Independent Allocation of Vaccines Group (IAVG)

The main purpose of the IAVG is to make validation assessments of proposals for Vaccine Allocation Decisions ("VAD proposals"), which outline the volumes of Vaccines that should be allocated to each country/economy participating under COVAX within a given time frame. The IAVG will consider VAD proposals prepared and submitted by the Joint Allocation Taskforce ("JAT"), composed of WHO and Gavi staff.

Terms of reference

COVAX is the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools ("ACT") Accelerator, and it is co-led by Gavi, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations ("CEPI") and the World Health Organization COVID-19 vaccines that are procured or distributed through COVAX (the "Vaccines") to countries and are allocated must be transparent and independent.

In this context, WHO, Gavi and CEPI (collectively, the “COVAX Partners”) support the establishment by WHO of an Independent Allocation of Vaccines Group ("IAVG") pursuant to the WHO Regulations for Study and Scientific Groups, Collaborating Institutions and Other Mechanisms of Collaboration, and in accordance with these Terms of Reference. The IAVG is expected to play a pivotal role in the allocation of Vaccines under COVAX and to foster the independence of, and provide transparency into, the Vaccine-allocation decision-making under COVAX.

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I. Functions

The IAVG will have the following functions:
1. To review the VAD proposals submitted by the JAT and to request clarifications from the JAT when necessary;

2. To discuss with the JAT any adjustments to the VAD proposals considered necessary on the basis of IAVG’s critical assessment;

3. To make validation assessments of the VAD proposals, ensuring they are technically informed and based on the latest available data and evidence;

4. For each VAD proposal that is validated by the IAVG (hereinafter a “VAD”), to document and justify the validation of such VAD, including any adjustments made to the original VAD proposal submitted to the IAVG by the JAT;

5. To deliver the VADs to the WHO Deputy-Director General for further implementation by the JAT.

II. Composition

1. The IAVG shall be composed of twelve (12) members, who shall serve in their personal capacities.

Collectively, IAVG members should have a balance of skills, experience and expertise in the following areas:

   a. global immunization and/or infectious disease epidemiology;

   b. emergency public health response;

   c. access to medicines and health products and its related issues in international settings and lower income countries, including relevant regulatory and legal processes;

   d. immunization programmes, vaccine programme implementation and service delivery;

   e. international health diplomacy, law and policy.

In the selection of IAVG members, consideration shall be given to attaining an adequate distribution of technical expertise, geographical representation and gender balance.

2. Members shall be selected jointly by Gavi, CEPI and WHO, following an open call for nomination conducted by WHO on behalf of the COVAX Partners.
3. IAVG members shall be appointed by WHO in accordance with WHO’s internal rules, regulations and procedures, to serve for a period of 1 year. IAVG members shall be eligible for renewal of their appointment for subsequent 1-year periods.

4. The IAVG shall elect the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson from among its members. The Chairperson's functions include the following:
   a. to chair the meetings of the IAVG;
   b. to work closely with the JAT between meetings of the IAVG.

In appointing a Chairperson, consideration shall be given to gender and geographical representation. A Chairperson is eligible for reappointment as a member of the IAVG but is only permitted to serve as Chairperson for one term of 1 year.

5. All members of the IAVG must respect the impartiality and independence required of WHO. In performing their work, members of the IAVG may not seek or accept instructions from any duties, members of the IAVG must be free of any real, potential or apparent conflicts of interest. To and return a WHO declaration of interests form and the appointment of IAVG members, or renewal as well as to the determination by WHO that their participation would not give rise to a real, potential

6. At all times during the performance of their work for the IAVG, all IAVG members must act independently, ask relevant and critical questions, act professionally and maintain the highest ethical

7. Following a determination by WHO that a proposed member’s participation in the IAVG would not give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest, the proposed member will be sent a letter member to the IAVG is subject to WHO receiving the invitation letter, a Confidentiality Undertaking proposed member.

8. Notwithstanding the requirement to complete the WHO declaration of interest form, IAVG members have an ongoing obligation to inform the WHO of any interests, real or perceived, that may give raise

9. As contemplated in paragraph II.5 above, WHO may, from time to time, request IAVG members to complete a new declaration of interest form. This may be before an IAVG
meeting or any other IAVG related member's participation in the IAVG activity or engagement is subject to a determination by WHO that

10. Where an IAVG member is invited to travel to an in-person IAVG meeting, WHO shall, subject to any conflict of interest determination as set out in paragraph II.9 above, issue a letter of appointment as Letter") to the relevant member. WHO shall not authorize travel by an IAVG member, and the IAVG Letter.

