

## **Gavi Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee Meeting**

25 March 2020

Teleconference

### **1. Chair's report**

- 1.1 The meeting was held virtually via teleconference and commenced at 14.09 Geneva time on 25 March 2020. Nina Schwalbe, Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) Chair, chaired the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair thanked the EAC members for their availability despite the ongoing challenges related to the COVID-19 outbreak, and informed the members that the decision was taken to go ahead and hold this meeting virtually given the importance of discussing the topics at hand, notably how to use evaluation in times of crisis, and the role of the EAC in guiding the Secretariat in preparing the evaluation workplan.
- 1.3 EAC members provided updates on the national responses and measures being put in place to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak in their respective countries.
- 1.4 Standing declarations of interest were tabled to the Committee (Doc 01a in the Committee pack).
- 1.5 The minutes of the EAC meeting of 2-3 October 2019 were tabled to the Committee for information (Docs 01b in the Committee pack). The minutes had been circulated and approved by no-objection on 5 December 2019.
- 1.6 The Chair referred to the EAC Action Sheet (Doc 01c). She reminded Committee members that they may contribute to the EAC Workplan (Doc 06) by raising issues with either herself or the Secretariat.

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### **2. Welcome from the Executive Office**

- 2.1 Seth Berkley, CEO, thanked the EAC members for their participation during such a challenging time, and updated them on the measures that the Gavi Secretariat has put in place in response to the COVID-19.
- 2.2 Dr Berkley noted that the outbreak affected more than 50 Gavi supported countries, which struggle with weak health systems and have little capacity to respond to the outbreak.
- 2.3 Dr Berkley highlighted the importance of ensuring the continuation of Routine Immunisation (RI) to avoid outbreaks of other infectious diseases.

- 2.4 In terms of supporting countries to respond to the current outbreak, he noted that Gavi will support countries facing challenges through its Health System Strengthening (HSS) funds, and will collaborate with partners to avoid duplication of efforts. He further noted that flexibilities to support countries are available through the Fragility, Emergencies and Refugees policy.
- 2.5 Dr Berkley highlighted Gavi's central role in COVID-19 vaccine manufacturing, development and ensuring equitable access, noting that work is already underway with WHO and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), with the focus on equitable availability and supply.
- 2.6 In relation to the Gavi Alliance replenishment, Dr Berkley noted that this is a corporate priority, with the pledging conference due to take place on 4 June 2020, but that the design of the event remains dependant on developments between now and June.
- 2.7 In relation to Gavi 5.0, he noted that some related workstreams will need to be delayed in view of the ongoing outbreak and the limitations of the Secretariat staff working remotely.
- 2.8 Dr Berkley noted that the EAC work and evaluation is as important as ever to Gavi's mission. He highlighted the importance of identifying learning questions for Gavi 5.0 and that EAC feedback is critical in order to put in place an effective process for evaluation work in the context of Gavi 5.0.

### *Discussion*

- One EAC member called on Gavi to keep gender at the center of its considerations in response to the pandemic, as its effects will be heavily felt by women. Dr Berkley noted that this a priority for Gavi and is included in the work which is underway with partners and will remain a focus area for the Secretariat.
- Another EAC member expressed concerns around RI interruptions and enquired if Gavi has specific guidance for countries. Dr Berkley noted that the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on immunisation is expected to produce guidelines which will be further circulated to help guide countries in ensuring that RI schedules are back on track once confinement restrictions are lifted.
- One EAC member referred to the importance of including patients in Developing Countries in COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials. Dr Berkley noted the need to test the vaccine in different countries and ensure global, equitable access once available.
- An EAC member enquired on Gavi's plans to catch up on immunisation programme delays, Dr Berkley responded that Gavi has experienced similar situations post the Ebola outbreak, and is ready to deal with catch up plans as necessary.

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## **7. Advance Market Commitment (AMC)**

7.1 Gilbert Asimwe, Programme Officer, Evaluation, introduced this item (Doc 06).

7.2 The purpose of this session is to:

- 1) Seek early guidance from the Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) on the draft high-level evaluation questions of the outcomes and impact evaluation of the AMC, and
- 2) Assess EAC's desired involvement in reviewing the RFP.

7.3 The EAC was also presented with several questions for discussion, namely:

- *Are there any suggested changes to the draft, high-level evaluation questions?*
- *Which EAC members volunteer to review the draft full-set of questions and scope of the evaluation as set-out in the ToR?*
- *Would the EAC like to review the draft report and/or the final report?*
- *Are there any suggestions for potential SteerCo members and suppliers for this evaluation?*

### *Discussion*

- EAC members made the following suggestions related to the ToRs:
  - To look at the distributional impact and sub-groups of interest;
  - To revisit the original framework, which is now 12 years old;
  - To consider the specific pathways for impact, as it is important to know how well the coordination between stakeholders is working and whether there is a larger capacity at country level on AMC;
  - To look at broader health system, especially in light of COVID-19;
  - To look at unintended consequences;
  - To look at how this impacted country choice;
  - To try to look across products and separate the questions a little bit more; and
  - To explore lessons learned in broader aspects including equity and gender and current situation of Covid-19.
- It was requested that EAC members send the Secretariat any suggestions for suppliers to be included on Gavi's suppliers list for evaluation.
- It was agreed that Zulfiqar Bhutta, Juan Pablo Gutierrez, and Ezzeddine Mohsni will review the ToR questions and assist with restructuring and design of this centralised evaluation of high strategic value to the Board on behalf of the EAC.

