



Report to the Executive Committee

1 November 2013

Subject:	IRC Terms of Reference
Report of:	Nina Schwalbe, Managing Director, Policy and Performance
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Agenda item:	03
Category:	For Decision
Strategic goal:	Affects all strategic goals

Section A: Overview

1 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 In June the Board approved the new Grant Application, Monitoring, and Review (GAMR) process, which includes a new role for the Independent Review Committee (IRC). A high-level Terms of Reference (TORs) for the IRC is attached.
- 1.2 Further to the Executive Committee (EC) Charter, the purpose of this paper is to seek approval from the Executive Committee on the new TORs for the IRC. This paper presents the revised TORs (see Annex A) and summarises in Section B the major differences with the previous TORs. The paper and accompanying TORs have been reviewed by the Programme and Policy Committee (PPC) and their proposed changes incorporated. The PPC recommendation is provided below.
- 1.3 It is noted that for the TORs to become effective the Board will need to amend the GAVI Alliance By-Laws, following a recommendation by the Governance Committee.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The PPC recommended to the Executive Committee that it **Approve** the IRC terms of reference as attached to Doc 03, taking into account the changes made at the PPC meeting and subject to the Board amending the By-Laws as appropriate to enable a process of emergency appointments.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 9-10 October, the PPC also recommended to the Governance Committee that it consider recommending to the Board that it approve changing the By-Laws to allow the CEO, in consultation with the

Chair of the PPC, to appoint IRC members in emergency situations which will be followed by Board ratification.

3 Executive summary

- 3.1 At its June meeting the Board approved a new Grant Application, Monitoring, and Review system. The key elements of a revised GAMR include replacing the Monitoring IRC with a new monitoring and review system based on strengthened routine monitoring and the review of annual renewal requests by a High-Level Review Panel, and the review by the IRC of new proposals and of requests for renewal of support for a country's strategy and planning cycle. The IRC will consider applications for all types of new support, to facilitate a more holistic view of the broad portfolio of support GAVI provides to countries, rather than looking at each new application in isolation from the others. At the end of a country's strategy and planning cycle, the IRC will also review that country's renewal request for the next cycle.
- 3.2 Under GAMR the schedule of IRCs will be consolidated. Three IRCs will be conducted every year at predictable times.¹
- 3.3 The new TORs integrate elements of GAMR and describe in more detail both the functioning of IRC meetings and the responsibilities of the Chair and Vice Chair.
- 3.4 At its meeting, the PPC recommended amending the TORs of the IRC proposed by the Secretariat to retain the appointment process set out in the By-Laws, while allowing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in consultation with the PPC Chair to appoint IRC members in emergency situations. The need for such an emergency appointment process is explained in Section B.6.2. In addition, the PPC requested that Section 3.4(b) clarify that IRC members should not review applications from countries in which they are engaged to conduct significant work in relation to programmes that GAVI supports and that for past work in particular countries only recent assignments should be taken into account.

4 Risk implication and mitigation

- 4.1 As a general matter, a new system that entails substantial changes to GAVI's application, monitoring and review systems comes with implementation challenges and risks. Clear and coherent TORs for the IRC mitigates risks around the implementation of the IRC's new functions and operations under GAMR.

5 Financial implications: Business plan and budgets

- 5.1 There are no financial implications of the new TORs.

¹ If the Board approves GAVI support for accelerated roll out of Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV), additional rounds will be needed in 2014 and 2015.

Section B: Content

6 Major differences between the new and previous IRC TORs

6.1 The new TORs reflect changes related to GAMR and provide more detail on the operating modalities of the IRC as well as the roles and responsibilities of the Chair and Vice Chair.

