



PEF Targeted Country Assistance (TCA) Guidance for 2019 Reporting and 2020 Planning

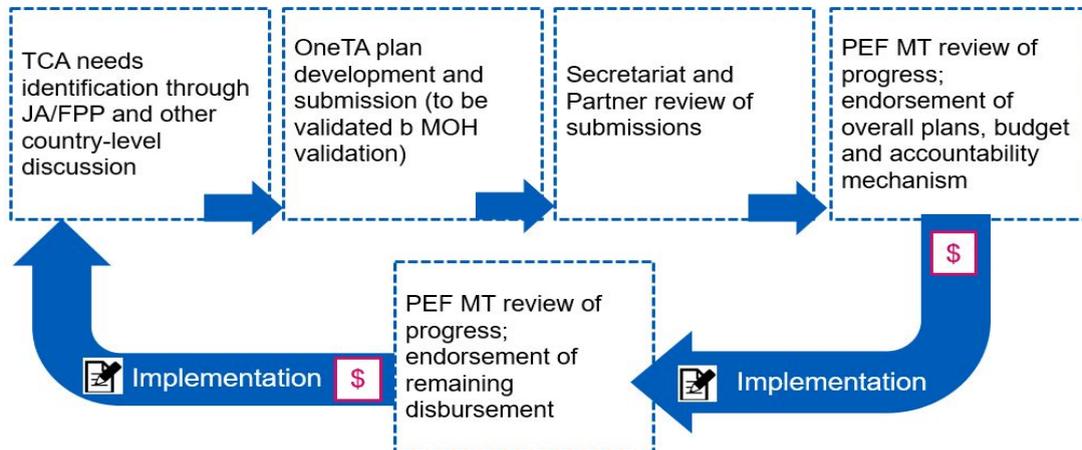
This document provides guidance on 2019 reporting and 2020 planning processes for Targeted Country Assistance (TCA). Important changes include:

- One country submission deadline for OneTA plans for both core and expanded partners proposals
- A narrative in the planning template ('OneTA plan') for better context, strategic links to other investments and a clear alignment with results
- Introduction of a standardised template for technical proposals submitted by expanded partners
- Updated guidance to ensure SMART, results-focused and a reduced number of milestones and on how to link TCA activities to programmatic areas and GPF indicators in the OneTA plan
- Accompanying e-learning modules to help partners optimally plan and report on TCA (published separately from the TCA guidance) and available recorded webinar

1. What is PEF TCA?

TCA is one support area provided by Gavi to country immunisation programs in their efforts to improve coverage rates and reduce equity barriers to immunisation services. TCA is provided by partner agencies, including WHO, UNICEF, the World Bank, CDC (i.e. the core partners) and other partners (expanded partners). TCA results should be aligned with other Gavi grants and the immunisation outcomes expected in the country. This alignment should also be demonstrated through linking TCA activities with the programmatic areas and GPF indicators in the OneTA plan.

Annual PEF process



 Milestone reporting June and November each year

 Disbursement



TCA needs to be clearly defined by the MOH in consultation with relevant country stakeholders and based on the most critical country needs. Activities allocated to each TCA partner should build on their comparative advantages, expertise and past performance. Of note in 2020 is the introduction of a narrative section in the OneTA plan template that allows for the contextualization of all proposed TCA activities.

2. Who is eligible?

The table below outlines country eligibility for Gavi-funded TCA in the 2020-2021 cycle.

Category	Countries	Eligibility for PEF TCA 2019-2020
<u>Gavi eligible countries¹</u> including accelerated transition countries (*)	Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Congo, DR, Chad, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, South Sudan, Mozambique, Madagascar, Haiti, Yemen, Niger, CAR, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo, Republic*, Cote d'Ivoire, DPR Korea, Djibouti, Eritrea, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR*, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Nepal, Nicaragua, Rwanda,	Yes

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	Sao Tome and Principe*, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Island, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Togo, Uzbekistan, Zambia, Zimbabwe	
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Countries that have transitioned out of Gavi support can still access technical assistance under Gavi’s post-transition engagement (PTE) which has a different process and timeline to TCA. See, PTE guidance [here](#).

Countries who received TCA in 2019 are required to report on TCA progress, even if not eligible for 2020 TCA.

3. How to apply for TCA

The 2020 TCA activities should be developed and submitted to Gavi via the OneTA plan available on Google spreadsheets, which Gavi makes available as a link to partners and the EPI before the JA meeting. An important element of the template is a new narrative section which allows to contextualize all proposed TCA activities (more details further below).

