

# The Gavi grant management change process

Frequently asked questions  
June 2015

## Overall change process

### 1. How was it decided that grant management changes were needed?

Over recent years, through a series of consultation sessions, the Gavi Alliance Board, Programme and Policy Committee (PPC), partners, countries, and the Secretariat, identified challenges with Gavi's grant application, monitoring and review systems. In June 2013, the Gavi Alliance Board approved the principles and key elements of a proposed redesign of these systems and the Gavi Secretariat began to work with Alliance partners to launch the changes.

### 2. What was identified for improvement?

One area identified for improvement was the annual renewal process. This had been a once yearly desk review of grants by a panel of independent technical experts based on a 'one size fits all' annual report. Stakeholders agreed that this review process should engage countries and partners more effectively and should build on existing country mechanisms.

Limitations around routine grant monitoring were also identified as being important to address. It was agreed that changes were needed to strengthen the on-going monitoring of Gavi grant implementation progress and performance against a set of standard indicators, which could also be tailored to reflect various country circumstances.

### 3. What are the intended outcomes of the change process?

The purpose of the change process is to redesign and refine Gavi's grant management approach to increase grant impact, better manage risk, and increase value for money. The intended outcomes have various implications for countries, partners, the Secretariat and the Gavi Board as depicted below.

Intended Outcomes		
For countries	For Gavi Board	For Secretariat & Alliance partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased ownership through stronger country dialogue</li> <li>Improved alignment to country processes &amp; plans</li> <li>Lower transaction costs where possible</li> <li>Improved access to grant information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved fiduciary and programmatic oversight</li> <li>More timely information on the status of grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved quality and timeliness of grant information enabling pro-active grant management</li> <li>More efficient and effective internal processes with greater clarity of purpose, roles and responsibilities</li> <li>Grant management standards defined and practiced, including differentiation of approach</li> <li>Better engagement and greater accountability across the Alliance to resolve implementation challenges and deliver support</li> </ul>

#### 4. What exactly is changing?

In the past, to renew funding, countries submitted an Annual Progress Report (APR) to the Gavi Secretariat along with a request for the next year's vaccine and cash support. The renewal decisions were based on a desk review by an independent panel of technical experts. The reporting through the APR was required at a set time in the year, not necessarily aligned with countries' planning and fiscal cycles, nor based on when data became available.

The change process intends to streamline and strengthen the progress reporting and review processes, and includes some new elements including:

- a. Joint appraisal: a new step in the grant renewal process. It moves the discussion on grant implementation progress and future needs to the country level and engages more effectively those most familiar with the Gavi support. The joint nature of the appraisal aims to foster stronger collaboration between government and Gavi stakeholders, and achieve a common understanding of opportunities, challenges and critical needs for support and technical assistance through transparent dialogue.
- b. High Level Review Panel (HLRP): replaces the monitoring Independent Review Committee (IRC) and comprises senior management from WHO, UNICEF and the Gavi Secretariat as well as some independent technical experts. The HLRP meets three times a year to accommodate requests from countries that have different planning and fiscal cycles. Upon conducting a review of the outcomes of the in-country joint appraisal process, the HLRP makes recommendations to Gavi's Chief Executive Officer on the renewal of Gavi new vaccine support (NVS) and/or health system strengthening support (HSS) for a further year, reviews recommended actions to respond to needs identified, and discusses cross-cutting issues to improve policies and operations of the alliance. It also discusses allocation of resources for Alliance partners to provide technical assistance to countries.
- c. Grant performance monitoring: a new tool, the grant performance framework, will be introduced to monitor an agreed set of performance indicators to track programmatic performance, financial utilisation, activity implementation progress against targets and programme outcomes.

#### 5. By when will the changes be complete?

This is a multi-year change process with new elements designed, tested and refined following different timelines. By the end of 2015, many Gavi-supported countries will have conducted a joint appraisal and starting in 2016, countries will use a performance framework to report progress and performance of Gavi grants. A new online portal will be introduced in 2016 to facilitate better consolidation and presentation of data and to collate relevant information from a variety of sources. Consultation and learning is taking place along the way so that the changes should be complete by the end of 2016.

#### 6. What are the key dates for 2015?

There are three High Level Review Panel (HLRP) review meetings scheduled this year. The associated deadlines to submit materials (including the Annual Progress Report) are as follows:

2015	APR submission	Joint appraisal submission	HLRP Meeting
May HLRP	15 April	20 April	11-13 May
July HLRP	15 May	20 June	22-24 July
October HLRP		15 September	14-16 October

## **Performance framework**

### **7. What is a performance framework?**

The performance framework is an upfront agreement between the country and Gavi on the key metrics used to report on and monitor grant performance during implementation. It includes agreed indicators and related baselines, targets, data sources and reporting schedule. There will be one performance framework per country that includes all indicators to be tracked across all Gavi grants. Frequency of reporting will be determined on an indicator-by-indicator basis, largely driven by the data sources selected and could vary from quarterly, semi-annual to annual. Reporting against the performance framework will have to be kept up-to-date, especially prior to conducting a joint appraisal.

