

## Gavi Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee Meeting

### 5-6 March 2025

### Geneva, Switzerland

#### 1. Chair's report

- 1.1 Noting that the meeting had been duly convened and finding a quorum of members present, the meeting commenced at 09.03 Geneva time on 5 March 2025. James Hargreaves, Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) Chair, chaired the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair invited Rhoda Wanyenze, EAC member and Unaffiliated Board member, to present an update from the Board that had last met in December 2024. Ms Wanyenze highlighted important themes that the Board discussed such as the evaluation agenda in Gavi 6.0, the Health Systems Strategy, and how Gavi can best align with other Global Health players. She referred to a recent technical briefing on the Gavi approach to Fragile and Humanitarian settings which featured discussions on the potential impact of geo-political changes on Gavi's replenishment, countries transition, and health financing. She highlighted the need to sustain the visibility and timeliness of evaluation findings which could be used to inform Board decisions to improve their utility.
- 1.3 Standing declarations of interest were tabled to the Committee (Doc 01a in the Committee pack).
- 1.4 The minutes of the September and November 2024 meetings were tabled to the Committee for information (Doc 01b and 01c in the Committee pack). The minutes had been circulated and approved by no-objection on 28 November 2024 and 22 January 2025, respectively.
- 1.5 The Chair informed the EAC that he had presented an Evaluation update to the Programme and Policy Committee (PPC) for the first time in late October 2024, an action to strengthen the linkage between the PPC and EAC stemming from the Board and Committee Evaluation in 2023, as well as providing his regular Committee Chair report to the Board in December 2024. He noted that this was not yet in his view a full response to the EAC's repeated assertion that there should be a stronger link between the PPC and EAC.
- 1.6 He referred to the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) 2024 report which highlighted the positive development of the Gavi Measurement, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) function. He also referred to his engagement with the Gavi CEO, Sania Nishtar, as well as with the EAC Focal Points on the action planning from the Evaluation Function Review (EFR).

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## 2. Update from the Office of the CEO

- 2.1 Sania Nishtar, Chief Executive Officer, provided the EAC with an update on several important topics including the current changing geo-political context and its implications on Gavi operations. She gave a brief update on Gavi 6.0 replenishment and operationalisation, the new Gavi Leap framework, and her vision for Gavi's approach to evaluation in Gavi 6.0.
- 2.2 With respect to the Gavi Leap framework, she noted that Gavi is undergoing internal changes to enhance the Secretariat's agility and efficiency, and emphasised the importance of transparency and keeping the Secretariat informed.
- 2.3 Dr Nishtar highlighted ongoing reviews and changes at the Gavi Secretariat level, including: i) revamping the grant management system; ii) changing the country operating model; and iii) adopting a new approach to dealing with Fragile and Humanitarian contexts.
- 2.4 She emphasised the need for a new paradigm of measurement which includes a new framework for the MEL functions m, including metrics for the Strategic goals with clear accountability, noting that the Secretariat is currently undergoing a review to deliver these changes, all of which are happening fast.
- 2.5 In relation to the replenishment for Gavi 6.0, the CEO noted that Gavi is progressing with its replenishment efforts despite a significantly changed donor environment. Nevertheless, donor support remains, with bipartisan backing in the United Kingdom and the United States.
- 2.6 Finally, the CEO noted that she expected to call on the EAC's expertise within the next months as thinking progressed on the evaluation function for Gavi 6.0.

### *Discussion*

- EAC members emphasised the importance of utilising evaluation findings and learnings, ensuring that evaluation findings are useful for strengthening country immunisation programmes and fostering stronger coordination, given that most evaluation findings are more frequently used at the Secretariat level. The CEO acknowledged the challenges and highlighted that country level evaluations were often too general and not granular enough. She added that some countries have deep-rooted challenges in public health systems. However, she also provided positive examples, such as Uganda as a country where there are no stock outs, while many larger countries do not have the same efficient systems.
- In reference to the potential impact of aid cuts on countries' ability to meet their co-financing commitments, the CEO expressed her optimism in this respect given that these commitments have already been established in countries' budgets.