4. Reporting on TCA on the Partner Portal

Reporting progress on TCA implementation is obligatory for all PEF-TCA implementers, as stipulated in legal agreements between Gavi Secretariat and implementing partners.

All reporting is submitted through the online [Partner Portal](#). This platform allows for automatic consolidation of reporting across and within partners showing all milestones and their status of completion (on track, facing minor/major delays, or re-programming). Additional visuals and milestone data analyses are available.

Tools to help you

A training deck is available [here](#) and provides additional guidance on how to navigate through the Partner Portal and how to report on milestones.

E-learning tools on PEF-relevant subjects (e.g. TCA reporting and planning), including a recorded webinar, are made available [soon](#).

Training can be provided if requested. Questions and support needs (e.g. raised by partners who have not received their login and passwords) should be directed to pef@gavi.org.

5. 2020 TCA planning

5.1 What is the OneTA plan?

Based on needs and priorities identified at the Joint Appraisal (JA²) or other country-led processes, core partners and selected expanded partners collaborate with the EPI/MOH in the development of a ‘One TA Plan’. It is critical that this plan follows critical components of TCA described as follows:

TCA principle	Definition for OneTA Plan
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² In countries developing an application for an HSS grant, the Programme Support Rationale (PSR) process substitutes the JA.

Country-owned	The OneTA plan development is led by the EPI/MOH who oversees the identification of TA needs and assignment to the core and expanded partners. The plan is reviewed and approved by ICC, before submission to Gavi
Targeted	The OneTA plan is, where relevant, targeted, in that it seeks to address and prioritise most critical bottlenecks (incl. gender-related barriers) to improve immunisation coverage and equity, especially in specific geographical areas and/or population segments with large numbers and/or high percentage of un- or under-immunized children
Harmonized	The OneTA plan is harmonised in that it is internally consistent and includes activities that complement one another, and investments made by the Government, Gavi and other bilateral/multilateral donors. Alignment of TA needs to be demonstrated in the narrative section of the OneTA plan
Efficient & Effective (Value for Money)	OneTA plans should ensure efficient and cost-effective technical assistance and be grounded in evidence-and cost-based assessments of results and lessons learned from previous TA work. Previously inefficient and/or ineffective TCA should be transparently and constructively discussed by all PEF partners and the EPI team. Newly proposed TCA activities should build on previous results and expertise
Results-oriented	OneTA plan include TCA activities that must be linked to SMART and results-focused milestones , programmatic areas, Grant Performance Framework (GPF), and other key information (e.g. budget assumptions etc.). Linking these ensures strong results and facilitates effective monitoring and reporting on TCA during its implementation phase
Mutual accountability	The OneTA plan should establish mutual accountability among EPI and partners on the type of support provided to the country and on the implementation progress of their TCA activities

The OneTA plan represents a one-year joint work plan but can be developed for a longer than one year, for example for continuous TCA activities. Funding, however, is only released on an annual basis, subject to performance.

5.2 Populating and submitting the OneTA plan

The Gavi SCM provides a link to the 'OneTA Plan' template to partners and the EPI prior to the JA. The online platform enables multiple users to simultaneously access and edit the document to avoid version control issues.

The OneTA plan is filled out by partners and reviewed by the relevant Government agencies, all stakeholders – representatives from each partner institution, EPI and a MOH representative – sign-off on the final validation page, locking the spreadsheet for further editing and alerting the PEF Secretariat of the submission. If the plan requires adjustment after review by the Secretariat, endorsements of revised plans will be sought to ensure country ownership and accountability.

Submission of the final OneTA Plans must occur by the submission deadlines outlined in the time table further below. Proposals either submitted after the deadline, requiring significant revisions, or not recommended for approval by the PEF MT can be resubmitted for consideration within the next submission timeframe.

5.3. TCA Activities that can be funded through the OneTA plan

OneTA plans are focused on the provision of **technical assistance activities** and not the funding of routine program activities, consumables, supplies, or equipment. Gavi support for such costs typically is financed through HSIS, VIG, or OPs grants. Ineligible costs proposed in OneTA plans will not be accepted.

A list of typical objectives and activities in various programmatic areas such as programme management, demand generation, data, vaccine-specific support, supply chain

management, transition, policy & regulatory environment, health financing & sustainability) can be found [here](#).

