

Subject **Evolution of Gavi's Partnership Approach**

Agenda item **11**

Category **For Decision**

Executive Summary

The Alliance model brings together the collective force of partners at the global, regional and country level to help accelerate immunisation outcomes in Gavi-supported countries, in line with Gavi's five-year strategies. The Partners' Engagement Framework (PEF), introduced in Gavi 4.0, marked a significant evolution in the way Alliance partners work together and included three funding levers: Targeted Country Assistance (TCA), Foundational Support (FS) and special investments in Strategic Focus Areas (SFA)¹. In Gavi 5.0/5.1, the partnership model expanded with diversification of the partner base to meet the Alliance's ambitious priorities.

The Alliance is at an important junction as it prepares for Gavi 6.0. The Board therefore requested a review of the partnership model to ensure it is fit for purpose for the new strategic period, including a request for a stronger accountability mechanism. As noted by the Gavi Programme and Policy Committee (PPC), the evolution of the model is even more critical in the context of the profound impact of current geopolitical shifts on the global development ecosystem with many countries and partners experiencing significant funding reductions that may impact delivery of immunisation programmes. **Closely aligned with the direction of the Gavi Leap, this paper lays out four principles (country ownership, differentiation, context appropriate partnerships, focus on results) and two key levers (funding model and accountability framework) to implement these.** The approach has been recommended for approval by the PPC and has been informed by consultations with countries, partners and donors including the Alliance Partnerships and Performance Team (APPT), a dedicated Cross-Alliance Working Group (CAWG), targeted country and regional consultations. It builds on key learnings from Gavi 5.0/5.1, independent evaluations and a benchmarking exercise conducted by an external firm. In May 2025, the PPC delegated authority to the PPC Chair and CEO to make a recommendation to the Board on the country foundational functions component of the Partnerships Accountability Framework (PAF), taking into consideration inputs from the PPC's 14-15 May 2025 meeting as well as additional consultations.

¹ TCA: technical assistance to Gavi-supported countries; FS: Longer term funding at the global and regional level to support essential functions of Core Partners in developing global immunisation normative guidance and standards; SFA: Project based funding at global and regional level, for all partners, to accelerate progress and address critical gaps through new global goods, learning agendas and to establishing proof of concept for innovative tools and approaches at country level.

Action Requested of the Board

The Gavi Alliance Programme and Policy Committee **recommended** to the Gavi Alliance Board that it:

Approve the evolution of the Partnership Approach described in Annex D to Doc 11.

The Gavi Alliance Programme and Policy Committee Chair and the CEO **recommended** to the Gavi Alliance Board that it:

Approve the country foundational functions component of the Partnerships Accountability Framework (PAF) described in Annex C to Doc 11.

Next steps/timeline

Following Board approval, the Gavi Secretariat will continue to prepare for the roll-out of the new Partnership Approach as part of the broader preparations for Gavi 6.0. If needed, updates to the approach will be made following any potential recalibration of Gavi 6.0 priorities by the Board.

Previous Board Committee or Board deliberations related to this topic

In May 2025 Programme and Policy Committee (PPC) folder: Doc 12 - *Evolution of Gavi's Partnership Approach*

In December 2024 Board meeting book: Doc 06b - *Funding Policy Review* – Provided a decision on the consolidation of funding levers

In June 2024 Board meeting book: Doc 05 - *Gavi 6.0 The Alliance's strategy 2026-2030*

Report

1. Context

- 1.1 The Alliance model brings the collective force of its partners to accelerate immunisation outcomes in Gavi-supported countries.** It draws on the sum of its partners' strengths to deliver critical support to governments. **The Alliance model is currently anchored around the Partners' Engagement Framework (PEF).** Funding for partners under PEF comprises three levers, with the following 5.0/5.1 programmatic budget: US\$ 551 million for Targeted Country Assistance (TCA), US\$ 257 million for Foundational Support (FS) and US\$ 177 million for special investments in Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs). Grounded in a set of lessons learned from 5.0/5.1, the partnerships approach, central to the Gavi Leap (see Doc 02), will evolve in Gavi 6.0 to support strategic priorities in a changing global health ecosystem with more constrained funding.

2. Gavi's Partnership Approach in Gavi 6.0

- 2.1 Four principles help guide the Partnership Approach for Gavi 6.0,** which would be implemented mainly through two levers – an updated funding model and new Partnerships Accountability Framework. The principles of the new Partnership Approach are aligned with the December 2024 Board decision to **combine parts of country level technical assistance (TA) alongside other Gavi cash funding levers into a consolidated cash grant.** While closely linked to the funding model for the Partnership Approach, this reform is further elaborated in the Gavi 6.0 Health System Strategy and Policy (see Doc 06) and referenced below as relevant.

2.2 Principles

- 2.2.1 Country ownership - rebalance towards a country centric approach.** Country ownership of TA investments and their results can differ greatly and are not always well-coordinated with other Gavi country-level cash grants. In Gavi 6.0, per PPC guidance provided in May 2025, there will be a stronger focus on country ownership, in line with the Lusaka agenda, by:

- Operationalising the December 2024 Board decision to consolidate most country-level TA with Gavi cash funding levers (see Doc 06), increasing country decision-making over financial resources;
- Including foundational long-term country support functions ('Country Foundations') that are programmed in line with country needs as part of the new Foundational Fund (see Section 2.3.1); and
- Increasing transparency and country ownership of results through the new Partnerships Accountability Framework (see Section 2.3.2).

