

1st GAVI Board Meeting

UNICEF House, New York – 28 October 1999

Executive summary

Introduction

The meeting was held at UNICEF House in New York on 28th October 1999. Ms. Carol Bellamy Executive Director of UNICEF welcomed Board members and observers to the meeting.

Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, Director General of WHO and Chair of the Board emphasized in her introductory statement that vaccines and immunization are key tools in breaking the vicious circle between health and poverty (Annex 12).

She outlined the main challenges of GAVI as follows:

- improve the coverage of immunization building on the lessons from the Polio initiative;
- reduce the gap between the number of vaccines used for children of the rich versus the poor countries;
- find new tools to secure R&D for diseases prevalent in poor countries such as malaria and HIV.

Dr. Brundtland stressed the urgency of filling these gaps.

The Board approved the recommendations of the Proto-Board meeting held in Seattle 122-13 July as a basis for GAVI's operations. As outlined in that report, decisions by GAVI Board would not over-ride the authority of the Governing Boards of each individual partner organization.

Global fund for children's vaccines

The GAVI Board adopted the following basic principles of the Global Fund for Children's Vaccines:

- the fund is considered as an essential part of GAVI to fulfill its mission;
- the basic structure and operation of the Fund approved by the Board have been set out in Annex 2;
- the first sub-account, "procurement of new vaccines and safe injection equipment" will be used for the purchase of newer vaccines for the poorest countries based on proposals from their governments. The guidelines for use of this sub-account are set out in Annex 2.

The Board expressed its sincere gratitude to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation which allowed the fund to be established with an initial grant of \$750 million over 5 years.

The Board stressed the need for developing sustainable financing instruments of vaccine procurement. The development and implementation of multi-year immunization plans within the context of health sector development and action to reduce poverty lead by national governments was emphasized as key to secure sustainable financing, including external resources.

Vaccine procurement

GAVI seeks to achieve a balance between three objectives:

- prices that are affordable to governments;
- adequate investment in capacity to supply global needs; and;
- private investment in research and development of high priority vaccines for developing countries.

Therefore,

- GAVI acknowledges and supports the fact that different markets have different effective prices, and that;
- the poorest country segment should have the lowest effective price.

The current procurement strategy of GAVI addresses the procurement of the vaccines and the target countries set out in Annex 2. This procurement strategy:

- seeks the lowest effective price for the purchase of these vaccines for the eligible countries;
- is based on the principle of open, competitive tendering through UNICEF Supply Division;
- will explore a competitive negotiation mechanism with producers of new vaccines to help bring these vaccines to the poorest populations at the earliest possible time;
- the GAVI Board expresses its gratitude to the pharmaceutical industry for making efforts to make these vaccines available at the lowest possible prices.

Launch

The Board approved the GAVI launch to take place at Davos, Switzerland, in the context of the World Economic Forum on 31st January 2000 in the afternoon.

The Launch will consist of a panel presentation by key representatives of the GAVI Board followed by a press conference.

Dates and place of next meetings

The next Board meeting is planned to take place at Davos on 31 January 2000 in the morning. The following Board meeting is planned to take place at WHO Geneva on 13 and 14 June 2000.

Acknowledgements

The Board acknowledged the excellent presentations made by Dr. Mark Kane and Mr. Piers Whitehead. Their overheads and the discussion paper prepared by Mr. Whitehead are attached (Annexes 3.1 to 3.3).