It is important that the OneTA Plan has strong, logical, and meaningful milestones and is linked to the Grant Performance Framework (GPF) indicators that clearly measure important outputs, or progress towards them with a focus on coverage and equity. A milestone guidance document is available [here](#) and provides guidance on how to formulate high quality PEF milestones and examples of stronger/weaker milestones with examples from TCA plans.

The PEF milestones have several purposes:

- Illustrate the logical progression and incremental contribution towards expected results as outlined in the GPF
- Identify the key outputs or results expected from a project
- Demonstrate the successful transfer of capacity to individuals and/or institutions
- Indicate the planning and pace of activities
- Highlight junctures where important decisions are made, or approvals are required
- Track progress toward results and highlight delay issues for increased attention to resolve any pending issues

TCA should seek to transfer skills to (sub) national counterparts and strengthening systems and procedures to increase capacity of EPI programme management and other governmental stakeholders at individual, team or institutional level. Capacity can be strengthened via different TA models (including through embedding staff within governmental entities) as well as through close coordination of all TCA activities with other donors and partners for optimal alignment of Gavi's and other investments. The Gavi Alliance is currently finalising a capacity building framework planned to be launched in due course. It will help identify different country maturity levels to provide tailored support through gap-filling or capacity building.

TCA can fund **staffing (including consultants) at national and (sub)national levels**. All proposed TCA funded staff must be reflected in the budget assumptions column in the OneTA plan. Gavi continues to uphold high transparency standards on PEF-funded staffing (incl. consultants) and requires that the right capabilities and accountabilities are in place to ensure transparency and results. More recently, TCA funds have been increasingly used to fund human resources at subnational level with the intent that it is leading to accelerated progress in coverage and equity.

5.4. Identifying implementers to TCA activities

While core partners regularly participate at the JAs and are assigned for the implementation of TCA activities, the joint discussions may result in identification of TA needs that no core partner has the expertise or resource support for the TA need. In this case, an expanded partner might be better positioned to respond to the country's need. Expanded partners with proven experience in TCA implementation should equally participate at the JA and be assigned as key implementer for certain TA needs. A **non-exhaustive list of 'Expanded Partners'** is available [here](#). Eligibility criteria for local institutions are available [here](#). Additional guidance for expanded partners can be found [here](#) along with the newly introduced **technical proposal template** [here](#).

For 2020 TCA planning, all core partners and expanded partners will need to have been identified and their TCA activities proposed. All TCA implementers are further requested to justify in the narrative how they plan to collaborate with local partners to ensure further decentralisation of TCA efforts and impact.

5.5. Budget Guidance

The financial envelope for 2020-21 TCA to partners receiving multi-country support has not yet been approved and is expected to be flatlined across all countries. Increased or decreased budgets of single OneTA plans could, however, be submitted as long as the sum of OneTA plans across countries is flatlined from previous year. The individual agency budget should reflect a thorough review of future priorities, past performance as well as (sub)national resource allocations.

Expanded partners: Additional resources can be made available for innovative and catalytic activities undertaken by expanded partners (incl. local institutions), based on their comparative advantage. It is strongly encouraged to include TCA proposed to be implemented by expanded partners in the OneTA plan. Expanded partners are requested to seek further approval through submission of a technical proposal to Gavi's SCM and PEF team (find the template [here](#)).

6. Timelines

To better align with country timelines, two different TA planning schedules continue to be available for the development of the 2020-2021 OneTA plans. The two deadline options for submission of the 'OneTA Plan' are:

15 October 2019 (Schedule A) Countries whose JA is completed by the end of August are strongly encouraged to submit their OneTA Plan in accordance with Schedule A.

29 November 2019 (Schedule B) Countries whose JA is completed after August can submit a OneTA Plan in accordance with Schedule B.

Countries applying for TA for the first time and in line with Schedule A for 2020-21 TCA, should, if necessary, adjust budget to account for funds already committed for March 2020 - June 2020 through the 2019/2020 envelope.

Both schedules include progress milestone reporting on a biannual basis in June and November. Planning along either schedule should include budgets for 12 months, although implementation is possible over a maximum of 15 months (this is equivalent to the budgeted 12 months with a 3-month buffer for delays).