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## 6. Evaluation & Learning Update and Workplan for 2020

- 6.1 Esther Saville, Head, Evaluation & Learning, introduced this item (Doc 06) and requested 1) feedback from the EAC on progress on the workplan for 2020, and 2) for the EAC to approve any changes to the workplan stemming from this discussion.
- 6.2 She and several Evaluation & Learning Team members described progress on ongoing evaluations of the Cold Chain Equipment Optimisation Platform (CCEOP); Gavi's Engagement with the Private Sector; and the Supply and Procurement Strategy. The team highlighted areas where they had identified that plans may need to be adjusted due to COVID-19.
- 6.3 The scope and approach for the potential evaluation of Gavi's Fragility, Emergencies and Refugees (FER) policy was also discussed. The evaluation and learning team highlighted that this was in preliminary stages of development and the initial approach proposed would be to conduct a retrospective evaluation. However, in light of COVID-19 and the countries applying for flexibilities for emergencies enabled by this policy, the EAC was asked for guidance on whether a real-time evaluation should be considered.
- 6.4 The EAC was also specifically asked to respond to the following questions:
- *What are EAC's initial thoughts on the scope for the proposed evaluation of Gavi's Fragility, Emergencies and Refugees (FER) Policy?*
  - *Are any EAC members available to review the funding policy review results and monitoring frameworks?*

### *Discussion*

- EAC members tended to agree that given the changing landscape, it will be important to consider how to adapt the methods set out in Gavi's ongoing evaluations.
- The EAC requested that the Secretariat revisit the questions set out in all ongoing evaluations – both centralised and decentralised. It was noted that these circumstances present an opportunity to consider doing things differently, including seeking new in-country partners to continue work in-country and revisiting research methods.
- Specifically related to the evaluation of CCEOP, EAC members suggested that the approach will need to be adapted given the changing landscape. One EAC member asked for clarification on whether CCEOP will fall within or outside the Health Systems and Immunisation Strengthening (HSIS) window moving forward. It was clarified by the Secretariat that the intent is for CCEOP to be part of HSIS moving forward. It was also noted that there are some key touchpoints on utility that should be taken into account as modifications are considered, aligned with new timelines for operationalisation of Gavi 5.0, and including the development of guidelines for support for 2021.

- Regarding the Private Sector evaluation, the Evaluation and Learning Team is reconsidering the priority of this evaluation and is discussing with colleagues in Resource Mobilisation to determine whether the timeline should be modified. EAC members encouraged the Team to proceed, and suggested engagement with local teams to conduct this evaluation and to include that in the contract, if possible.
- In relation to the evaluation of Supply and Procurement Strategy, the Secretariat noted that it would work closely with the supplier to adapt to the changing circumstances due to COVID-19.
- On the question of whether to build in planning for an evaluation of the FER Policy:
  - The EAC agreed that this evaluation seemed even more critical now, if there is capacity within the Secretariat to undertake this evaluation, and therefore to modify the workplan accordingly. EAC members suggested that there are real-time questions that should be built in.
  - One EAC member asked about the logic of having this as a standalone policy evaluation rather than built into the broader policy framework.
  - Several EAC members cautioned the Secretariat to carefully consider the evaluability of this Policy and to address this as part of the proposed approach. EAC members also questioned the feasibility of this evaluation given likely constraints to data collection and whether there would be any available indicators other than process indicators.
- On the question of which EAC members would be available to review results and monitoring frameworks, it was requested that each EAC member contact the Secretariat to provide information about their availability. Mira Johri and Jeanine Condo volunteered to review the Eligibility, Co-Financing, and Gender Policy frameworks.

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#### **NEW ITEM (no paper): Adapting methods for evaluation to a changed landscape**

- The EAC Chair noted that this session had been added to the meeting agenda so that the EAC could brainstorm on alternative approaches to evaluation design and data collection, given the potential constraints on on-going and planned evaluations due to COVID-19.

