



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Updated - Terms of Reference for the Equitable Access Initiative

Background

1. Over the past decade, there has been a significant increase in access to life-saving health interventions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), particularly immunization and treatment for infectious diseases. However, as countries move along the development continuum from low-income to middle-income status, they may lose eligibility for certain global health and development resources.
2. One hundred middle-income countries (MICs) account for 70% of the world's population, 70% of the world's poor, and the greatest proportion of the world's disease burden. Equitable access to health, including essential health technologies, therefore requires not only significant attention in low-income countries, but also in countries that are moving or have recently moved into middle-income status.
3. While increases in gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national income (GNI) may indicate a degree of corresponding increase in public health capacity, these economic concepts can be inaccurate indications of a government's true ability and capacity to provide equitable access to health for all its citizens.
4. Other factors including, but not limited to, the size of a government's health budget, levels of income inequality, a country's specific disease burden, the state of the country's health infrastructure, and the availability and quality of health technologies and services, play a critical role in health outcomes.
5. The co-conveners of the Equitable Access Initiative (EAI)¹ are collaborating with a wide-spectrum of representatives from governments, civil society, academia and the private sector to better understand these issues and propose potential solutions through a holistic approach, and by gathering quantifiable data and qualitative analysis, in order to ensure the health gains achieved particularly over the past decade can be sustained.

¹ Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; The Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB, Malaria; UNAIDS; UNICEF; UNDP; UNFPA; UNITAID; WHO and the World Bank.

Project Goal and Deliverable

1. The EAI aims to develop a new framework to classify countries by key components of equitable access to health in order to better inform national and international decision making processes on health and development.
2. The EAI will work inclusively with a Panel of Experts, modelling groups and representatives of all key stakeholders to analyse and propose a new health classification framework, including relevant indicators.
3. As part of the deliverable, the EAI will explore how to measure i) countries' capacity for co-financing; ii) in-country institutional capacity; and iii) equitable access to health services and technologies as key components of health capacity that are replicable and can be used as coefficients for a new framework.

Project Governance

1. The structure of the EAI encompasses a high-level Expert Panel, a Technical Working Group with high-level representation from the public sector and civil society set up by the Convening Organisations, and a Project Management Team.
2. The Expert Panel will be comprised of around 35 - 40 leaders from the international health community; governments from countries across the economic spectrum; non-governmental organizations and advocates; academia and think tanks; as well as representatives from the international financial, law and ethics sector. In inviting the members of the Expert Panel, Convening Partners of the EAI considered leadership, technical ability and experience, while ensuring the broadest possible international representation in terms of diversity of knowledge, experience and approaches in the field for which the panel is being established. At the expiration of the project period, membership in the EAI Expert Panel shall end.
3. The high-level Technical Working Group set up by the Co-Convenors will assist the Expert Panel and help to prepare relevant documents for the EAI. The Working Group will be made up of nominees from Convening Organisations, senior officials from countries in different geographies across the economic spectrum, and representatives of Northern and Southern NGOs.

Timelines and Proposed Activities

1. The proposed EAI project dates are 1 January 2015 – 1 May 2016.

Expert Panel

2. The Expert Panel will convene for two meetings, the first on 23 February 2015 and the second in early 2016.
3. The basic commitment asked from all Expert Panel members to accept the invitation is to attend the two full day meetings. Panel members are also kindly asked to provide guidance on the overall approach of the Initiative; mandate the high-level Technical Working Group and modelling groups with taking forward the related analytical work; and provide feedback and decision-making as the project evolves. In addition, a subset of Expert Panel members would be charged with working more closely with the Technical Working Group and modelling groups in order to oversee the development of the country classification frameworks.

Conveners Technical Working Group

4. At least three in-person meetings are envisioned for members of the Technical Working Group (WG), in addition to their participation in the Expert Panel meetings.
5. The WG will be charged with overseeing the development of the classification framework, and with preparing relevant documents to be considered by the Expert Panel at their second meeting in 2016, from which a final report will be drafted.
6. Agree on the technical content of the EAI supported by modelling groups against a Project Plan to be approved by the Expert Panel.
7. Assess the ongoing outputs of the analyses being commissioned out to modelling groups, and also review models prepared by convening organisations, which may be submitted for consideration by the Expert Panel.
8. Oversee the content of the planned consultations with countries and civil society key stakeholders.
9. Identify and address any weaknesses or delays in the Project.
10. Approve all public disclosures relating to the Project, including presentations, posters and papers and ensure that the contribution of all funders is acknowledged in all such publications, quoting relevant award numbers. The intellectual property (IP) of the resulting work products will be made freely available in the public domain.

11. Any sub-working groups of the WG would produce more specific TORs to guide their EAI related activities.

Working Methods

1. Technical Working Group members will work via teleconferences, e-mail exchanges, in-person meetings, and may attend consultations with stakeholders, which will be attached to existing international conferences. The stakeholder consultations will be with governments, civil society and communities living with, and most affected by HIV, tuberculosis and malaria; and with the private sector delegations of the governing Boards of Co-convening organizations including relevant pharmaceutical companies. This approach will enable all stakeholders to systematically provide input and feedback to be considered in the Program of Work over the 14 – 18 month Initiative.
2. Documents prepared by or with input from the Technical Working Group (WG) are not for external distribution. Non-public materials provided to WG members, as well as the deliberations of the WG, are not for external distribution unless agreed otherwise. Breaches of this agreement may be grounds for termination of membership in the WG.
3. Members of the Technical Working Group serve on an honorary basis and are not compensated for their participation while performing the standard functions of such membership.
4. The guidance provided by the Expert Panel and the Technical Working Group during the EAI project is not binding on the Boards of any of the Co-convening organizations and the Co-convening Organizations.
5. The Co-conveners will take responsibility to organize EAI meetings and the stakeholder consultations.
6. Travel costs and per diem associated with EAI meetings for staff members of Convening Organizations, as well as Technical Working Group members nominated by the Convening Organization, will be provided for by the respective organizations.
7. Members of the Expert Panel or Working Group Members do not receive remuneration from the EAI. However, when attending EAI Expert Panel meetings by invitation the Convening Partners of the EAI may cover travel related costs of panel members and certain technical working group members upon request. Governments are encouraged to contribute to travel and travel expenses of government officials participating in the Equitable Access Initiative.

Conflicts of Interest

1. It is expected that no individual working with/ for the Equitable Access Initiative shall have a conflict of interest in a project related matter in which, to his/her knowledge, he/she or an associated person or associated institution has a financial interest, if the particular matter may have a direct and predictable effect on that interest. Members of the Initiative are subject to the Ethics/ Conflict of Interest Policies of all the convening organizations, and agree to declare any conflict of interest that could constitute a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest with respect to their involvement in the work of the Equitable Access Initiative to the Co-Chairs of the Expert Panel, to facilitate subsequent review and any appropriate action regarding their involvement. It is also the responsibility of Expert Panel Members and Co-convenor Technical Working Group members to bring to the Co-Chairs' attention, any significant link that may give rise to an actual, potential or perceived conflict of any individual working with the Equitable Access Initiative.

Co-sponsor(s) of the Equitable Access Initiative

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