation approaches and designs based on different paradigms, including qualitative research methods.
- The proposed "results framework" is a useful construct though there exists some risk that the framework is not comprehensive enough or collects superficial data. Ideally, a results framework could evolve into a "monitoring framework" that would encompass a fully fledged theory of change.
- To develop such a monitoring framework, it would be necessary to link the framework's goals, objectives, feedback loops and other processes to the soon-to-be-articulated overall GAVI strategy. The M&E team is working with the group facilitating the development of the strategy for GAVI's next phase in order to do exactly this.

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## 7 Options for Evaluation for GAVI's Next Phase

Peter Hansen presented initial work done in exploring options for development of monitoring and evaluation systems for GAVI's next phase (Doc #5). Options are being explored to develop monitoring and evaluation systems where evaluation activities and monitoring activities build on a common framework, be linked through a tiered, prospective approach and have regular reporting of results. Discussion followed:

The Committee endorsed in principle a tiered, forward-looking and systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation at GAVI, and identified providing guidance to the GAVI monitoring and evaluation team in developing this further as a priority for the coming year. The Committee requested the Secretariat to develop a revised concept note that articulates the objectives, strategy, design and next steps.

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## **8 Committee schedule, modalities of working and composition**

The Chair led a discussion on the future of the Committee including its operation and composition (Docs #6-10). Discussion followed:

- The Committee agreed that its primary objective is to maximise the utility and quality of evaluations, and help develop a coherent monitoring and evaluation system to assist in the Board's decision-making. In doing this, the Committee's immediate priorities include:
  - Providing oversight and quality review of major projects of the Secretariat's Monitoring and Evaluation team.
  - Providing advice on revisions to the GAVI Evaluation Policy.
  - Advising on the development of an overarching strategy and framework for monitoring and evaluation.
  - Advising on the workplan and budget for the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system developed for the period 2011-2015.
- The Committee agreed that real or perceived conflicts of interest amongst committee members will damage the credibility of the Committee and reduce its effectiveness and impact. The Committee reviewed its composition and agreed that the independence of the Committee's opinions is not a priori affected by the fact that members of the Committee are also Board members. In this context the Committee highlighted the terms of reference, which specify that Board members in the minority.
- It was agreed that the conflict of interest policy in effect for all Board Committees, shall also be applied to the Evaluation Advisory Committee.
- The Committee Chair will ensure that all members declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from inappropriate discussions should any exist.

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## **9 Action items and forward planning**

- With regard to the GAVI second evaluation, the Committee agreed that such an evaluation should benefit from the Committee's input. However, since the evaluation is already well underway, and given the very tight time frame, the Committee's input will be limited to critical products. The Committee requested that the Secretariat:
  - Share (electronically) the first emerging themes paper with the Committee after receipt from the consultants. The Committee members will comment on this to the extent possible.
  - Share the consultant's monthly progress reports (including their analysis of progress against the international evaluation standards and a description of any methodological and process constraints) with the Committee prior to the completion of the draft Phase 2 report.
  - Schedule an in-person Committee working session in May 2010 to comment on the draft Phase 2 report and discuss the evaluation for the next phase. Materials requested for this session include:
    - Relevant reports from the consultants detailing methodology and constraints as they become available.

- Updated mapping of current evaluation activities.
- Schedule an in-person Committee working session in the first half of October (before the December Board).
- There was consensus that the current composition of the Committee required augmentation. The Committee agreed that membership should be increased to include two additional independent evaluation experts. Committee members (and others) will submit candidates to the Secretariat and Chair for forwarding to the Governance Committee by 1 March 2010.
- The Committee requested the Secretariat to:
  - Distribute relevant Board membership policies and Committee membership principles prior to selecting new candidates.
  - Provide guidance on how changes to the Committee charter can be made.
  - Establish a shared virtual space (for example “myGAVI”) to facilitate secure sharing of documents and discussion amongst Committee members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Dr. Bernhard Schwartlander, Committee Chair

## Attachment A

### Participants

#### **Committee Members**

- Bernhard Schwartlander, Chair
- Zenda Ofir
- George Pariyo
- George W. Wellde, Jr.

#### **Regrets**

- Helen Rees
- Richard Sezibera

#### **Other Board Member Participants**

- Julian Lob-Levyt (for agenda item #1)

#### **GAVI**

- Abdallah Bchir
- Peter Hansen
- Stephen Nurse-Findlay
- Nina Schwalbe