

28 April 2017

To: Chair of Interagency Coordination Committee (ICC)
WHO country office
UNICEF country office

Dear colleagues,

We are pleased to announce that the resources dedicated to the Gavi Partners' Engagement Framework (PEF) have been released to your country. As you know, the PEF seeks to leverage the comparative strengths of Alliance partners to support immunisation outcomes in countries. As we embark on the second round of support under the PEF process (2017/2018), we wish to thank all of you for supporting your national immunisation programmes and re-iterate the core principles that drive the PEF.

Capacity building and transfer of skills

The PEF aims to build local capacity and promote transfer of skills to the national EPI staff with a vision for long term sustainability.

In order to do so, it provides significant resources to country offices of WHO, UNICEF and other partners who in turn bring technical expertise to the national EPI programme. These resources have successfully strengthened the capacities of these organisations in many countries, particularly by embedding staff at national – and sometimes sub-national – levels.

The Alliance will continue its efforts to strengthen in-country capacity in order to implement strong immunisation programmes.

Country ownership, transparency and accountability

The PEF process strengthens ownership of the Ministry of Health, enhances coordination amongst immunisation partners, and reinforces accountability for results. It places countries at the heart of the approach; by an early identification of needs and a country-led articulation of support and regular assessment of performance. This is a key shift from the previous model and requires EPI teams to meet regularly with in-country partners to discuss progress and review future priorities.

The PEF also creates an unprecedented level of transparency and coordination between partners at country, regional and global level. A key feature of this is the individual 'targeted country assistance (TCA) plan' attached to this communication, which provides full visibility on the roles and responsibilities of each partner in your country.

In addition, the PEF sets high reporting standards in order to hold all partners accountable for results. At country level, Alliance stakeholders and EPI teams are requested to discuss semi-annual milestones. At global level, a new PEF management team (MT) composed of WHO,

UNICEF, the Gavi Secretariat, USAID, DFID and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has been set up to oversee the consolidation of progress.

Trust and coordination amongst partners

As you know, the PEF has marked a significant evolution in the way Alliance partners work together. This required adaptation, flexibility, and sometimes challenging but honest discussions in order to achieve the desired results at country level. Trustful relationships between the Alliance partners are absolutely vital to ensure successful support to countries. In particular, continuous collaboration and open dialogue between WHO, UNICEF and the Gavi Secretariat teams at all levels are vital.

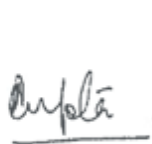
On that note, for the first time in 2016, the Alliance organised an “Alliance Health Survey” to better understand where the Alliance stood in terms of trust, coordination, and collaboration. The main findings revealed an extraordinary commitment from Alliance colleagues to the Gavi mission of immunising children in low-income countries. It also uncovered several areas of improvement in the Alliance processes, communication and interpersonal relationships. These also apply to the PEF process, which in 2016 faced challenges related to provision of timely guidance and coordination between partners. Our shared experiences with the PEF processes in 2016 provide valuable lessons upon which we will plan further enhancements and learning in the year ahead. We will continue to improve the way we engage as an Alliance, undertake joint resource planning, and hold each other accountable for results. Several initiatives are already underway to improve the Alliance processes, communication and trust in 2017.

2017 PEF support

As previously mentioned, funds for your 2017 PEF TCA have been sent to the WHO and UNICEF country offices. You will find attached details on activities and milestones, as well as reporting milestones. These funds come in addition to programme grants you receive from Gavi (health system strengthening, new vaccine support, etc). The implementation period for this TCA support runs until June 2018. We strongly encourage that activities and milestones be reviewed regularly with all relevant in-country stakeholders under the leadership of the EPI manager and team. We cannot succeed without your collective valuable input and learning.

The Alliance partners appreciate the committed partnership of your Ministry in working towards the goal of increasing immunisation coverage and equity for the benefit of all children. We thank you for your partnership and collaboration.

Sincerely,



Anuradha Gupta
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance



Ted Chaiban
Director, Programmes
UNICEF



Dr Jean-Marie Okwo-Bele
Director of the Department of Immunisation
WHO

Cc: EPI manager
Gavi stakeholders including regional head and senior country manager

Enc: Activities for Country's 2017 PEF targeted country assistance (TCA)