GAVI Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee Meeting

20-21 January 2011
Geneva, Switzerland

FINAL MINUTES

1. Welcome, introduction and Secretariat update

Finding a quorum of members present, the meeting commenced at 9.10 on 20 January 2011. Bernhard Schwartländer chaired the meeting. The Chair welcomed the participants (including Sania Nishtar via videoconference from Pakistan) and the Committee agreed to some changes to the agenda. The Chair then welcomed the acting GAVI CEO, Helen Evans, and invited her to update the Committee on key developments within the GAVI Alliance.

Ms Evans briefed the Committee on several issues including:

- The GAVI Alliance strategy and business plan for 2011-15
- The recruitment of a new CEO, recent installation of a new GAVI Alliance Board Chair and the replenishment process for the GAVI Alliance
- The recent launch of pneumococcal vaccine in Nicaragua, the planned launch in Kenya and the recent launch in Burkina Faso of the vaccine to prevent Meningitis A
- Progress in co-financing, implementation of the Health Systems Funding Platform, and the status of the call for new vaccine applications
- The role that the Second GAVI Evaluation would have in the April 2011 GAVI Alliance Board retreat

2. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the Committee's last meeting on 29 June 2010 were approved with the following amendments:

- On page 2 (section 3, 4th bullet), in addition to the survey instruments listed from DHS and UNICEF, GAVI should also include the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Study.

- Correction for page 4 (Strategic goal 2, 2nd bullet) - DTP1 measures access and DTP3 measures system strength.

- Given that the Alliance is working with multiple partners to ensure maximum reduction of morbidity, disability, and mortality, specific attribution to specific partners is not possible.

Decision One

The GAVI Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee moved to:

- **Approve** the minutes of its meeting on 29 June 2010, pending the amendments noted above.

3. Presenting the Second GAVI Evaluation at the Board Retreat

The Committee discussed how it could support preparation for the discussion on the Second GAVI Evaluation at the April Board retreat.

- The Committee noted that the evaluation reports are rich in information, but too long to be accessible for most readers. A shorter summary is needed to help inform the Board retreat and for other audiences. They asked the Secretariat to produce this document and share it with Committee members for feedback.

- The Secretariat could consider creating a short documentary film outlining the evaluation's key findings.

- The Committee noted that the terms of reference for future evaluations should specify the type of summary document required and set clear expectations in relation to content, format and length.

4. Update on Monitoring and Evaluation Activities

Peter Hansen, Director of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), provided an update on GAVI M&E activities, including the finalisation of the M&E Framework and Strategy, development of indicators for the GAVI Alliance Strategy for 2011-15, the review of GAVI Independent Review Committees and the Second GAVI Evaluation.

- The Committee applauded the manner in which the M&E team leveraged partnerships and existing work, drawing on the IHP+ and Paris principles.

- GAVI should go forward with its work in developing the full country evaluations, while continuing to engage other agencies and identify opportunities for harmonisation in the coming months and years. The fact that partners are at different levels of readiness for harmonisation of evaluation activities should not slow GAVI's progress in this area.

- The Committee noted the importance of tracking equity vis-a-vis other stratifiers, in addition to wealth status in the strategy. The Secretariat clarified that while the indicator only explicitly measures equity vis-a-vis wealth status, equity vis-a-vis other stratifiers – including the sex of the child and urban/rural status - will be tracked in countries for which such data are available. The committee recommended development of indicators for the operating principles.

- Where the strategy and indicators refer to 'DTP3', a note should be added to indicate that for the majority of countries this refers to pentavalent DTP-hepB-hib vaccine rather than trivalent DTP vaccine.

- The Committee noted that the language on pages 17 and 19 of the M&E update paper should be revisited to appropriately reflect the principle of "contribution, not attribution". On page 19, the phrase 'as a result of GAVI support' should be deleted from the indicator definition.

- The Committee noted data sources and data quality as a cross cutting issue and noted this issue should be addressed as an agenda item in the next meeting.

- The Committee noted that GAVI evaluation activities should address issues of sustainability, particularly in relation to graduating countries.

- The Committee noted that it is important that the indicators and targets in the strategy be treated as a living document, and that the Board consider bringing changes where appropriate in response to lessons learned over time.

5. Revision of Evaluation Policy on Monitoring and Evaluation Activities

Abdallah Bchir, Senior Specialist in Evaluation, presented the evaluation policy approved by the Board in 2008 for guidance on whether the policy should be revised, and if so, with what changes. Discussion followed:

- Given that GAVI is a partnership, a key omission from the policy is an evaluation of the partnership dimensions of the alliance.

