

Gavi appoints Rose Leke as IRC chair

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, has announced the appointment of African immunologist, parasitologist and malariologist Rose Gana Fomban Leke as the new chair of its independent review committee (IRC).



Source: Supplied. Rose Leke, chair of Gavi's IRC.

A Cameroonian national, Leke is emeritus professor at the University of Yaoundé, and has been a prominent and well-respected figure in global health and immunology for several decades.

The Gavi IRC is an independent committee of experts that are mandated to review countries' applications for all types of new funding support, ensuring a holistic view of the broad portfolio of immunisation and health systems' support Gavi provides to countries, and to make recommendations for funding allocation to the Gavi chief executive officer.

"We are privileged to have Leke bring her deep experience, country knowledge, policy mastery, expertise in immunisation and passion to the Gavi mission," said Seth Berkley, chief executive officer of Gavi.

"As the Alliance enters a period of renewal after several years of emergency pandemic response, Leke is the right person to chair the IRC as we look to support countries to recover, restore and expand routine immunisation, reach zero-dose children, roll out critical innovations such as the HPV and malaria vaccines, and strengthen health systems and emergency-response capacities."



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Leke is currently chair of the Africa Regional Certification Commission for Poliomyelitis Eradication, the Cameroonian National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (Nitag) and a co-chair of the Advisers to the World Health Organization (WHO) on the Development of the Framework for Allocation of Malaria Vaccine Supply.

Co-chair of the board of Harvard University's defeating malaria initiative, she additionally serves on WHO's Malaria policy advisory group (Mpag), the Malaria Elimination Oversight Committee, and is a member of the Global Certification Commission (GCC).

Leke's career highlights

Previously Leke was vice-chair of the first technical evaluation reference group (Terg) of the Global Fund and member of the scientific advisory group (Sag) for Ebola vaccine trials in Guinea.

In 2011, she won the African Union's Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Award for Women.

In 2018, Leke was elected one of nine "Heroines of Health" by Women in Global Health, and in 2019 was identified by the Cameroon Medical Council as "Queen Mother" of the Cameroonian medical community.

In 2021, *Forbes* recognised her on their list of "100 Innovations, Inventions & Icons from Africa". In 2022, Africa Centres for Disease Control & Prevention recognised her "Achievement in Global Health Leadership" for contributions to the science and public-health sectors in her home country of Cameroon and globally.

She is also a fellow of the Cameroon Academy of Sciences, The African Academy of Science, and The World Academy of Science, and an International Honorary Fellow of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH).

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