#### *Discussion*

- EAC members suggested a number of methods for data collection, monitoring and evaluation which could be potentially useful during the current outbreak, including:
  - Making use of mobile technology and social media platforms applications such as WhatsApp to exchange information and obtain real time data, to compliment conventional statistics;

- Strengthening links with local institutions and evaluators and the use of electronic questionnaires and surveys;
  - Using data analytics based on artificial intelligence similar to google docs;
  - Regularly using registered administrative records;
  - Working with community leaders and community workers, particularly in rural areas, and referring to community balanced scorecards as rich sources of information;
  - Establishing links with in-country focal points such as Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) and EPI managers to understand better the quality of services and issues such as vaccines stockouts;
  - Establishing electronic databases;
  - Utilising Civil Society Organisation (CSO) networks;
  - Undertaking scope assessment of available information on realist evaluations and obtaining client-centred feedback; and
  - Using tested tools which are context appropriate.
- Some EAC members shared positive examples of the different methods being used in countries, such as mobile technology in India for monitoring pregnant women as well as current COVID-19 cases; balanced scorecards in Afghanistan; and data collection through community workers in Ethiopia and Uganda.
  - The Committee also discussed the importance of triangulation of methods to strengthen evaluations, particularly in this complex situation.
  - One EAC member asked for clarification on Gavi's requirements on Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals.
  - The EAC members highlighted the importance of ethics in relation to data collection and noted that tools must be adapted to respond to ethics in certain countries and communities. Working with communities on designing such tools and co-creating questions were highlighted as necessary to respond to community needs.
  - One EAC member noted the importance of data quality and referred to certain settings where it is often challenging to implement electronic databases and have real time data, even when determining factors such as good internet connectivity is available.
  - Hope Johnson, Director, Monitoring & Evaluation noted that the Evaluation and Learning team is rapidly taking stock of opportunities and questions in light of the current outbreak and referred to existing research, evaluations and modelling work and in country assessments. She noted that the evaluation and learning team will continue to work with the EAC to map out their key learning questions moving into Gavi 5.0, and would welcome EAC input into key learning questions in light of COVID-19.
  - Dr Johnson referred to managing the IRB process, noting that it could be useful to refer to existing IRB approvals to address some related questions. She underlined the importance of innovative methods and making use of technology, which are

built in evaluation research studies, noting the need to continue the discussion on the topic offline to identify the real questions.

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## **8. Strategic Communications for Evaluation**

- 8.1 Iain Simpson, Independent Consultant, introduced this item (Doc 08) on strategic communications for evaluation and his project to explore how we can better communicate evidence and information to ensure we put the right information, in the right hands, at the right time.
- 8.2 The purpose of the item was to request that the EAC provide guidance to inform the analysis on how to strengthen utility of learning products and communication of evaluation findings and recommendations for key Gavi audiences.
- 8.3 The EAC was also asked to address two key questions:
- *How can the Evaluation and Learning Unit and the EAC better engage with Gavi Governance structures: primarily the Board and the PPC?*
  - *How does the EAC advise the Evaluation and Learning Unit to deepen its engagement with other teams as part of each individual Evaluation?*

### *Discussion*

- EAC members made the following comments:
  - Working with teams upfront on their Theories of Change (ToC) would be a good opportunity for engagement around learning questions;
  - That it would be useful to tailor the messages in evaluation products to specific stakeholders and their concerns;
  - Format and length of documents is an issue. Reports should include tight Executive Summaries for higher level audiences;
  - That it is important to consider the timeliness of information. Currently the time delay for publishing evaluation management responses to evaluations is too long;
  - That information approaches can also be very useful, eg, brown bag sessions;
  - That with Gavi publications, Gavi should strive to reach beyond its standard Alliance partners.
- The two EAC members who are Gavi Alliance Board members reflected on what they felt had been a positive experience at the Board meeting in December 2019 where they had consulted each other and with the EAC Chair prior to the start of the meeting to try to present a consistent message.
- The Chair of the EAC set out some additional options for engaging with the Board and Committees, including the PPC, such as pre-Board briefings that had been agreed with the Board Chair.

- It was requested that any follow-up comments be sent to the Secretariat and Mr Simpson.

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## **9. Review of decisions**

- 9.1 Meegan Murray-Lopez, Senior Manager, Governance reviewed the decision language with the Committee which was approved by them.

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## **10. Closing remarks and any other business**

- 10.1 The EAC Chair informed the EAC members that a dedicated call would be organized to discuss on the *Process for Developing Evaluation and Learning Work plan for Gavi 5.0* (Doc 05) would be held a later meeting. This could potentially occur after the PPC meeting in late May.
- 10.2 The Chair also suggested setting up a chat group with the EAC members and the Evaluation team in order share knowledge and strategies to deal with the current situation. The Secretariat offered to explore options for this, including potentially using Board Effect for this purpose.
- 10.3 After determining there was no further business, the meeting was brought to a close.

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Mrs Meegan Murray-Lopez  
Secretary to the Meeting



## Attachment A

### Participants

#### Committee Members

- Nina Schwalbe, Chair
- Zulfiqar Bhutta
- Jeanine Condo
- Maty Dia
- Juan Pablo Gutiérrez
- Mira Johri
- Ezzedine Mohsni
- Marta Nunes
- Viroj Tangcharoensathien

#### Secretariat

- Hope Johnson
- Esther Saville
- Gilbert Asimwe
- Emmanuella Baguma
- Leslie Moreland
- Nadine Abu-Sway
- Meegan Murray-Lopez
- Raphael Ferry (item 7)
- Veronica Denti (item 7)
- Ed Baker (item 7)
- Sebastian Meaney (item 7)
- Maya Malarski (item 6)
- Bertrand Pederson (item 6)
- Dave Cagen (item 8)