11. IAVG members do not receive any remuneration for any work related to the IAVG. However, when attending in-person meetings, their travel cost and per diem shall be covered by WHO in accordance

12. The appointment of members of the IAVG may be terminated at any time by WHO, in consultation with Gavi and CEPI, if the interests of the COVAX Partners and/or COVAX so require or as otherwise

13. Where the position of an IAVG member becomes vacant for any reason (including, without limitation, by reason of the termination, resignation or death of the incumbent member), such position shall be to and in accordance with the relevant provisions of these Terms of Reference. Individuals appointed

III. Operation

1. The IAVG shall normally meet every two weeks. However, WHO may convene additional meetings as required. IAVG meetings will normally be held virtually, via video or teleconference, but may also be held in person (at WHO headquarters in Geneva or another location, as determined by WHO).

2. The quorum for IAVG meetings shall be two-thirds of the members (eight (8) out of twelve (12) members).

3. WHO may, at its sole discretion, invite external individuals from time to time to attend the open sessions of the IAVG, or parts thereof, as “Observers”. Observers may be invited either in their organization, or from a non-state actor. WHO shall request Observers invited in their personal capacity Invitations to Observers attending as representatives from non-state actors shall be subject to internal Engagement with non-State actors. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Observers may be asked to shall not
participate in the process of making validation assessments of VAD proposals. WHO shall IAVG. For the avoidance of doubt, proposed Observers shall not be allowed to participate in any IAVG meetings) unless and until WHO has first received a duly Confidentiality Undertaking. Observers shall regard.

4. For each of its meetings, the IAVG shall prepare a report setting forth the IAVG’s findings, observations and VADs. Subject always to the protection of confidential non-public information, reports of IAVG

5. The IAVG shall normally make validation assessments by consensus. If, in exceptional circumstances, consensus cannot be reached, VAD proposals shall be returned to the JAT for further consideration.

6. Active participation is expected from all IAVG members in teleconferences and interaction over email. IAVG members may, in advance of IAVG meetings, be requested to review meeting documentation.

7. WHO shall determine the modes of communication by the IAVG, including between WHO and IAVG members, and the IAVG members among themselves.

8. IAVG members shall not speak on behalf of, or represent, the IAVG or WHO to any third party.

IV. Secretariat

WHO shall provide the secretariat for the IAVG, including any necessary scientific, technical, administrative and other support. In this regard, WHO shall provide the IAVG members in advance of each meeting with the agenda, working documents and discussion papers. Distribution of the aforesaid documents to Observers will be determined by WHO.

V. Information and documentation

1. Any information, materials and documentation (whether in written, oral, visual, electronic or any other form) to which members and/or Observers of the IAVG may gain access in performing IAVG related activities and/or attending IAVG
meetings (collectively, “Information”) shall be considered and treated by IAVG members and Observers as strictly confidential and proprietary to WHO and/or parties collaborating with it. As mentioned above, IAVG members and Observers shall be required to sign and return to WHO a Confidentiality Undertaking as a condition precedent to participating in any IAVG meetings.

All IAVG members, as well as all Observers, shall abide by the confidentiality obligations and restrictions on use contained in the Confidentiality Undertaking signed by them. In addition, by counter signing the Letter of Appointment referred to in section II(7) above, IAVG members undertake to abide by the confidentiality obligations contained therein and also confirm that any and all rights in the work performed by them in connection with, or as a result of their IAVG-related activities shall be exclusively vested in WHO. IAVG members and Observers shall not disclose, quote from, circulate or use IAVG documents or any other Information (as defined above) in any manner and for any purpose other than in a manner and for the purpose expressly permitted under the Confidentiality Undertaking and/or Letter of Appointment signed by such persons. In addition to and without limiting the foregoing, IAVG members and/or Observers shall not use any Information for any benefit, gain or advantage including, but not limited to, trading or having others trading in securities, giving trading advice or providing any Information to third parties for trade in securities. IAVG members and Observers shall not disclose the content of any discussions and/or assessments related to their participation in IAVG meetings. WHO, in consultation with Gavi and CEPI, shall retain full control over the publication of the reports of the IAVG, including deciding whether or not to publish such reports (subject always to the protection of any confidential and/or non-publication information that may be contained therein).