TCA Process Steps	2019 Schedule A	2020 Schedule B
Joint Appraisal	January 2019 – August 2019	January 2019 – November 2019
Development of OneTA Plan	January 2019 – September 2019	January 2019 – November 2019
Review of OneTA Plan	September 2019 – October 2019	November 2019 – November 2019
OneTA plan circulated with relevant Regional Office and RWG	17 September 2019	1 November 2019
OneTA plan circulated with HQ	24 September 2019	8 November 2019
OneTA plan circulated with Gavi SCM and Technical Teams	1 October 2019	15 November 2019

Submission of OneTA Plan	<i>15 October 2019</i>	<i>29 November 2019</i>
PEF MT Approval	<i>November 2019</i>	<i>February 2020</i>
Disbursement of Funds	<i>January 2020</i>	<i>March 2020</i>
Implementation Period	<i>January 2020 – March 2021</i>	<i>March 2020 – June 2021</i>

Joint Appraisal: Most countries will conduct their JA or PSR process between May 2019 and November 2019. The JA report should note which TA is required and prioritised and may also indicate which partner(s) are recommended for specific activities. These TA recommendations form the primary basis for the TCA planning efforts leading to the OneTA plan along with its narrative.

OneTA Plan development process: Country stakeholders are convened by the EPI to begin the process of collaboratively developing 2020-21 OneTA plans and the accompanying narrative. Partners and EPI will jointly develop a holistic TA plan that includes all partners' proposed activities for the year. These activities should be based on evidence and country needs identified during the JA and other relevant meetings and should complement one another and existing activities in-country. Including all TCA relevant stakeholders in the OneTA plan development is critical to ensure that the planned TCA activities have clearly defined expected results that together contribute to the country's efforts in strengthening its immunization and health systems. TCA planners will further demonstrate the catalyzing role of expected TCA results through linking TCA activities to the programmatic areas and GPF indicators in the 2020-21 OneTA plans.

Review of OneTA Plan: Review of the OneTA Plan incl. its narrative section before final submission may require a series of meetings and teleconferences as well as input from regional, HQ, and Gavi Secretariat members. *Prior to submission*, finalised submissions are expected to have been reviewed by the country EPI management team, ICC, partner organizations at both regional and HQ-levels, and the Gavi Secretariat. Therefore, plans should be circulated within partner organizations at least 4 weeks prior to the submission deadline to allow sufficient time for review and feedback:

Suggested timeline for reviewing OneTA plan proposals for TCA schedule A submission (15 October 2019)

4 weeks prior to submission (17 September 2019): OneTA Plan circulated with relevant Regional Office and RWG

3 weeks prior to submission (24 September 2019): OneTA Plan circulated with HQ

2 weeks prior to submission (1 October 2019): OneTA Plan circulated with Gavi SCM and Technical Teams

Suggested timeline for reviewing OneTA plan proposals for TCA schedule B submission (29 November 2019)

4 weeks prior to submission (1 November 2019): OneTA Plan circulated with relevant Regional Office and RWG

3 weeks prior to submission (8 November 2019): OneTA Plan circulated with HQ

2 weeks prior to submission (15 November 2019): OneTA Plan circulated with Gavi SCM and Technical Teams

Submission of OneTA Plan: Following ICC endorsement, the OneTA Plan for each country and all TCA implementing partners will be submitted through Google Drive proposals which are not finalised or fully reviewed will not be considered past the submission deadline and will have to be submitted at the next scheduled deadline.

PEF MT Approval: Proposals will be reviewed by the PEF Management Team, who may endorse the submissions, seek clarification from partners, and/or provide recommendation for final adjustments. Note that approval of Core partners' OneTA plans and proposals from expanded partners is always subject to availability of funds.

Disbursement of Funds: This includes the finalisation of contractual agreements and fund disbursement to partners for implementation of TA activities. Once OneTA plans have been formally approved by Gavi, partners should begin implementation as soon as possible. Delays are unavoidable in some cases hence core partners have 15 months to complete their 12-month budgeted plans.

Planning & Implementation Timeframes: Implementation of TA along Schedule A will occur from January 2020 through March 2021. Implementation of TA along Schedule B will occur from March 2020 through June 2021.

Due to the nature of capacity development, it is understood that some activities may not be complete in a 1-year timeframe. Although funding is released on an annual basis, countries are encouraged to plan activities over a 2-year timeframe if appropriate. Activities whose duration goes beyond the 15-month funding period will be automatically included in the draft 2020-2021 OneTA plan and undergo revalidation. Such an extended planning timeframe is optional and is consistent with other donor-funded multi-year programs whose budgets are subject to annual re-authorizations prior to disbursement of funding tranches.