### **8. How will the performance framework be used?**

For grant management, performance frameworks will be used to help signal the need to potentially revisit grant objectives and activities or to re-allocate funds if implementation is slow or targets not being met. They will also inform grant disbursement decisions. For example, frameworks track progress on intermediate results and outcomes (coverage and equity) to help determine HSS PBF programmatic and reward payments. Financial utilisation indicators will inform recommendations on whether to disburse the next tranche or not. They will be used as a key reference document during country missions (to discuss the reasons for not meeting targets, poor fund utilisation or slow activity implementation) and as a critical input to the joint appraisal.

### **9. What is the time-frame for the roll-out of grant performance frameworks?**

Grant performance frameworks will be rolled-out beginning mid-2015. Gavi will seek to learn from early adopters and bring required refinements and changes to the tool itself, as well as accompanying materials. Gavi aims to have all countries reporting using the performance framework in 2016.

## Joint appraisals

### 10. What is a joint appraisal?

The joint appraisal is an annual, in-country, multi-stakeholder review of the implementation progress and performance of Gavi's vaccine and cash grant support to the country, and of its contribution to improved immunisation outcomes.

### 11. What are the objectives of a joint appraisal?

The objective of the joint appraisal is three-fold:

- To identify persistent challenges impeding progress, in particular toward improved coverage and equity.
- To highlight areas where greater national investments and efforts, as well as technical support, are needed.
- To inform the Gavi decision on the renewal of its grants, and enable consideration of how to optimize its catalytic support to help improve immunisation outcomes.

### 12. Is this another review of the national immunisation programme?

The joint appraisal is not a review of the immunisation programme. It is a review of implementation progress and performance of Gavi's vaccine and cash grants to a country within the overall context of the national immunisation programme. The joint appraisal will build on situational analysis and contextual information from other recent reviews (e.g. Expanded Programme on Immunisation review, post introduction evaluations, joint health sector reviews) as these other reviews shed light on many system bottlenecks, and should be used to inform the joint appraisal. As both a backward-looking and a forward-looking exercise, the joint appraisal review of past performance will inform a discussion on how Gavi's resources can be best directed in the coming year to maximise their impact on immunisation outcomes.

### 13. Who conducts the joint appraisal?

The "joint appraisal team", is responsible for carrying out the appraisal and reporting on its findings. Typically the team would include government officials (those involved in the programmatic and financial management of NVS and HSS grants), and relevant staff from Alliance partner organisations (at country, regional and/or headquarter levels), and the Gavi Secretariat.

### 14. When does the joint appraisal take place?

The joint appraisals should, wherever possible, be planned to align with other planning, review or fiscal cycles and related activities in country (e.g. annual work planning/reviews/evaluation). Other considerations include the timing of disbursement needs for Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) grants, timing of other competing activities in country where key stakeholders may not be available to participate (e.g. elections, vaccine introductions, World Immunisation Week, etc.), the availability of key data sources that inform the appraisal, such as the APR, reports from household and facility surveys and other relevant assessments, WHO/UNICEF Joint Reporting Form (JRF).

In the long run, we foresee that each country may adopt a regular timing for the joint appraisal that most fits its needs, and countries will come to the HLRP around the same time every year. Countries should discuss with partners and Gavi Senior Country Managers what would work best for them in the future. Gavi will use this information to inform the future timing for HLRP panels.

## **15. Who is responsible for writing the report?**

The responsibility for report-writing may vary by country. The responsibility could be split among the joint appraisal team members, or a person could be designated upfront to draft the report and circulate it more broadly for feedback. This responsibility for report writing, editing and finalisation needs to be agreed upon early on during the planning process. The Gavi Senior Country Manager will work with the joint appraisal team to ensure the final report is complete and responsive to grant management needs.

## **16. Do I need to use the provided report template?**

Countries are requested to use the report template provided, as the structure will help ensure completeness of reporting as well as a consistent presentation to the High Level Review Panel (HLRP). It will also help regional and global partners identify common issues across countries and inform how they can best provide support.