- a) The new TORs reflect several GAMR elements including:
 - (i) the review by the IRC of extensions to funding for the country's next strategy and planning cycle;
 - (ii) the holistic review by the IRC of all requests for new funding and extensions to funding for the next strategy and planning cycle, assessing linkages and continuity between programs. To further strengthen linkages between approval of new proposals and the assessment of requests for continued funding of existing programmes, the IRC also takes into account reports on country performance from the High-Level Review Panel (which fulfills the monitoring and review function formerly undertaken by the Monitoring IRC). In addition, three IRC members (including the Chair) will also serve on the High-Level Review Panel.
- b) More detail is provided in the new TORs on the operating modalities of the IRC, including the number of annual meetings and specifying the length of service of IRC members.
- c) The new TORs also describe in more detail the roles and responsibilities of the Chair and Vice Chair, including the period of their appointment, their responsibilities in leading plenary sessions, and their presentation to the PPC of both the IRC Consolidated Review Report and the report of the High-Level Review Panel. The IRC Chair and two other IRC members will also participate in High-Level Review Panel deliberations.

6.2 Rationale for the emergency appointment process of IRC members by the CEO in consultation with the PPC Chair

- a) Under the By-Laws, the Board appoints IRC members. As the Board only meets twice a year, there is not the flexibility to add to the pool when additional or particular types of expertise are needed (e.g. HPV and gender) or when people drop out at short notice. Each IRC meeting requires an appropriate constellation of expertise in multiple areas. Although there is a pool of approved IRC members reviewers sometimes have conflicting obligations or cancel at the last minute and there are at times gaps in particular expertise that cannot be filled through the process described in the By-Laws, which requires a long lead time. In such situations it will therefore be necessary to have a faster approach to appointing IRC members.

- b) Under its Charter, the PPC is responsible for advising on the criteria for and recruitment of IRC members and for responding to IRC policy recommendations. In addition, in practice the PPC Chair is the most likely Committee Chair to have a public health background. In line with this and to retain the necessary flexibility, the Secretariat proposes that, in emergency situations, the CEO in consultation with the PPC Chair approve the appointment of IRC members, which will be followed by Board ratification. The PPC Chair's involvement would add independence and external expertise to the emergency appointment process.

7 Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify new IRC pool

- 7.1 A closed RFP has been issued to appoint a company to assist the Secretariat with the nomination of new IRC members based on the competencies outlined in section 2.2 of the TOR. The nominations resulting from this process will be submitted to the Board for approval, upon Governance Committee review.

Section C: Implications

8 Impact on countries

- 8.1 Under the approved GAMR process there will be more linkage between cash and vaccine support, and between the assessment of new proposals and considerations of requests for continued funding for existing programmes. This should better enable countries to plan and implement their programmes and GAVI to assess the applications in a holistic manner.

9 Impact on GAVI stakeholders

- 9.1 The new TORs do not have an impact on GAVI stakeholders, beyond the provision for participation in open sessions of the IRC. This already happens to some extent, but only for purposes of factual clarification. Under the new system, the Chair may exercise his or her discretion in requesting views from countries, partners and the Secretariat during open sessions, beyond purposes of factual clarification.

10 Impact on Secretariat

- 10.1 Similar to the impact on GAVI stakeholders, the new TORs provide the Chair with discretion to request views from the Secretariat.

11 Legal and governance implications

- 11.1 Taking into account any amendments made by the EC and assuming the By-Laws are amended as appropriate, the TORs would apply to IRC functions and operations starting with the first IRC convened under revised the GAMR system, which is scheduled for June 2014. The emergency appointment process will require a change in the By-Laws which will be

presented to the Governance Committee for consideration and possible recommendation to the Board at the next opportunity.

12 Consultation

12.1 These TORs reflect the principles and key elements that were discussed during the GAMR “action lab” process (consisting of two three-day labs between November 2012 and January 2013, at which Alliance partners and country representatives were participants), which were approved by the Board in June 2013. The TORs also reflect the discussion at the PPC meeting on 9-10 October 2013.

13 Gender implications

13.1 Gender balance will be sought in constituting the pool of IRC members. The pool will include multiple individuals with gender expertise, to conduct cross-cutting gender reviews during each round of the IRC.