- 2.2.2 Differentiation – partner contributions better aligned with Gavi 6.0 priorities based on country context.** Historically, PEF support focused on ongoing priorities rather than adopting new Alliance strategic

priorities or tailoring support to country contexts. Additionally, partner support has not sufficiently transferred skills to strengthen country capacity and ensure sustainability of support. In Gavi 6.0, partner support will be better aligned with Gavi 6.0 priorities and tailored to each country's context, in line with the differentiated approach outlined in Gavi 6.0 Health Systems Strategy. This will see an increasing shift of TA from gap-filling to capacity strengthening as countries progress through the transition continuum. It will be implemented by the levers outlined in 2.3.

2.2.3 Context appropriate partnerships – systematically select partners based on their comparative strengths. This is not yet implemented systematically in Gavi 5.0/5.1, despite partner diversification. In Gavi 6.0, partner selection will be more deliberately informed by past performance, established presence and ability to deliver results. This will include partners within and beyond immunisation such as Maternal Newborn and Child Health. At the country level, this will be implemented through new programming guidelines on partner selection and other safeguards (see Annex A). At the global and regional levels, this will be achieved either through a competitive, open selection process (for 'global/regional solutions') or invited funding proposals (for 'global/regional foundations'). As detailed in Annex A, all funding requests will undergo an independent review by Gavi's Independent Review Committee (IRC) with the exception of projects within 'global/regional solutions' assessed as low risk and low materiality. These may be considered for an internal Secretariat-led review process building off the lessons learned from the pilots that were part of the IRC transformation (see Doc 09)². The PPC emphasised the importance of strong guidelines for partner selection and the IRC review of country applications.

2.2.4 Focus on results. Despite reforms in Gavi 5.0/5.1, visibility on results remains limited with somewhat heavy reporting processes, lacking clear escalation pathways or consistent course corrections. In Gavi 6.0, there will be a shift towards mutual accountability, streamlined processes and radical transparency regarding partner funding, results achieved and Secretariat performance. This will be achieved via the new Partnerships Accountability Framework described in Section 2.3.2, and other Secretariat reforms such as the Gavi 6.0 execution framework.

2.3 Lever 1 - Funding model: Replace the PEF funding model with a streamlined approach centred on a new **US\$ 492 million Foundational Fund, complemented by US\$ 358 million consolidated within the cash envelope for partner support.** The Fund, combining funding at global, regional and country-level (TCA not consolidated cash grant), contains three guardrails:

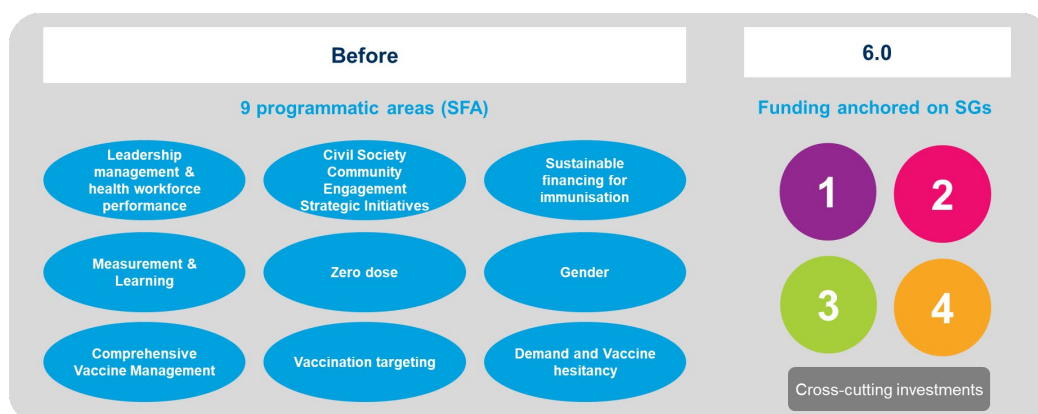
² This will require an exception to the Terms of Reference of the IRC which will be discussed by the Governance Committee in H2 2025.