## **17. What is the purpose of including technical assistance requests in the joint appraisal?**

The joint appraisal section on technical assistance is to encourage this discussion among in-country partners during their review of Gavi grant performance. This will help ensure technical assistance needs identified focus on the critical bottlenecks related to Gavi grants and the immunisation programmes. Gavi intends to use the information reported in this section to help clarify roles and responsibilities and improve coordination of partners providing assistance at country level. It will also help the Alliance identify the resources required by partners to provide future support to countries.

## **18. What types of technical assistance should I describe in joint appraisal form section 4.1?**

In section 4.1, countries are asked to describe the scope and focus of technical assistance currently provided by various partners. This could include support on specific technical issues (e.g. cold chain and logistics, EVM assessment, social mobilisation, financial management system), or broader management support (e.g. new vaccine introduction, coverage improvement plan, graduation plan). If this information already exists in another document, please reference these other sources. This information will help ensure that the technical support is focused, well-coordinated and appropriately resourced.

## **19. How much detail should be included in the technical assistance section?**

Unless the need for TA is expressed and detailed in another document, it is encouraged to provide sufficient detail in the Joint Appraisal form to ensure that partners will be able to respond appropriately to the needs expressed by the country. However, in cases where the need has not been fully defined at the time of the joint appraisal process, the report can include a more generic description of the needs which could be described in greater detail later with the appropriate partners.

## **20. Will Gavi fund all of the technical assistance needs identified in the joint appraisal?**

Most of the technical assistance needs identified through the joint appraisal process should be met by partners using their core resources, specifically when these partners are UN institutions, bilateral donors, or other institutions already funded for immunisation-related programmes. Gavi will

however consider providing additional resources for assistance that is not funded through any other mechanism.

## **21. What are the relationships between the APR, the joint appraisal, and the performance framework?**

The **APR** has served as the annual reporting tool for countries to report quantitative information on Gavi grant performance (past and projected) as well as qualitative information around achievements and challenges in grant implementation. Reporting will still be required of countries, but new approaches will improve the way countries report and the way Gavi and country partners use this information to strengthen grant management. Such changes include the performance framework, the joint appraisal process and the roll-out of a new online portal. To avoid duplication of reporting by countries, the Secretariat will collate information from existing sources such as the JRF.

Going forward, countries will continue to use various different tools and approaches to help monitor and evaluate their grants, including grant-specific reports and evaluations, EVM assessments, coverage evaluation surveys and various others. Grant **performance frameworks** will be introduced to monitor an agreed set of performance indicators adapted to each country to capture programmatic performance against both core (standardised across all countries) and tailored (country / grant specific) indicators during the implementation of Gavi grant support. Many of these indicators are familiar to countries, having been reported through the APR previously, and continuing to be reported against in the WHO/UNICEF Joint Reporting Form.

The **joint appraisal** brings together country, regional and global stakeholders to review the implementation progress and performance of Gavi's vaccine and cash grant support within the context of the national immunisation programme. The joint appraisal uses the quantitative data reported through the performance framework along with key reports and other information sources, and recommends corrective actions to improve grant performance and immunisation outcomes (see more on questions below).

## **22. In 2015, is there not a duplication of reporting required by Gavi in the APR and the joint appraisal?**

In 2015, Gavi retains the APR while the new performance framework and online portal are being developed. This does mean that there will be some overlap between the APR and the joint appraisal this year. To minimize this duplication where possible, Gavi has removed some fields from the APR so that the qualitative analysis will be included only in the joint appraisal report instead of the APR.

The APR will be phased out in 2016. A new online country portal is being designed to improve the reporting of quantitative performance data as well as to organize supporting country documents (e.g. ICC/HSCC minutes, comprehensive multi-year plans, financial statements, etc.).

## **23. Who do I contact if I have a question about a joint appraisal in my country?**

Please contact your Gavi Secretariat Senior Country Manager (SCM) should you have any questions regarding joint appraisals, or alternatively send an email to: [renewals@gavi.org](mailto:renewals@gavi.org).

## **High Level Review Panel (HLRP)**

### **24. What is the HLRP and who's on it?**

Comprised of senior management from the Gavi Secretariat, WHO, UNICEF, as well as three members from the Independent Review Committee (IRC), the HLRP makes recommendations to Gavi's Chief Executive Officer on annual renewals of funding for Gavi new vaccine support (NVS) and/or health system strengthening support (HSS).

In addition to the funding recommendations, the HLRP reviews the recommendations and outcomes of the joint appraisal process to assess steps that can be taken by Alliance partners to strengthen support to the country and improve immunisation outcomes. It also identifies cross-cutting issues to generate learning and help inform improved implementation, policy, and strategy across the Gavi Alliance.

### **25. How often does the HLRP meet?**

The HLRP takes place three times per year. See question 6 for a detailed schedule for this year (2015).