However, she recognised the real challenges that countries may face across other public health interventions.

- With regard to the potential organisational changes, the CEO emphasised that the overall Secretariat review is being driven by simplicity and transparency, aiming to eliminate the fragmentation that has gradually developed in Secretariat operations.
- In discussing the themes and areas where learning and evaluations can contribute to upcoming strategic initiatives, the CEO noted that while traditional evaluations are valuable for assessing the long-term impact of programmes, she underlined the need for agility and openness to change in managing day-to-day operations.
- The CEO responded to a query on her vision for the data hub, noting the importance of leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI). She noted that there are over 20 dashboards in the Secretariat that can provide valuable information quickly if utilised through AI.
- The CEO discussed with the EAC the importance of adopting different approaches during times of crisis. She highlighted Gavi's new Health Systems Strategy that is being developed to address persistent issues through various methods.

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### **3. Update on Measurement, Evaluation and Learning for Gavi 6.0**

3.1 Hope Johnson, Director, Measurement, Evaluation and Learning, provided an update on measurement, evaluation and learning for Gavi 6.0 (Doc 03).

#### *Discussion*

- EAC members expressed appreciation of the update on the new more coherent approach for Gavi 6.0, noting that it has the potential to address several issues raised in the EFR and that it would be useful for both Gavi leadership and the EAC moving forward.
- With respect to the MEL approach, EAC members asked about whether there were opportunities to further join up its different components. The Secretariat noted that Gavi 5.1 had been a big step up in terms of the Learning pieces and that it is proposed in Gavi 6.0 that these be centralised, moving to an approach where the questions are identified at the outset, followed by the use cases, and then the type of activity. This will imply a cultural shift within the team and for the Alliance.
- EAC members also queried: i) data availability, and it was clarified that when facing limitations in data, Gavi's approach has been to avoid burdening countries and to support them in their data collection; and ii) the tension inherent in using theories of change and adaptive learning approaches, and it was clarified that the proposed

approach is to link to key review points and be clear what the theory of change is and what it would be used for.

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#### 4. Gavi 5.1 Evaluation Workplan Update

4.1 Nathalie Gons, Senior Programme Officer, Evaluation and Learning, introduced this item (Doc 04) and provided an update of Gavi 5.1 evaluation activities, with specific focus on the Zero-Dose evaluation and joint COVAX evaluation.

##### *Discussion*

- With respect to the Zero-Dose evaluation, EAC Focal Points for the evaluation provided context based on their engagement since the last meeting, noting their support to pause the start of Phase 3, building on the learning from Phases 1 and 2 as well as other data sources, and to focus more on the country level to better understand country implementation in particular the current changing operating contexts on country implementation, as well as the Fragile and Humanitarian settings.
- Rita Rhayem, Head of Equitable Immunisation Programmes, commented on how the previous evaluation findings had been used and noted that it would be more useful, given the absence of new data at this point in time, to start the next phase in Gavi 6.0.
- On the basis of this discussion, the EAC was supportive of adjusting the timeline for Phase 3 of the Zero-Dose agenda within the Gavi 6.0 centralised evaluation workplan.
- For the update on the joint COVAX evaluation, the EAC was joined by representatives from the evaluation supplier, RTI International, including Rebecca Flueckiger, Susannah Clarke-Von Witt, Matthew Cooper and Lamiaa Shehata, as well as from the COVAX Evaluation Delivery Evaluation Partnership Group (DEPG), including Beth Plowman and Aude Mommeja (UNICEF), Roxana Prisacaru (CEPI), and Riccardo Polastro (WHO).
- The EAC Focal Points for the COVAX evaluation highlighted the excellent results achieved by this evaluation, despite its complexity, and congratulated the Secretariat for the well-structured process they have established to manage this evaluation that was instrumental in actively engaging the main partners and achieving evaluation key milestones. They summarised the comments that had already been provided to the suppliers on the evaluation report, including areas for improvement such as on the length of the report, on the need to provide stronger justification and clearer mapping between findings, conclusions and recommendations, and that the theory of change should be included in the main report. The EAC Focal point also mentioned that Annex C to Doc 04 on lessons learned was found to be valuable and should be shared more widely.

