

The GAVI Alliance Gender Policy

Towards Gender Equality in Immunisation and Related Health Services

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Objective

Promote increased coverage, effectiveness and efficiency of immunisation and related health services by ensuring that all girls and boys, women and men, receive equal access to these services.

The policy will guide the Alliance in terms of its programmatic operations, its governance structures and management of the Secretariat.

Gender equality – what does it mean?

- Gender equality refers to the absence of discrimination on the basis of one's sex in terms of resources, benefits, services and decision-making power.
- A gender sensitive approach recognises the differences between men and women, girls and boys and therefore defines the appropriate interventions according to their respective needs.

Rationale for a Gender Policy for the GAVI Alliance

- Improving programme effectiveness – gender equality is also a prerequisite for poverty reduction and development
- Attaining the MDGs
- Fulfilling the human rights to the highest attainable standard of health
- Realising GAVI's vision to be forward-looking & catalytic

Development Process

- Literature review
- Analysis of data
- Assessment of current gender perspective and practices of the GAVI Alliance
- Review of partners' approaches to gender
- Secretariat staff survey and country partners survey
- Stakeholder interviews
- 8 May consultation workshop

Guided by a time-limited inter-agency advisory committee

Evidence: gender and health

- Gender equality critical in reducing maternal and child mortality
- The inequalities are shown as:
 - vulnerability to disease
 - extent to which different people's health needs and concerns are acknowledged
 - access to health services
 - quality of health care
 - research on which health policies and decision making are based

Evidence: coverage differentials

- Differences in immunisation coverage
 - Biases against girls
 - South and South East Asia; West and East Africa
Pakistan 7,9 %, India 13,4%, Gambia 6,7%
 - Biases against boys
 - Africa (e.g. Madagascar, Nigeria, Namibia)
Madagascar 12%, Nigeria 7,9%
- However more analysis is needed as the evidence is still limited

Scope of the policy

- Apply a gender perspective to all work, in agreement with internationally agreed-upon legal and political commitments.
- Complement partners' efforts to promote gender equality in health.
- Promote country ownership and alignment with regard to gender equality.
- Play a catalytic role in promoting awareness and realisation of effective strategies to address gender inequality in health.

Strategic directions

- **Generate, report and analyse new evidence**
 - develop better understanding of the gender-based implications
 - report and analyse sex-disaggregated data
- **Ensure gender sensitive funding and policies**
 - incorporate a gender perspective in guidelines
 - gender dimension into all policy decisions
 - work with national expertise
- **Advocate for gender equality as a means to improve immunisation coverage and access to health services**

Implementation and next steps

- Finalisation of implementation strategy
- Report to the Board on progress annually
- External review of the gender policy and its implementation in 2012

The GAVI Alliance and Fund Board are requested to:

- **Approve the GAVI Alliance Gender policy**
- **Delegate responsibility to the GAVI Secretariat to work together with partners to develop a costed implementation strategy.**
- **Take note that adequate human and financial resources for gender mainstreaming are essential.**