- The evaluation policy should address the roles of the Evaluation Advisory Committee and steering committees for specific evaluations.

- The policy should not separate the monitoring and evaluation functions, but consider these together.

- The policy should address the role of countries and define principles for the role of in-country actors in evaluations that take place at country level.

- The policy should define different types of evaluations that may be conducted.

- Consideration should be given to how much GAVI wants to innovate in evaluation. Additional criteria beyond OECD DAC could be added, including policy coherence, quality standards, social return on investment and transferability/scalability.

- On page 5 (section 3.2), 'future activities' should be changed to 'current and future activities'.

- On page 5, conflict of interest should be added to the principles.

- On page 7 (section 3.4.2), the Committee recommends including equity and impact on poverty.

- On page 9 of the evaluation policy (Section 4.1 "Designing evaluations", 2nd paragraph), the Committee noted the text "To avoid conflict of interest, individual members of evaluations teams must not have been personally engaged in the activities to be evaluated." The Committee recommends that this be elevated to the level of a principle within the evaluation policy.

- The Committee also recommended reviewing the terms used on pages 7 and 8 to ensure that they capture the most appropriate points.

- The Committee agreed to present recommended changes to the Board in November.

- Committee members were invited by the Chair to send additional comments on the evaluation policy via email. A revised document will be discussed at the next face-to-face meeting.

6. Full Country Evaluations

Peter Hansen presented on the full country evaluations and asked the Committee to provide guidance on questions to be addressed, engagement with Alliance partners and other global health initiatives, and oversight arrangements. Discussion followed:

- The RFP should clarify the expectations in relation to use of existing studies and data collection systems. The principle should be clearly stated that these evaluations should use existing studies and data wherever feasible and appropriate (e.g., household surveys, administrative data, surveillance systems, vaccine effectiveness studies, health systems performance assessments). These evaluations should not recreate what already exists and they should not be taken as health systems performance assessments.

- GAVI's goal level indicators, results framework and the full set of evaluation questions must be clearly and coherently addressed. The RFP will need to provide potential bidders with sufficient information on existing activities in the

first and second tiers of GAVI's M&E framework, and proposals from bidders will need to present a robust plan for addressing the indicators, results framework and evaluation questions.

- Targeted studies in the second tier of the M&E framework should leverage the full country evaluations and be conducted in the same sites, where appropriate.

- GAVI should invest in drawing out the theory of change underpinning its strategy and the assumptions that underlie why the organisation thinks that change will happen in the manner anticipated.

- GAVI's effort to further draw out the theory of change can be facilitated by examining the *OneUN* evaluations, or by positioning the organisation to test and develop the elements of the recently developed sustainability checklist.

- The question of generalisability is an important but challenging one. These evaluations should not over-reach in attempting to serve as a basis for producing results generalisable to all GAVI supported countries, but at the same time core principles of learning should be made explicit, and parameters for generalisability should be constructed in advance. One purpose of the evaluations is to explain heterogeneity—why do some things work in some places but not in others?

- GAVI should prepare for these evaluations on dual tracks. GAVI should fast-track an RFP, and focus efforts on finalising aspects of the evaluation that need to be finalised in advance of sending the RFP. GAVI should consider convening a meeting with relevant experts and countries to conduct a consultation on the evaluations. Consideration should be given to linking this to the adjudication process in such a manner that short listed firms are invited to present their proposed approaches at the meeting.

Country selection:

- Country capacity to conduct relevant studies and analyses is an important consideration. It may be worth prioritising countries where previous evaluation studies have established a baseline to prevent duplicative efforts.

- Consideration should be given to where existing evaluations are taking place, and whether there is potential to harmonise and align activities.

- A mix of countries including high and low performing systems should be selected. DTP3 coverage is a reasonable measure of system strength for this purpose.

- The RFP should list criteria for country selection rather than pre-select countries. The strength of justification for the selection of countries should be part of the assessment of bids in the adjudication process.

Contractor selection:

- Bidders should apply in coalitions with in-country partners.

- Bidders should demonstrate relevant experience, specifically with regard to financial, quantitative and qualitative expertise, and experience conducting evaluations in low income settings.

7. Review of Accelerated Vaccine Introduction Platform

Abdallah Bchir led the discussion on this agenda item and explained that GAVI established the Accelerated Vaccine Introduction (AVI) initiative in 2008 to improve coordination of activities related to new vaccine introduction in GAVI supported countries. A management review of this initiative has been planned for 2011 to assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of its structure. The Secretariat shared with the Committee feedback provided by the AVI outsourced entity and the AVI Management Team on the draft evaluation questions. The Committee was asked to provide guidance on this review. Discussion followed:

- The Committee noted that AVI is in many ways an Alliance within an Alliance, with complex partnership dimensions. Recent evaluations, including the Second GAVI Evaluation, have not explicitly addressed partnership dimensions of the Alliance.