- Members of the DEPG also commented on lessons learned from the evaluation process, including the high level of effort and investment to coordinate that had been required for a joint evaluation; the importance of having country focal points in place to ground the evaluation and of making the report and learnings useful to the countries; the importance of including CSOs; the need to allow appropriate time for recommendations and lessons learned (including different needs, expectations and power dynamic between different agencies); and the importance of early joint planning. One DEPG member noted that it is important that joint evaluations are initiated by the leadership of the participating organisations and the EAC strongly endorsed this need.
- Laura Craw, Senior Manager, Global Health Security, commented on the level of resourcing needed for joint evaluations, but also noted that there were direct and indirect benefits to the collaboration, and had recently appreciated the joint reflection on lessons that had been undertaken with partners and that there had been benefits in bringing together MEL and programmatic colleagues throughout the process. Moving forward, she suggested that it would be important to gain alignment on the Request for Proposal stage as it had proved difficult to navigate when points had been added in at a later stage. With respect to utility, she indicated that the findings would feed into cross-partner work on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.
- The EAC suggested having a further discussion on the use case for joint evaluations at the next meeting in the context of Gavi 6.0 planning.
- The EAC also took stock of progress on the ongoing workstream to expand the supplier base together with engagement of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.
- In relation to the request for guidance on the format of the Annual Evaluation Report, EAC members clarified that the request to produce a standalone report had not come from the EAC but requested that an assessment of options be provided for the next meeting.
- The EAC also provided guidance on lessons that could be drawn from Gavi 5.1 as it relates to planning for the Gavi 6.0 centralised evaluation workplan. In terms of areas to strengthen, EAC members noted that: i) there is room to improve the strength of the draft recommendations as they relate to evaluation findings, and ways to develop strategic and feasible recommendations; ii) there is an ongoing need to strengthen country level engagement in evaluation; iii) it would be good to focus on results and be impact driven; iv) bigger is not necessarily better – and overly broad evaluation scopes may hinder point i), and sometimes it would be more cost efficient to do smaller reviews. EAC members also noted in terms of positives that: i) that the engagement of EAC Focal Points for centralised evaluations with more regular touchpoints had been very useful; and ii) phased evaluations have been appreciated.

The Evaluation Advisory Committee provided the following formal guidance related to the Zero-Dose Evaluation:

EAC focal members acknowledge that both evaluations were conducted using rigorous methodology. While the first phase focused on the left side of the TOC, the second phase highlighted the country's perspective.

1. With respect to scope and overall next steps to close-out the Zero-Dose evaluation in 2025:
  - Publish Phase 2 Deliverables;
  - Conduct Quality Assessment of Phase 2 Deliverables; and
  - Develop an evaluation management response, given that the scope of Zero-Dose evaluation in Gavi 6.0 could be different.
2. With respect to next steps for Gavi 6.0 and lessons learned:

### Methodological Approach

- Leverage the information collected during Gavi 5.1, including Phase 1, Phase 2, Learning Hub, and other relevant sources;
- Leverage where case studies have been conducted during Zero-Dose Evaluation, and if relevant and possible, take deeper dives with more targeted approaches on the Zero-Dose agenda at the country level; and
- Where possible and relevant, prioritise collecting information from NGOs, as they are key implementers of immunisation programmes in fragile and humanitarian settings.

### Comprehensiveness and Efficiency

- Consider implementing the next phase evaluation, either continuing directly with Zero-Dose or integrating that within the HSS evaluation.

The Gavi Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee provided the following formal guidance related to the COVAX Evaluation:

- Moving forward, joint evaluation processes should be initiated by agency principals; and
- Continue extracting learning from doing joint evaluations, including lighter and more efficient approaches, and tracking their utility.

With respect to the Annual Evaluation Report:

- For CET to revert with an assessment of whether it is worthwhile to continue with a standalone AER format or consider an alternative approach.

