

Summary of IRC Monitoring Team Policy Recommendations to the GAVI Board *with responses from the Working Group*

Reporting – Quality

The IRC continue to face many problems with inconsistencies in the annual report. One of the most important inconsistencies is that targets differ from requests. Partners need to take responsibility for assisting countries in filling in the progress report correctly in order to avoid delays in supply.

Furthermore, the problem of countries repeatedly failing to provide information requested by the IRC in a timely manner has become worrisome. In the absence of sufficient information, the IRC is not in a position to approve support to these countries. The IRC urges partners and ICC to take greater responsibility by working closely with countries to ensure reports are properly completed (especially ensuring targets are in line with achievements) before endorsing.

The Working Group agrees with the recommendation of the Monitoring & Evaluation Subgroup to a two-step process of sharing the Country Progress Reports with Regions by 15 April before final submission to the Secretariat by 15 May. This will allow regions more time to work with countries to improve reporting quality.

Reporting – Deadlines

Deadlines for reporting are often not observed. When reports are received hours or the day before the IRC is to make its review, it is impossible to do quality background preparations. A strict rule should be applied that if a report is not received by two weeks before the review date it will not be reviewed.

The Working Group supports this recommendation for all countries except for Low Income Countries under stress

Vaccine management

Vaccine management and **forecasting** is a major problem in many countries. More particularly, there is an ongoing problem of **zero stock balances** being reported. The IRC is aware that a training program is in progress to address some aspects of this problem, but is of the opinion that something needs to be done urgently in the interim to confirm stock balances prior to approving vaccine requests and/or procurement.

The Working Group recommends that improving vaccine management in countries should be flagged as a priority activity under the current work plan. Ongoing work of WHO and UNICEF should be coordinated to identify specific areas for additional support from 2005.

Regional Support mechanisms

We reiterate the need to strengthen regional support mechanisms. In particular, the previous IRC recommendation to the Board to use the regional EPI managers meeting as an entry point to improve the quality of the annual report through an internal peer review process. At the same time, there is a need to **strengthen the RWG**.

WHO should elaborate a plan to implement this activity as previously agreed in the July 2004 IRC recommendations

Reward based systems

At this late stage of the first phase of GAVI, changes in the current rules for rewards would be difficult to implement and justify (Kenya has suggested to change the rules for calculating rewards). We note that previous ad hoc changes to the reward rules have complicated the implementation of this system. For example, the IRC has previously expressed its concern about the use of coverage surveys to calculate rewards.

The Working Group supports the M&E subgroup recommendation to maintain the current rules for calculation of rewards

Recommendations for phase two

A. Lump sum payments for new vaccine introduction.

- Countries shifting from one presentation should be considered to receive extra funding support for this change.
- When there are considerable vaccine delivery delays outside the countries' control (e.g. Yemen), these countries should also be considered for further support.
- There needs to be some variation in the amount of funds provided to countries, and this should be related to the country context (size of population, EPI budget etc).

The Working Group recommends that these proposals be addressed as part of activities outlining GAVI Phase II support

B. Reward based systems

The reward based system is fundamentally useful and has helped to provide incentives for EPI system improvements in many countries. At the inception of GAVI many countries had unreliable administrative data on immunization coverage, and since it was necessary to establish a baseline, complex rules based on arbitrary targets were established to set investment and reward payments. Fortunately, many countries have improved coverage and the DQA has proved to be a useful tool in improving the reliability of their information systems.

For the second phase of GAVI we recommend that simpler rules be adopted. This would include:

1. Passing the DQA
2. Reward payments based on JRF improvements, not arbitrary targets
3. Special rules allowing countries with high coverage and/or declining populations to receive awards
4. Improved and broadened GAVI mechanisms to support countries in crisis on a more proactive and real time basis. This will provide needed support to countries that will be less likely to benefit from a long term reward based system.

The Working Group recommends that these proposals be addressed as part of activities outlining GAVI Phase II support.