

GAVI Alliance, the Global Fund and the World Bank
Update on joint programming for the High Level Task Force on Innovative International Financing for Health Systems, 16 September 2009

Better health for the money

The final High Level Task Force report, recommendation 9, asked for establishment of ‘a health systems funding platform for the Global Fund, GAVI Alliance, World Bank and others to coordinate, mobilize, streamline and channel the flow of existing and new international resources to support national health strategies’. Subject to decisions to be taken by Boards in November 2009, work has progressed significantly on establishing a joint platform for health systems support.

This coordination is critical to sustain accelerated scale up of interventions to achieve the health Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, particularly in the area of maternal and child health to which all three organisations contribute significantly; e.g. by funding platforms to deliver immunisation services, prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV, sexual and reproductive health, and protection of pregnant women and small children from malaria.

In line with commitments made in Paris and Accra, the International Health Partnership (IHP+) provides a framework where mandates can be respected whilst remaining true to country needs by emphasising one plan, one monitoring and evaluation, results based framework and one funding arrangement to strengthen delivery of health services to accelerate progress towards the MDGs.

Within this framework the three agencies have been working intensively since March to translate the High Level Task Force’s recommendation into action. This work has been facilitated by WHO.

An inter-agency group has been exploring what can be brought to the Boards of GFATM and GAVI in November 2009¹, to significantly improve coordination of investments in health systems² to better target resources, reducing duplication of investments, leveraging funding by each institution, creating strategic co-funding opportunities, strengthening results based financing, and simplifying mechanisms thereby reducing transaction costs. There was a consultation meeting in Washington in June 2009, and an inter-agency working level meeting in August 2009, to clarify what this platform could look like.

Finalising the process

The work programme provided to you in May 2009 has been largely completed. Papers are being developed for our Boards which will outline two options for countries to choose from, depending on the country context.

The first option harmonises all major procedures between the agencies, so that there is only one process for applying for funding³, and a joint assessment process, through an independent review

¹ World Bank management would normally agree these processes

² The Taskforce refers to HSS in terms of: delivering health services through a primary care approach; ensuring financial and social protection; investing adequately in human resources, logistics and supply, and information and knowledge; and ensuring effective governance of the health sector

³ The World Bank does not have a separate application process

process, with a combined technical review panel. Funds can be pooled at country level. One monitoring and evaluation framework would be used.

The second option bases the funding decision on the national strategy, processes are fully harmonised with the in-country process, and any review will be done alongside existing processes in country.

We are confident that, with additional resources, a real step change can be made in addressing bottlenecks to the delivery of health interventions, and we will be a significant step closer to reaching the MDGs.