## Decision One

The Gavi Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee:

- **approved** the revised multi-year (2021-2025) centralised evaluation workplan attached as Annex A to Doc 04.

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### 5. Evaluation Function Review: Action Planning

- 5.1 Leslie Moreland, Senior Programme Officer, Evaluation & Learning, introduced this item and presented on the process to date (Doc 05).
- 5.2 She provided an update on the proposed actions in response to the Evaluation Function Review (EFR) recommendations. She highlighted the two key shifts identified in the report to implement the strategic and operational actions and outlined the proposed decision pathway noting the upcoming main touchpoints with key stakeholders through 2025. She emphasised that agility is key.
- 5.3 Hope Johnson, Director, Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning noted that the decisions that will be requested by the Board in June 2025 will be important for the subsequent process to update the Evaluation Policy and Gavi 6.0 evaluation workplan in advance of the start of Gavi 6.0. She illustrated what the key shifts mean in practice, noting that the EAC input would help develop some of these policies.

#### *Discussion*

- The EAC Focal Points for the EFR raised: i) the need to review the policy and for the Secretariat to develop the strategy as a priority to make sure it addresses the changing environment; ii) questioned the use of the three lines of defence as appropriate in the context of evaluation and therefore the need for a clear definition of evaluation and its role relative to other related functions. The Secretariat clarified that the three lines of defence model continues to underpin the evaluation model at Gavi, with evaluation falling in line two, and that this has been enhanced by Gavi's risk appetite statement.; iii) the need to understand the underlying causes of burden emanating from governance processes related to the EAC; iv) consider the cost-effectiveness of outsourcing quality assurance; and v) develop a theory of change for evaluation and evidence as part of the strategy. They also underlined: i) the importance of independence and credibility when considering a new evaluation function model; and ii) the need to interrogate existing evaluation principles to align with the new model and the need to identify a broader range of questions and methods to enable more agility.
- Some EAC members also emphasised the need for better clarity on the complexity of governance processes that had featured in the EFR. The Secretariat explained that the Governance Committee had recommended examining the root causes of these complex processes and their impact on the Evaluation Function's effectiveness. The current EAC model of meeting twice a

year is not always ideal for the CET team, which needs more frequent, less governance-heavy interactions, closer to the EAC Focal Point model currently in place. EAC members indicated that they understood the challenges presented and that Focal Points do indeed provide ongoing inputs between EAC meetings.

- In response to a request for more detail on the structure of Gavi's Independent Review Committee (IRC), which had been cited as an example of an alternative model, the Secretariat provided clarifications on its basic structure but noted that the IRC is highly process-oriented, and would not necessarily be a model to replicate for the future EAC. The EAC queried the urgency of agreeing on a revised Evaluation Function model by the end of the year, given the PPC's heavy agenda for its upcoming meeting in May 2025, and the Board's priorities post-replenishment. The Secretariat acknowledged these challenges but emphasised the preference for guidance to contribute to the organisational review and the overall efficiency and effectiveness planning package that will be implemented in Gavi 6.0.
- The EAC highlighted the importance of avoiding burden for the PPC that might come with strengthening links to the PPC. The Secretariat reiterated the goal of maintaining a light process while establishing oversight through enhanced structural engagement with the PPC.
- The Secretariat underlined that the current Board oversight of evaluation does not necessarily result in strong understanding of centralised evaluations. As the PPC already has oversight over other aspects of MEL's work, there would be a benefit to the PPC being presented with holistic evidence and a full picture, which it would be hoped would lead to better engagement with the PPC.
- Regarding the proposed pathway, the Secretariat emphasised the importance of timing in the decisions sequence, particularly in relation to the governance cycle. It was agreed that the EAC Focal Points would collaborate with the CET team in the short-term on the development of options.
- It was clarified that when the Governance Committee considers evaluation oversight for Gavi 6.0 in Q3-4 2025, one option in line with the EFR findings may be to simplify structures and move the oversight outside of the Gavi Governance mechanisms. In that case, a new Terms of Reference would be developed for the new evaluation oversight mechanism for Gavi 6.0, and the Board would be asked to formally sunset the existing EAC Terms of Reference.