Section D: Annexes

Annex A: Draft Terms of Reference for the Independent Review Committee

**Annex A: Draft Terms of Reference for the Independent Review Committee
under the new Grant Application, Monitoring, and Review (GAMR) system**

1. Purpose

1.1 Under the GAVI Alliance By-Laws, the Independent Review Committee (IRC) is an independent, impartial group of experts that serves to guarantee the integrity and consistency of an open and transparent funding process.

2. Composition

2.1 Selection of IRC members shall be conducted in an open and transparent manner and based on publicly available criteria and they will be appointed in accordance with the GAVI Alliance By-Laws.

2.2 The IRC membership shall:

- a) be representative of a wide range of expertise relevant to GAVI-supported programmes, including in the following areas: routine immunisation programmes, especially at country level, management of campaigns, delivery of health services including child and adolescent health, health systems strengthening and management, epidemiology and disease control, cold chain and logistics, financial and budget analysis, and gender and equity;
- b) consist of technical experts knowledgeable on the developing country context and relevant issues, including in a variety of fields related to immunization and health systems, and who have practical experience working in or with developing country governments, civil society, and other partners in those contexts.
- c) be geographically diverse, with a male and female representation consistent with GAVI's Gender Policy and Guidelines on the GAVI Alliance Board Gender Balance.

2.3 IRC members shall be appointed for a term of up to 3 years. This term may be renewed for another period of up to 3 years. Upon reaching the second term limit IRC members will not be eligible to serve on the IRC for at least 1 year. During their term IRC members may be called upon to serve on the IRC for review of country plans or requests for extensions for which he or she has specific relevant skills. IRC members shall receive an honorarium and reasonable costs for their participation in each IRC session shall be in accordance with GAVI's policies.

3. Duties and responsibilities

- 3.1 The IRC advises the GAVI Alliance Board on whether to fund country plans and programmes – both for new vaccine support and health systems strengthening support.
- 3.2 The IRC will review new country plans and requests for extensions of existing programmes in accordance with policies adopted by the GAVI Alliance Board. The aim of the IRC review is to make a recommendation as to whether a country plan will likely achieve (i.e. on a balance of probabilities) the proposed results and contribute to GAVI achieving its mission and strategy, taking into account the justification of the introduction decision, soundness of approach, country readiness, feasibility of plans, system strengthening and sustainability, economic and financial considerations and public health benefit of the investment in line with GAVI mission.
- 3.3 IRC members are responsible for upholding the integrity and independence of the IRC. IRC members are required to disclose any affiliations, current consultancy contracts, connections or links that may affect their independence in assessing country plans or proposals. While in-depth knowledge of a country is considered an asset there are circumstances where it may be perceived to affect a member's independence.
- 3.4 Specifically, IRC members will:
 - a) not be employees of Alliance partner agencies;
 - b) not review country plans from GAVI eligible countries of which they are a national, have significant links with (e.g. residency for a considerable period) or where they have recently done or are engaged to do significant work that relates to the type of programmes GAVI supports; and
 - c) not have taken part in any preparation processes.
- 3.5 In an annual declaration of interest form IRC members will be requested to declare any facts relevant in the context of the requirements in Sections 3.3 and
- 3.6 At each meeting the Chair will request the IRC members to declare whether they have any additional conflicts of interests in addition to their standing declarations of interest. The Chair shall determine, in consultation with the Secretariat and the affected member, whether, and if so, to what extent, a member with a conflict of interest shall be able to attend or participate in the specific sessions discussing the relevant countries.

- 3.7 IRC members are covered by the requirements of the GAVI Alliance Conflicts of Interest and Ethics Policies and are required to submit annual confidentiality and declaration of interest statements.

