

Advancing Immunisation-Nutrition Integrated (I.N.I.) Programming with a focus on 'Zero Dose Children' through Learning and Implementation Research



Background

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance is a public-private partnership, headquartered in Geneva, committed to saving children's lives and protecting people's health by increasing equitable use of vaccines in lower-income countries. The Vaccine Alliance brings together developing country and donor governments, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, the vaccine industry, technical agencies, civil society, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and other private sector partners. Since 2000, Gavi has contributed to the immunisation of nearly 700 million children and the prevention of more than 10 million future deaths.

Gavi 5.0 priorities include prioritization of equity (accelerated reduction of 'zero dose' children and missed communities) with impact (complete immunisation), a Primary Health Care (PHC) orientation, with efficiencies demanding 'smart integration', expanded partnerships notably with Civil Society, and enduring commitment to transition and sustainability.

Immunisation and good nutrition are critical for children to develop to their full physical, intellectual and human potential, and to realize their right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health. One dollar invested in nutrition gives a rate of return of \$16,¹ while the return on investment of immunisation in Gavi-supported countries is \$21 per \$1 spent.² These basic services are essential for the full enjoyment of the right to health and other human rights. Additionally, they are evidence-based and highly cost-effective – and therefore among the “best buys” in terms of investing in human development.

Importantly, nearly half of all deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases in Gavi-supported countries occur among “zero-dose” children – those who have not received any routine vaccines.³ Given the high coverage of immunisation vis-à-vis other essential health interventions, the existence of zero-dose children indicates that their communities are deprived of most, if not all, essential health interventions and often face systemic economic, social and cultural disadvantages.

Considering the multiple deprivations faced by zero children and their households and the intersectionality of immunity, poverty, insecurity, and food insecurity of many 'zero dose' children, Gavi has a strategic interest in exploring scalable approaches to integration of nutrition and immunisation, that can demonstrate impact on both immunity and nutritional status of children. In the last six months, Gavi has formed an ad hoc group, the Immunisation-Nutrition Integration group (I.N.I.) and engaged in dialogue with the Eleanor Crook Foundation (ECF), Nutrition International, and released a joint policy statement with Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN).

The Eleanor Crook Foundation (ECF) was founded in 1997 with a single goal: to eradicate global malnutrition. The Foundation invests in research that proves what methods work, policy analysis to drive systems reform, and advocacy that makes the case for urgent action to address this global

crisis. ECF's ['Nourish the Future'](#) strategy proposes ways to advance the goal of global malnutrition eradication and considers elements of integration between nutrition and immunisation interventions as one of these strategic directions.

Protection against Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPDs) and the fight against malnutrition have substantial impact on child health and child survival. Malnutrition and poor immunisation coverage are symptoms of the inequitable distribution of power and resources in our societies. Addressing these inequities requires a strong public sector and community-based and focused delivery system that is committed, capable, adequately financed and trusted by the public. Gavi and ECF consequently share a strategic interest in developing global evidence and learning to scale programmatic and investment synergies that may exist.

This concept note proposes the recruitment of a consultant by ECF, embedded in Gavi to carry out the following activities.

Goal and Objectives of the Consultation

The goal is to substantially advance integrated immunisation-nutrition programming through strategic learning.

The objectives are to (1) develop a rapid mapping and synthesis of the evidence for integrated immunisation-nutrition programming, (2) identify and document select case studies that can be used for Gavi (Secretariat, Technical Alliance), ECF and other Partners, and (3) to develop recommendations on the most promising approaches to explore for immunization-nutrition programming, along with a learning agenda.

Scope of Work

In the first phase, the consultant will produce a short summary of the state of the evidence for public health benefits/unintended effects of integration, as well as operational challenges for programs and national health systems.

The consultant will work with Gavi's teams (including country teams), Alliance members, ECF and relevant communities of practice to identify potential country case studies. After development of a data extraction plan, the consultant will review documents, carry out a limited set of interviews for each country and produce a short document of case studies of country experiences including funding sources. This person will:

1. Develop a short summary of the compiled evidence on child health outcomes from integration of immunisation and nutrition interventions, particularly for children who are under immunized, 'zero dose', or malnourished (considering two-way synergies on outcomes). This should include a mapping and synthesis of identified integration programmatic and operational challenges.
2. Engage with Gavi country teams, ECF, national governments, Alliance members, relevant communities of practice, and other relevant stakeholders, e.g., CSOs, as needed to identify a small set of integration efforts for documentation.
3. Develop an analytical grid (framework and data extraction plan) for review of country efforts with different types of integration efforts (notably 'campaigns and 'routine').

4. Gather and synthesize data on effectiveness and cost of co-delivered programming, ideally differencing co-delivered programs versus standalone programs.
5. Analyze country experiences, engage with relevant Gavi Country Teams, carry out informant interviews, and document 3-5 salient past Gavi Alliance or Expanded Partners' integrated programming efforts, impact, operational, cost, and financing challenges.
6. Regularly update and take guidance from technical steering group and contribute to ongoing engagement of Gavi with potential Nutrition sector partners.
7. Provide recommendations on steps forward for improving I.N.I. within the zero dose Gavi 5.0 strategy.

Deliverables

- a. Short evidence summary, mapping and synthesis of immunisation-nutrition integration synergies and challenges, including for equity and gender considerations (e.g., Gavi zero dose children and missed communities' agenda).
- b. Framework and data extraction plan) for review of country efforts with different types of integration efforts (notably 'campaigns and 'routine').
- c. Case study of country experiences (20-30 pages maximum excluding annexes) with cross-cutting comparison of co-delivered programs, for example nutrition services/referrals being added to the immunization platform, immunization services or referrals being added to a nutrition platform, new co-delivered program through campaigns or routine programs.
- d. Recommendations and learning agenda on which nutrition and immunization programs are best suited for integration, key strategies, cost, and benefits of different integration approaches, including financing implications.
- e. Presentation of deliverables as needed, and monthly progress reports (one page max).

Based on the results, ECF and GAVI may decide to move forward with additional steps of development of country approaches, supported by a rigorous implementation research framework.

Reporting and Period of Performance

The consultant will report directly to Dr. Eric Sarriot at Gavi and to Dr. Yashodhara Rana at ECF and regularly update a GAVI-ECF led technical steering group. This consultation is expected to take 6 months. Residence near Geneva would be appreciated, but the consultant will have the possibility of working remotely with three trips to Geneva.

Consultant Profile

Required:

- A minimum of master's degree with 12 years of experience or Doctoral degree with 10 years of experience.
- Relevant experience in health systems research, health systems strengthening, primary health care management, and programming.
- Prior experience working with bilateral or multilateral institutions.
- Team player, adaptable, problem-solver, inquisitive, diplomatic, with strong writing and conceptualizing skills.

Preferred:

- Fluency in English and one or more languages especially French
- Experience around cost effectiveness

- Experience in integration and/ or co-delivery of programs
- Experience in program design at scale, and fragile settings.
- Experience in nutrition and immunization related policy or programs.

Applications and nominations should be directed to **yvana@eleanorcrookfoundation.org**.

Applications should include a resume, cover letter and relevant illustrative publication if available.

June 9, 2022