**The Gavi Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee provided the following formal guidance:**

- Continue developing the evaluation function as a component of the broader MEL system;
- Agree that it makes sense to strengthen links with the Programme and Policy Committee (PPC), specifically for recommendation/approval of the Evaluation Policy and workplan with advice from the EAC;

- Consider the cost-effectiveness of using an external quality assurance service and develop costed options to inform decisions;
- Continue to explore options for a more agile evaluation oversight mechanism for Gavi 6.0;
- Clarify the meaning of Evaluation Culture through articulating a clear definition and rationale including how this approach would benefit the evaluation function and the organisation; and
- As part of the evaluation strategy development, explore the range of evaluation types that could be used going forward and include these categories in the strategy and planning process.

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## 6. Gavi 6.0 Evaluation Workplan Update

6.1 Claudia Lo Forte, Senior Programme Officer, Evaluation & Learning, introduced this item (Doc 06) for guidance from the EAC.

6.2 Rhoda Wanyenze commented on behalf of the EAC Focal Points for the Gavi 6.0 workplan workstream, noting that: i) the topics that have been included in the draft workplan so far seem to be aligned well with the Board's direction for Gavi 6.0 and had been thoroughly consulted on; ii) it would be useful to be more clear about which topics should be centralised or decentralised; iii) it will be important to be mindful of the sequencing of the evaluations to ensure it will be possible to obtain the evidence needed in time; and iv) it will be important to ensure the buy-in of the Board and that some of the proposed shifts will likely help to streamline this but also to be sure to develop a comprehensive Theory of Change, a fit-for-purpose evaluation culture, and identify evaluation champions.

### *Discussion*

- EAC members acknowledged the comprehensive workplan and consultations used to identify topics in alignment with Gavi 6.0's strategic direction.
- EAC members queried some apparent overlap between the proposed evaluation topics and how these would be reconciled, and asked for more information about the criteria that would be used to help prioritise. The Secretariat noted there is a decision tree to determine evaluation types and streamlining evaluations to prevent overlap.
- With respect to joint evaluations, one EAC member noted that the malaria evaluation had been proposed as a joint evaluation and suggested health systems might also be a joint exercise.
- EAC and Board members provided the following key guidance for the workplan, including to consider: i) the broad issue of operationalisation, particularly with respect to the consolidated cash envelope; ii) on Gavi's Eligibility, Transition

and Co-Financing Policies (ELTRACO), whether this could be an appropriate space to evaluate the financial impact regarding countries co-financing their vaccines long-term; and whether to include Middle Income Countries (MICS) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS); iii) whether to add an evaluation related to human papillomavirus (HPV) captured under HSS implementation through school-based programmes, Gavi's involvement in polio and alliance partners' roles; and iv) the First Response Fund.

- An EAC member commented on the selection criteria for centralised evaluations, emphasising the need to consider strategic importance to Gavi and address evidence gaps. Another highlighted that the criteria might not be efficient to prioritise or select big themes. The Secretariat confirmed that strategic importance to Gavi would be considered as it is already part of the Evaluation Policy.
- An EAC member asked if Gavi's focus would move towards the country level for Gavi 6.0. The Secretariat clarified that while initial monitoring would enhance the left side of the Theory of Change, evaluations will look across all levels. Typically, right-side-focused evaluations are not considered Gavi evaluations, but decentralised evidence can inform them.
- The Secretariat noted that one new area of work will be related to the Board's need for information for their trade-off discussion on Gavi 7.0 priorities. Various methods will be considered, and a brainstorming session at the EAC meeting in September 2025 is planned.

**The Gavi Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee provided the following formal guidance:**

With recognition of the evolving scenario, continue to develop the Gavi 6.0 evaluation workplan with attention to:

- Timing and platforms for decision-making by the Board, its Committees, and other stakeholders;
- Improving the proposed “criteria” to guide prioritisation, selection and complementarity of evaluations; and
- Developing a mixed portfolio of evaluation types that addresses a wide range of evidence needs and considers joint evaluations where appropriate.