Chair and Vice-Chair

- 3.8 In consultation with the PPC Chair, the Chief Executive Officer shall designate an IRC Chair for a period that is normally not more than two consecutive years.
- 3.9 In consultation with the PPC Chair, the Chief Executive Officer shall also designate an IRC Vice-Chair for a period that is normally not more than two consecutive years ensuring that the Vice Chair term does not end in the same year as the term of the IRC Chair.
- 3.10 The Chair of the IRC, and in his or her absence the Vice-Chair, shall be responsible for:
- a) Leading the plenary session discussions on country plans and extension requests submitted by countries and reviewed by IRC members.
 - b) Facilitating consensus among different reviewers on the recommendations for individual country plans and extension requests.
 - c) Consolidating the relevant issues raised in the plenary sessions.
 - d) Leading the preparation of the recommendations on country programme grants for the GAVI Board.
 - e) Leading the process of formulating policy recommendations to the PPC as reflected in the IRC Consolidated Review Reports.
 - f) Present the IRC Consolidated Review Reports and report of the High-Level Review Panel on processes and outcomes to the PPC once a year.
 - g) Providing other services in relation to the IRC review process as needed.
 - h) Participating in the Grant Review Panel that assesses requests for continued funding of existing programmes.
- 3.11 Each year, the IRC Chair in consultation with the Secretariat shall request two IRC members to participate in the work of the High Level Review Panel for the duration of that year.

4. Operations

Meetings:

- 4.1 It is expected that the IRC will meet three times a year based on a schedule to be determined by the Secretariat, taking into account the calendar of meetings of relevant Board Committees and the Board.
- 4.2 The IRC members attending a meeting shall be divided into smaller review teams that will be assigned specific country plans or extension requests.
- 4.3 During the IRC meetings, GAVI Secretariat staff and staff from partner agencies may be invited to attend an open session during which they would share their assessment and information relevant for its review. For selected countries, the EPI Manager and others as appropriate may be invited to attend the open session and provide input as required by the IRC.
- 4.4 After receiving all input and discussing the presentations by the review team assigned to each country, the IRC will have the option to deliberate on their recommendations in a closed session.
- 4.5 Feedback and communication of recommendations to the GAVI Secretariat and partners will take place in an open session at the end of the review period.
- 4.6 In instances where the number of applications to be reviewed is large and are deemed to require a longer time period, the IRC can convene in two parallel sessions.

Review:

- 4.7 The IRC shall review applications for all types of new support as well as requests at the end of a country's strategy and planning cycle for the next cycle, and make recommendations on funding to the GAVI Alliance Board.
- 4.8 The IRC review shall consider the information available to countries within applicable guidelines and information provided to countries and shall consist of the following steps:
 - a) Review country requests for support and supporting documentation, such as Health Sector Plans, costed immunisation comprehensive Multi Year Plans (cMYPs), Mid Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs), WHO/UNICEF Joint reporting Forms (JRFs), and Financial Management Assessments
 - b) Provide the GAVI Alliance with final reports and recommendations of support for each country reviewed;

4.9 The IRC shall consider country plans and requests for renewal of such country plans holistically, especially assessing linkages and continuity between programmes. The IRC takes into account reports on country performance from the High-Level Review Panel and any other country-specific reviews in making its recommendations.

Reporting:

4.10 At the end of each review session, the IRC will prepare the following:

- (a) One report for each country whose application was submitted and reviewed by the IRC. The report will specifically make one of two possible recommendations:
 - I. Recommended for Approval – plus comments on areas the IRC deems deserving of special attention by the country, GAVI Secretariat or partners.
 - II. Not recommended for Approval – plus the key reasons why the IRC did not consider the country's application ready to be approved at this sitting.

- (b) The IRC also prepares one overall consolidated report which will include a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the applications submitted, any recommendations to the Board and Alliance Partners on GAVI programmes and policies, including in relation to the grant application and review processes (the "IRC Consolidated Review Report"). Once a year, the IRC Consolidated Review Report(s) shall be submitted to the PPC.