Optional narrative reports: Partners are strongly encouraged to submit optional narrative reports through the PEF portal to provide greater context and qualitative details of TCA performance beyond the milestone reporting. These reports should be succinct and focus on

- (i) main achievements incl. best practices;
- (ii) significant challenges; and
- (iii) lessons learned and recommendations.

Optional narrative reports can be used for eliciting specific feedback from Gavi Secretariat and/or for tracking implementation progress during JAs/FPPs, country missions, EPI reviews, quarterly TCA review meetings or at other relevant occasions.

Reprogramming: Should there be need to reprogram TA activities, funds can be reallocated by the partner within the current budget ceiling, subject to the approval of the Gavi Secretariat, EPI and ICC. When reporting in the PEF portal, re-programmed activities should have "Re-programmed" selected for their respective milestone status. Moreover, a short description of the re-programming and an update of the milestones are required. For expanded partners, reprogramming may require an adjustment to their MOU/Exhibit.

Carried forward milestones: Milestones which are not completed by the reporting deadline (i.e. reported as "Minor Delays" or "Major Delays") are carried forward to the following milestone reporting period until the TCA activity is completed, reprogrammed or cancelled. A short description outlining reasons for incomplete milestones is recommended.

7. Roles & Responsibilities in planning and monitoring TCA

The following table outlines the roles & responsibilities of key stakeholders in the PEF-TCA planning, reporting and monitoring processes. The countries may expand the roles and responsibilities accountability matrix to adjust for the country context. The below roles and responsibilities of PEF-TCA stakeholders are critical for ensuring the success and impact of

TCA, and their implementation will be increasingly monitored, such as through an increasing number of mutual accountability agreements between TCA partners, Government and Gavi Secretariat. Such tripartite agreements, for example established through Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs), shall facilitate more clarity of and adherence to roles and responsibilities regarding the cooperation, collaboration and mutual accountability of all relevant partners during the implementation of TCA activities.

Stakeholder	Roles & Responsibilities
EPI / MOH	Lead the TCA planning and monitoring process including development of a comprehensive roadmap for implementation of activities
	Convene quarterly meetings (including JA) to review progress on TCA implementation and plan for following period
	Proactively raise any concerns with TCA provision to partners, the ICC and Gavi
	Ensure relevant partners (including potential local institutions) are included in the JA, ICC and OneTA plan
	Provide quarterly documented feedback on quality, relevance and impact of TCA to ICC and during the Joint Appraisal process
	Agree with partners on the contribution of staff time to be embedded
ICC	Review quarterly TCA implementation progress and challenges and agree on corrective actions (at least bi-annually) and endorse plan for following year
	Review and validate any requests for adjustments to the 2019 OneTA Plan
Partners: Country Level	Submit progress updates on TCA milestone reporting in June and November, as well as an update and explanation for incomplete 2018 milestones by June 2019
	Monitor and discuss progress with other country stakeholders on a quarterly basis
	Submit annual OneTA plan
	ICC to be updated on recruitment or termination of staff and consultants. Staff retention to be reviewed on an annual basis
	Development of a mutual accountability framework
Partners: Regional Level	Monitor progress on TCA delivery throughout the year (including review of regular TCA reporting) and support countries in identifying and overcoming challenges or bottlenecks
	Support dissemination of guidance, tools, and decisions from PEF MT, ACT, etc. to country level staff
	Facilitate lessons learned and best practices from planning, implementation and monitoring of TCA in countries
Partners: HQ	Review submission of TCA milestone reports of priority countries before reporting deadlines and provide reporting feedback via the portal
	Disseminate guidance, tools, and decisions from PEF MT, ACT, etc. to regional level staff
	Core partners to submit HR and financial utilization reports to Gavi Secretariat twice a year
Gavi SFA working groups	Provide guidance to countries and partners on relevant TCA approaches in their programmatic areas
	Monitor progress on TCA delivery throughout the year in their programmatic areas
Gavi Secretariat	Ensure clarity on process for TCA planning and reporting
	Engage in quarterly review of TCA in country; convene discussions if necessary; review partner reports (milestones, results, and narratives) and provide timely feedback
	Ensure robust discussion on planning for TCA through the JA, including link with other Gavi grants and results expected in the country

8. Contact information for further clarifications and support

All process questions emerging along the TCA process should be directed as follows:

- **Country-specific questions** should be sent to the relevant -Gavi SCM and PEF PO.
- **Agency-specific questions** should be sent to the relevant Gavi focal points in each agency (Lidija Kamara, kamaral@who.int at WHO; Benjamin Schreiber, bschreiber@unicef.org at UNICEF; Michael Kent Ranson,

mranson@worldbank.org at the World Bank; and Shakia Bright, kxx6@cdc.gov at CDC).