- **‘Country Foundations’ (US\$ 193 million in Gavi 6.0): predictable long-term funding to WHO and UNICEF and, in select countries where contextually applicable, other country-selected partners to support immunisation programmes at the country level.** The foundational functions supported will represent minimum support and be differentiated based on country context. Based on PPC guidance, in all countries, an Immunisation Programme Support function will provide broad support across planning (including support for vaccine portfolio optimisation and prioritisation), advocacy, implementation, and co-ordination of Alliance partners, including beyond immunisation. This function will be complemented by targeted support from a menu of technical functions, selected based on country needs, to include vaccine and cold chain management, demand, data, and emergency response (e.g. outbreaks). Importantly, each function will help strengthen country capacity.
- **‘Global and Regional Foundations’ (US\$ 199 million in Gavi 6.0): predictable long-term funding for the Gavi 6.0 period, primarily to core and select expanded partners³ to provide global and regional functions necessary for effective immunisation programmes.** These foundational functions include: (a) normative guidance and public health goods; (b) partnership, advocacy, strategy and governance; (c) immunisation programme monitoring and data; and (d) regional coordination, technical support and quality assurance.
- **‘Global and Regional Solutions’ (US\$ 100 million in Gavi 6.0): project-based support of variable duration accessible for all partners⁴ to deliver critical innovative and catalytic initiatives at global and regional levels** helping solve persistent problems impeding immunisation outcomes. It includes testing new approaches, learning, measurement and advocacy. It will be structured around the four Gavi Strategic Goals to ensure close alignment with Gavi 6.0 priorities. As shown in Figure 1 below and following Alliance Partnerships and Performance Team (APPT) recommendation, the approach streamlines the current fragmentation seen in SFAs in which funding is divided into nine programmatic areas.

³ A small amount of foundational funding (US\$ 5-10 million, allocated through a competitive process) will be made available for a select number of expanded partners to cover costs related to foundational functions at global/regional level.

⁴ Including all existing / prospective core and expanded partners (i.e. recipient of Gavi funding) that win the competitive bidding process.

Figure 1. Evolution of global/regional solutions



2.3.1 The indicative strategic cost estimate for Gavi 6.0 approved by the Board in June 2024 entails a reduction in PEF funding from approximately US\$ 1 billion in Gavi 5.0/5.1 to US\$ 850 million. Some partners raised concerns as to whether the levels of funding for the Foundational Fund are sufficient. The amounts for the funding guardrails are grounded in extensive analysis. **They aim to protect country-level implementation of immunisation programmes** in priority. The reduction in funding will be borne at the global and regional levels, with country-level funding (across Country Foundations and the share of PEF TCA funding becoming part of the consolidated cash grants [see Doc 06]) retaining 100% of their Gavi 5.1 funding value. This means that in addition to the US\$ 193 million in Country Foundations, US\$ 358 million of former TCA will be included in the consolidated cash grant, in line with the principle of country ownership. The guardrails also factor in the important role of core partners across all levels, as well as the importance of catalytic, innovative initiatives to ensure progress on immunisation outcomes, often supported by other partners.

2.4 Lever 2 - Partnerships Accountability Framework (PAF): Building on experience from Gavi 5.0/5.1, the support provided through the Foundational Fund will be measured through a robust accountability mechanism ensuring mutual and institutional accountability, transparency, cross-portfolio learning and allowing course correction of partner support. The PAF will be integrated into the Gavi 6.0 Execution Framework, featuring accountability from the broader Alliance, including the Secretariat.

2.4.1 The PAF focuses on results that are tangible, measurable, and at the right level (e.g. output or outcome) to measure contributions. Results are linked to foundational functions, and measured through standardised performance indicators. Country-level indicators will be integrated in the country grant monitoring frameworks, enabling holistic performance management of Gavi support at that level. Reporting will be based on an integrated tool across all levels of foundational functions. Quarterly check-ins, aligned with financial reporting, will be

complemented by detailed biannual programmatic reports and independent third-party assessments. Performance management will reflect collaborative Alliance engagement and a tiered approach, including review of reports, and corrective actions via platforms like the APPT and Regional Working Groups, building on Gavi 5.0/5.1 good practices.

2.4.2 The accountability framework will entail revised grant agreements with core partners and/or service agreements with other partners.

The revised agreements will strengthen the possibility for proactive course correction. Disbursements against the Foundational Fund will be contingent on the finalisation of the PAF (see Annex A).

2.4.3 At its May 2025 meeting, the PPC welcomed the new Partnerships Accountability Framework (PAF) and highlighted the importance of including results that are proportionate with partners' contributions and associated with relevant and meaningful indicators. The PPC also delegated the authority to review the country foundations component of the PAF to the PPC Chair and Gavi CEO in advance of the Board meeting who have since recommended the country component of the PAF go forward to the Board for approval. They highlighted the need to allow for adjustments to the indicators over the course of the strategic period.

3. Next steps

3.1 Annex A provides further details on the implementation pathways for the new Partnership Approach. It includes programming the Foundational Fund⁵, and the development of the global/regional component of the Partnership Accountability Framework, to be shared with the Board for visibility.

Annexes and Appendices

Annex A: Overview of implementation pathway

Annex B: Overview of key risks and mitigation actions

Annex C: Partnerships Accountability Framework: country foundations component

Annex D: Overview of Partnerships Approach

⁵ This includes six-month funding extensions of ongoing support from January to June 2026 to ensure a smooth transition. Extensions will cover Country and Global/Regional Foundations. Given the relatively low materiality and risk this is proposed to be managed through a Secretariat-led review process building on the lessons learned from the pilots that were part of the Independent Review Committee (IRC) transformation (see Doc 09). This will require an exception to the Terms of Reference of the IRC which will be discussed by the Governance Committee at its 21 July 2025 meeting for a recommendation for decision to the Board at its July 2025 meeting.