

## Partners' engagement framework

### Guidance on the role of expanded partners in the provision of targeted country assistance

#### Background

Gavi provides funding to partners through the partners' engagement framework (PEF). This allows them, in turn, to support countries' immunisation programmes.

Introduced in pursuit of Gavi's new strategic vision for 2016–2020, PEF ushers in a new way of planning, funding, operationalising and monitoring technical assistance provided by partners. It is a country-centric approach designed to expand the pool of technical assistance providers at country level, leverage the comparative strengths of each partner, as well as to increase transparency and accountability for results.

Support under PEF is divided into three main areas: targeted country assistance, special investment for strategic focus areas and foundational support.

#### Targeted country assistance

The technical assistance provided by partners through PEF is called targeted country assistance (TCA). It is the most distinctive feature of PEF, currently accounting for approximately 50% of all PEF funding to partners.

TCA is an integral part of the overall portfolio of Alliance support to countries. It aims to support the implementation of Gavi vaccine and health system strengthening grants, and to improve coverage and equity of immunisation in a sustainable manner. It also encourages partners to explore innovative approaches in providing technical assistance.

The duration (short- or long-term), level of proximity to the recipient programme (embedded or remote) and function (capacity development, advisory, implementation or management support) of TCA differ in each country.

TCA can be provided by Gavi's traditional "core" partners (WHO, UNICEF, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Bank and the CSO Consortium), as well as by other partners, typically referred to as "expanded" partners. The latter can include academic or research institutions, consultancy firms, private institutions, other UN agencies, civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations and not-for-profit implementers.

#### Expanded partners

TCA provided by expanded partners under PEF must be complementary to that provided by traditional partners. Gavi is continuously looking to attract new expanded partners who can offer capacity-building support to countries in areas where specific expertise is required.

These include:

<b>Programmatic area</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Leadership, management, and coordination</b>	Support the efficient and effective oversight, management and coordination of immunisation programmes in areas with specific coverage and equity challenges. This may involve strategic and operational planning, implementation monitoring, and enhancement of performance management practices in the Expanded Programme for Immunization (EPI).
<b>Programme implementation</b>	Support the implementation of Gavi grants and their integration into national processes. This is particularly important where there is a history of delayed or partial grant implementation.
<b>Financing for immunisation</b>	Support the government in developing tools and analyses used to advocate for stepped-up domestic financing for immunisation. Capacity-building activities in this area include: planning, costing, budgeting, execution and disbursement of funds for immunisation
<b>Financial management</b>	Support the strengthening of financial systems, including budgeting and planning, accounting systems, procurement and payment systems, training and assurance mechanisms.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Support countries' transition out of Gavi support. This includes sustainability planning, development and implementation of transition plans, and other efforts to support a successful and sustainable transition.
<b>Supply chain</b>	Support to strengthen the immunisation supply chain, focusing on continuous improvement planning, cold chain equipment, data systems, supply chain staff and supply chain design.
<b>Data/surveillance</b>	Support improvements in the collection, management, analysis, quality and use of immunisation data. This could include support to the planning and implementation of regular surveys and surveillance activities (as per established guidelines).
<b>Demand promotion and community engagement</b>	Support the promotion of sustainable public demand for quality immunisation services.
<b>Vaccine sub-groups</b>	Support the introduction of new vaccines or supplementary immunisation activities. This may include supporting planning efforts, assisting with applications, implementing vaccine activities and conducting evaluations.
<b>Advocacy</b>	Support advocacy with stakeholders to improve high-level political commitment for quality immunisation programmes. This could involve developing and/or updating policies and raising awareness.

## Guiding principles

TCA provided by expanded partners is guided by the following principles. This list is not exhaustive and other principles may be applied as required.

1. **Country ownership:** assistance provided by expanded partners should be based on technical assistance needs identified by countries to help them overcome key immunisation bottlenecks. Expanded partners should therefore be contracted in consultation with the country's ministry of health. Countries generally identify their challenges and express their technical assistance needs through the annual joint appraisal process, and regularly assess the effectiveness and quality of support they receive from expanded partners. Technical assistance provided by expanded partners should form part of a composite "one technical assistance (TA) plan", which offers a holistic view of all TCA provided to a country. This ensures complementarity of support and reduces the risk of duplication.
2. **Technical assistance is embedded within the EPI team:** staff providing technical assistance should spend the majority of their time in country, directly supporting the national EPI programme.
3. **Technical assistance activities are clearly focused on the transfer of skills, with a goal towards achieving sustainability:** activities and deliverables should aim to strengthen country-level capacity and put in place sustainable mechanisms.
4. **Cost effectiveness:** the majority of the cost should be spent at country level (as opposed to global/regional levels).
5. **Strong accountability:** clearly defined semi-annual milestones should be reported against to ensure transparent and timely monitoring of indicators and deliverables. Countries should have complete insight into this reporting and be able to review their partner's performance on a regular basis.

## Approaches to identify additional expanded partners

Based on the needs identified at the country level, the Secretariat will reach out to a set of expanded partners to complement the TCA provided by core partners.

There are various strategies in place to identify expanded partners.

- Public request for proposal (RFP): Gavi will publish the technical requirements and scope for the technical assistance, allowing any partner to provide a formal proposal.
- Limited RFP process: Gavi will contact a shortlist of providers and ask for proposals. These providers may have been identified as part of :
  - the list of partners who expressed interest through the request for information (RFI) process undertaken in 2015;
  - the list of partners who continuously express their interest to work with Gavi through our website<sup>1</sup>;
  - the list of partners identified in the country either by the Gavi Secretariat, Alliance partners, donors, UN agencies or CSOs; or
  - the list of partners on the DevelopmentAid.org website.
- Single sourcing process: Gavi will contract directly with a provider. This happens when a specific service provider has been requested by the country, when a service provider is already providing a set of services that Gavi would like to build on, or when the technical assistance requested is part of an existing programme of support.

## Performance management of expanded partners

Expanded partners are held to the same standards of accountability as traditional, “core” partners and are required to regularly report progress against milestones. TCA milestones are country-specific and help link TCA investments to tangible, time-bound activities.

Expanded partners define a set of “milestones” representing the specific results expected as part of their support to the country. They are required to report against these milestones on a semi-annual basis. Before being consolidated at the regional and global level, these reports are discussed at the country level with the EPI team and Inter-agency Coordinating Committee (ICC).

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*If your expertise matches our needs, please contact [pef@gavi.org](mailto:pef@gavi.org).*

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.gavi.org/support/pef/targeted-country-assistance/>