- Additional guidance on engagement processes for the CDC and World Bank is available [here](#).
- **General PEF questions** should be sent to the Secretariat PEF team at pef@gavi.org

Annex: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

(A) Overall process

Q.1 What's new about the process in 2019-2020?

A.1 The 2019-2020 PEF TCA process builds on the success in 2016-2018. It seeks to clarify and strengthen the process and focus on results, based on a 2019 review conducted with all stakeholders in January-February 2019 as well as guidance and recommendations received from the PEF Management Team in February 2019.

(B) Planning

Q.1 The JA in my country was conducted many months ago, and the situation has evolved significantly. How can we make our 2019-2020 plan based on out-of-date information?

A.1. While the JA serves as the primary basis for PEF-TCA planning, it is expected that many countries will need to review and update the JA recommendations as part of the planning process. Such a review should be conducted in a transparent manner and include all relevant country stakeholders and, as appropriate, the World Bank and CDC, which may require remote inputs. The new Schedule A submission option can help reduce the gap between the JA and the development of the OneTA Plan.

(C) Monitoring & Reporting

Q.1 The date for the first milestones at the end of June is too early. How can we be expected to report on progress only 1-2 months after having received funds to begin provision of technical assistance?

A.1 We have introduced flexibility in the timing of the first milestone reporting. However, it is important to understand the logic behind the respective bi-annual reporting. Having at least two formal reporting touch points throughout the year is critical. Since one report will be due in November 2019 (to inform development of the next 2020 plan in December), it makes sense to have the other report occur roughly 6 months later. Second, some activities from 2017 that could not be completed on time need to be reported by June 30th, 2019. Finally, most countries' OneTA plans are approved/validated in January/February, which allows for a 4-6 months window before the mid-year reporting deadline. TCA implementers should not wait until funds are received at country level (as this can often be delayed due to internal agency procedures) but to begin activities as soon as the OneTA plan is formally approved.

- Q.2 What's the meaning of the quarterly touch point by the RWG? How is this different from what's happened in the past? Who should be participating in these reviews, and what is expected to come out of them?
- A.2 The guidelines this year have been revised to reflect the central role of the RWG in the PEF-TCA process. The RWG shall review country milestone status (and any other relevant reports) on a bi-annual basis to ensure progress is appropriate and make any recommendations for corrective action. RWGs are requested to schedule a minimum of two additional touch points in the two quarters that do not have formal reporting to ensure up-take of recommendations and monitor any challenges. RWGs are also requested to inform any relevant stakeholders (see Roles & Responsibilities table), including through circulation of meeting minutes and documented recommendations.

(D) Budgets and funds

- Q.1 Last year my budget for surveillance consumables – lab equipment, reagents, etc. – was refused. How am I meant to provide TA to support the improvement of surveillance without the necessary equipment?
- A.1 Lab equipment and consumables are important, but these are routine expenses and not directly related to the TCA provision. While these should be funded as part of the EPI's standard operating budget, countries with severe resource should seek to obtain funding through its HSS grant.
- Q.2 We struggle to recruit and retain qualified staff because Gavi planning timeframes only allow us to offer 1-year contracts. In addition, it often takes us several months to recruit, meaning that staff are only in place midway through the year. How can we be expected to deliver sustainable capacity improvements under these conditions?
- A.2 PEF-TCA explicitly allows for the signing of multi-year contracts with staff, and Gavi has formal agreements with its core partners that reflect this commitment. The release of funds on an annual basis should not preclude the provision of a long-term letter of commitment. In addition, there is also the opportunity to change/alter/update/revise staffing arrangements on an annual basis depending on the context and budgetary situation. In terms of recruitment, TCA implementers should anticipate their staffing needs and prepare the initial phases of recruitment (development of ToRs, advertising the position, etc.) in advance. Many agencies specify in advertisements that recruitment is conditional on final receipt of funds from the donor, so there is no reason to wait until Gavi funds are physically received in-country to launch the recruitment process. The same principle applies to recruitment of consultants.