**The Gavi Alliance Evaluation Advisory Committee provided the following cross-cutting formal guidance:**

- Document changing country strategies or actions in the face of potential funding cuts; and
- Prioritise the phased approach to evaluation to ensure agility and utility.

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## 7. EAC Engagement in Gavi 5.1 Evaluations

7.1 Hope Johnson, Director, Measurement, Evaluation & Learning introduced this item (Doc 07).

### *Discussion*

- The EAC made some adjustments to the current allocation for centralised evaluations, which appear in Attachment B to these meeting minutes.
- In addition, the allocation of EAC members to serve as Focal Points on other workstreams was also agreed, and these appear in Attachment C to these meeting minutes.

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## 8. Review of EAC Guidance and Decisions

8.1 The EAC reviewed the formal guidance and decisions that had been refined throughout the meeting.

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## 9. Closing Remarks and Any Other Business

9.1 The Chair warmly thanked outgoing EAC members.

9.2 After determining there was no further business, the meeting was brought to a close.

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Ms Meegan Murray-Lopez  
Secretary to the Meeting

**Attachment A****Participants****Committee Members**

- James Hargreaves (Chair)
- Helen Evans
- Rhoda Wanyenze
- Penny Hawkins
- David Hotchkiss
- Adolfo Martinez Valle
- Ezzeddine Mohsni
- Malabika Sarker
- Onei Uetela
- Justice Nonvignon

**Guests**

- Beth Plowman, UNICEF (item 4)
- Roxana Prisacaru, CEPI (item 4)
- Ricardo Polastro, WHO (item 4)
- Aude Mommeja, UNICEF (item 4)
- Rebecca Flueckiger, RTI Intl (item 4)
- Susannah Clarke-Von Witt, RTI Intl (item 4)
- Matthew Cooper, RTI Intl (item 4)
- Juan Pablo Gutiérrez (item 9)
- Michael Kent Ranson, World Bank (item 5-6)

**Secretariat**

- Sania Nishtar (item 2)
- Hope Johnson
- Leslie Moreland
- Claudia Lo Forte
- Anders Amaechi (items 3-9)
- Nathalie Gons
- Daria Piccand
- Cristina Cimenti
- Meegan Murray-Lopez
- Nadine Abu Sway (items 1-2, 5)
- Alexandre El Meouchi (item 6)
- Rita Rhayem (item 4)
- Laura Craw (item 4)
- Richard Mihigo (item 4)

**Attachment B**
**EAC engagement in centralised evaluations**

| EVALUATION   | SC                     | EAC Members on SC                          | EAC Focal Points      |                       |                    |
|--|------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Evaluation of Gavi's contribution to reaching zero-dose children and missed communities (Phase II and III) | Yes                    |  | Adolfo Martinez Valle | David Hotchkiss       | Malabika Sarker*   |
| COVAX Facility and COVAX AMC (Phase II, Joint)   | Yes                    | Adolfo Martinez Valle<br>Justice Nonvignon | David Hotchkiss       | James Hargreaves*     | Penny Hawkins      |
| Gavi's contribution to Sustainability of Coverage Post-Transition/MICs Evaluation                          | TBD                    | n/a  | Justice Nonvignon     | Malabika Sarker       | Helen Evans*       |
| AVMA, evaliability assessment in 2025  | Not yet                |  | Rhoda Wanyenze*       | Adolfo Martinez Valle | James Hargreaves   |
| Big Catch-Up   | Yes, TBD in March 2025 | n/a  | Onei Uetela           | Helen Evans           | Justice Nonvignon* |

\* EAC member in convening role

## Attachment C

## Additional EAC engagement

| Workstream   | EAC Focal Points |                       |                  |
|--|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Evaluation Function Review   | Penny Hawkins*   | Adolfo Martinez Valle | Helen Evans      |
| Gavi Workplan 6.0<br><br><i>Linked to the EFR and core business of the EAC</i> | Rhoda Wanyenze*  | Penny Hawkins         | James Hargreaves |

\* EAC member in convening role