

GAVI Proto-Board Meeting Seattle, Washington 12-13 July 1999

Executive Summary

More than two million children are still dying from diseases that can be prevented by currently available vaccines and several million more lives could be saved if we have effective vaccines against diseases like AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

There is now a new commitment of philanthropic foundations, vaccine producing industries and a variety of public sector institutions to bring these vaccines to current and future generations of children. The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) has been established to facilitate the attainment of these goals.

The Proto-Board of GAVI was set up as a one-time event at the Bellagio meeting on "Vaccine Development and Delivery: Partnership for the 21st Century". This meeting completed a one-year review of immunization-related activities undertaken by major interested partners.

The Proto-Board had a broad representation including multilateral and bilateral agencies, the private sector, philanthropic foundations, the research and development community, national technical agencies and developing countries (see Annex 1).

It was asked to decide on the mission, objectives, functions and structure of a mechanism that would enable various partners in immunization to collaborate as effectively as possible in the achievement of common goals. These have been set out in Annex 2 and are summarized below:

1. **Mission:** To fulfill the right of every child to be protected against vaccine preventable diseases of public health concern.
2. **Strategic objectives:** To improve access to sustainable immunization services, expand the use of all existing cost-effective vaccines, accelerate the development and introduction of new vaccines, and make immunization coverage an integral part of the design and assessment of health systems and international development efforts.
3. **Modus operandi:** As an operating platform, the Proto-Board adopted the following mechanisms:
 - a global Children's Vaccine Fund to facilitate (i) the financing of underutilized and new vaccines and (ii) infrastructure and research and development of priority for poor populations and countries;
 - a Governing Board expressing the highest political commitment of partners and providing a forum for decision-making on common objectives and strategies;

- a small Secretariat for implementing the directions of the Board and helping to ensure the involvement and representation of the broader immunization community;
 - a partners' Working Group to ensure that the decisions of the Board are translated into operational actions appropriate to each lead agency;
 - Task Forces of limited duration to address specific issues;
 - a meeting held approximately every two years in order to bring together the broader immunization community.
4. **The Board:** A Board membership of 12 was adopted, on the understanding that this was the founding board and could be altered as the needs of GAVI matured.
- The Proto-Board decided that Executive Heads of Board Member Organizations should serve ex officio and act as Chairs of the Board with terms of two years.
 - The Proto-Board invited the Director-General of WHO to serve as Chair for the first term and the Executive Director of UNICEF to serve as Chair for the second term.
5. **The Secretariat and Working Group:**
- The Proto-Board accepted the offer by UNICEF to house the Secretariat at its premises in Geneva, and requested UNICEF to establish a special account to receive partner funding for the Secretariat.
 - The Proto-Board appointed Dr Tore Godal as interim Executive Secretary of GAVI for a two-year period starting on 1 July 1999.
 - A budget of US\$ 3 150 444 for the Secretariat to cover the 18-month period from 1 July 1999 to 31 December 2000 was approved (Annex 3).
 - The Working Group was endorsed to ensure a strong link to the main Board Member Organizations.
6. **Task Force:** The Proto-Board established three Task Forces with agreed terms of reference: country coordination, advocacy and financing (see Annex 4). In addition, the Proto-Board endorsed:
- plans for the establishment of a Children's Vaccine Fund, to be pursued by the Working Group with additional expertise as required;
 - a gap analysis of the research and development field to be completed within a year.
7. **Milestones:** Interim milestones were adopted to assure a time-framed reduction in the inequalities of access to new and old vaccines and to reduce the preventable disease burden, especially among the poor. Preliminary cost estimates for reaching the milestones were made (Annex 5).

- Further elaboration of milestones in relation to disease burden, child mortality and internationally accepted development goals was requested.
8. **Launch:** GAVI should be publicly launched when the Children's Vaccine Fund has been established. The launch is expected to take place early in 2000. The launch should be a multi-site event (possibly over a period of time) with major contributors appearing with Heads of UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank as well as other main partners. Planned pre-launch and post-launch activities were approved (Annex 6).
 9. The first GAVI Board meeting is planned for 28 October 1999 at UNICEF House, New York, with the participation of Dr Brundtland, Chair of the Board, and Ms Bellamy, ex-officio member.
 10. The Proto-Board thanked the Working Group, PATH and the Gates Foundation's Children's Vaccine Programme for their excellent preparation and support for the meeting. The Board expressed gratitude to Professor Barry Bloom for chairing the meeting in an efficient manner.