- Instead of conducting an external review of AVI at the present time, a broader evaluation of partnership issues within GAVI should be considered, with AVI as one case study of collaboration as an integral part of the broader GAVI model.

- Existing literature on coalition evaluations serve as a useful model for thinking about such an evaluation within the GAVI context.

- The possibility of a broader evaluation on partnerships should be discussed with the Board at its retreat in April.

- A management review of the initiative would not require the oversight of the committee.

8. Evaluation of GAVI support for Civil Society Organisations

Abdallah Bchir led the discussion on this agenda item. Mr Bchir explained that the GAVI Board approved the opening of a window of support to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in November 2006 and that an evaluation has been scheduled for 2011. Discussion followed:

- The Committee noted that there are important lessons to be learned from the experience of the GAVI CSO window and that it is critically important to generate and document this learning through an evaluation.

- The Committee agreed that for transparency the CSO community and other relevant partners should be given an opportunity to provide their feedback on several elements of the evaluation. However, feedback should not be binding to the EAC, in order to ensure the independence and objectivity of the evaluation.

- The Committee delegates to the Secretariat the development of the terms of reference for the evaluation. Committee members' participation in this process will be welcomed and encouraged.

- The Committee delegates to the Secretariat the selection of a contractor for the evaluation.

9. Committee work plan and schedule for 2011

The Committee Chair led this discussion on defining the Committee's work plan and schedule for 2011. The Committee agreed on the following:

- The summary document on the Second GAVI Evaluation to serve as the basis for the evaluation discussion at the Board retreat in April will be reviewed by the Committee during a teleconference scheduled for 3 March at 17:00 Geneva time.

- The Committee will review the draft terms of reference for the CSO evaluation during the March teleconference.

- The Committee will review the draft terms of reference for the full country evaluations during its March teleconference.

- The first week of August was discussed as the possible timing of the next in-person meeting. The Secretariat will follow up via email to finalise dates. Options will be explored for linking the Committee's in-person meeting with the group meeting on the full country evaluations.

10. Further Discussion on Full Country Evaluations

Peter Hansen led this discussion. Building upon the previous day's discussion of the full country evaluations, the Committee's guidance was requested on the detailed design of the evaluation, methodological considerations to be addressed in the RFP, and criteria for country and consultant selection.

- The Committee endorsed the general approach, which it considered comprehensive and systematic. They noted that:

  - The full country evaluations should address more than the quantitative expressions of success (e.g., strategic goal level indicators).

  - The full country evaluations should be used as comparative case studies to examine how GAVI support plays out at the country level. The entire results chain should be assessed, including process, implementation and context.

  - GAVI's plans to stimulate country-level learning and to institutionalise monitoring and evaluation systems should be more clearly articulated.

- The evaluations should use two types of questions—general questions that are included in the evaluation in each participating country and additional questions that are relevant to, and addressed in, certain sub-sets of countries.

- The link between evaluation and knowledge management should be made explicit. In general, monitoring and evaluation contributes to three types of knowledge—operational knowledge, strategic decision-making and information for the public good. The RFP should define the extent to which the evaluations should contribute to each of these types of knowledge.

- A balance needs to be struck in terms of the level of specification in the RFP. Appropriate detail needs to be provided, but the country selection criteria and the methods to be used should not be specified in too much detail to leave space for bidders to justify their selection of countries and to specify in detail their measurement frameworks and methods to be used. This helps encourage innovation, and it provides useful information to inform the adjudication process.

- The RFP should specify the key methodologies in which the coalitions that bid on the evaluations are expected to have experience and expertise. These should include theory based evaluation, comparative case studies, institutionalisation of M&E systems and learning, process evaluation, qualitative methods and impact evaluation. The ability of the lead institution to manage an international coalition of evaluation partners, the proposed governance and management structure of the coalition and the percentage of funds going to country level partners need to be carefully assessed as part of the adjudication process.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Dr Bernhard Schwartlander
Committee Chair

Participants

Committee Members

- Bernhard Schwartländer, Chair
- Stanley Foster
- Gonzalo Hernandez
- Sania Nishtar
- Zenda Ofir

Regrets

- Richard Sezibera
- George Wellde

Other Board Member Participants

- Helen Evans

GAVI

- Abdallah Bchir
- Peter Hansen
- Stephen Nurse-Findlay
- Nina Schwalbe
- Deblina Datta (for sessions on full country evaluations)