



**Polio Oversight Board Meeting  
March 10, 2014 – Teleconference**

**Participants - Polio Oversight Board members:**

Dr. Margaret Chan, Director General, WHO; Bruce Aylward  
Dr. Chris Elias, President, Global Development, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, POB Chair; Jay Wenger, George Durham  
Dr. Thomas Frieden, CDC Director; Greg Armstrong  
Dr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director, UNICEF; Peter Crowley, Jalaa Abdelwahab, Terumi Yamazaki  
Mr. Wilf Wilkinson, Past President, Rotary International; Bob Scott; Carol Pandak

**Meeting Minutes**

**1. Review of POB Scorecard, Risk Registry**

**Summary:**

The POB reviewed the updated scorecard and risk registry. CDC indicated that the scorecard continues to be improved, though it does not yet reflect the footnotes the POB requested in the January meeting. The Finance Working Group is working on improving the finance-related indicators.

The group noted substantial progress in Nigeria, with the exception of Borno, where security remains very difficult and campaign quality remains an issue, even in accessible areas. Also noted recent case in Kano, around which supplemental vaccination activities are ongoing.

POB members commented that with the ongoing security challenges, reducing security risks must be a major focus of the program. CDC noted that progress in Nigeria further highlights Pakistan's need to interrupt transmission. The DG WHO highlighted upcoming meeting with PM Pakistan to address key strategy issues. UNICEF's Tony Lake is seeing Syria's Foreign Minister this week and will raise polio in the context of access more generally. UNICEF also noted that it faces challenges in recruiting national staff in Afghanistan as the security situation continues to deteriorate. WHO noted that attention needs to be paid also to the poor quality of vaccination programs and surveillance in Cameroon.

Suggestions made to WHO for additional modification of the Risk Register included a Rotary request that some of its field personnel be added as contact points on the document and will forward suggestions and CDC request to replace the term 'catastrophic' with another term.

**Decisions and Action Items:**

- Rotary to send additional names for inclusion on the risk register as point persons [complete]
- WHO to update the term 'catastrophic' in the Risk Register
- CDC to add clarifying footnotes, per January call, to the scorecard.
- WHO to provide updates to group on meeting with Pakistan PM, especially regarding KP and FATA access issue [complete]



## 2. GPEI Management Review Recommendation and Decisions *(see Decision Papers)*

### Summary:

The chair noted that the POB reached consensus on the GPEI Management Review Recommendation Decision via e-mail prior to the call with some minor revisions.

The chair clarified that the “financial oversight” portion of the review as outlined in the recommendation means assessing how the GPEI addresses financing and cash gaps, *not* auditing or examining the internal financial practices or processes of partner organizations.

The chair introduced a process overview document outlining next steps to engaging a reviewer and beginning the review process (Steps table below). CDC (echoed by other POB members) reiterated the POB’s position that the POB must identify a strong independent consultant/reviewer and also establish an effective process for engaging and interacting with them. All feel it is important that the consultant/reviewer not be ‘in-house’ (from any of the GPEI partners), but rather a knowledgeable outside party, even if that requires more learning on their part on polio and the partnership.

The POB discussed the IMB’s involvement in the process and noted that the IMB wants to ensure that the reviewer is independent and competent. BMGF proposed sharing the terms of reference and the RFP with the IMB, with the selection and oversight of the review remaining a POB function. CDC suggested that it would be ideal to see three “reviewer” options from which to make a selection.

Next steps as put forward by the POB included the following:



Steps	Target Date
1. POB Chair will solicit input and suggestions from POB and PSC members regarding individuals, firms, or others that should be considered as potential evaluation firms	10 March
2. POB Chair will draft a brief RFP outlining scope, deliverables, and timing, and will request information on approach, work plan, personnel, other contributions, and budget. POB Chair will review suggested evaluation firms and propose to the POB a group of firms that will receive the RFP	28 March
3. The Polio Oversight Board (POB) will review – via e-mail – and share with the IMB, the Terms of Reference and draft RFP	4 Apr
4. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (acting on behalf of the POB) will explore potential co-funding opportunities	24 March
5. POB Chair will send the RFP to the small group of prospective evaluation firms	4 Apr
6. Close RFP and deadline for respondent proposals	18 Apr
7. POB Chair will review and recommend to POB final candidate(s) for selection. POB will review the proposals and provide input on final selection	30 Apr
8. At direction of POB Chair, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (on behalf of the POB) will issue the contract and work begins. Selected firm will provide periodic updates to the POB on progress	16 May

The POB discussed the timeline and agreed that additional clarity on dates will come when we have engaged a reviewer.

WHO recommended that any stakeholder survey done by the reviewers include polio-free countries as well as endemic countries, which already feel pressure from regularly being asked to report at meetings. WHO recommends possibly India, OIC countries, and others in the region. BMGF agreed to include this as part of RFP.

**Decisions and Action Items:**

- POB will move forward with management review as outlined in the decision paper
- POB members to send recommendations to POB Chair for potential reviewers consultants that should be considered
- BMGF to make minor modifications to language in process document [complete, reflected in table above]
- BMGF to move forward to identify and engage parties to perform the review

**3. Donor engagement Decision Paper**

The POB approved the paper, which included the following three proposals.

The POB will proactively consult with donors on major decisions that affect the overall direction of the program, including changes to interruption of transmission timelines, major shifts in strategy,



changes to timelines for IPV introduction, proposals on the Global Legacy Framework, or changes to annual budget or the overall US\$ 5.5 billion budget envelope. (Major donors were defined as those who committed \$50M or more between 2013 and 2018 and are current in their pledge commitments. The board reviewed a list of those donors provided by BMGF with High Net Worth individual donors listed as a group as some prefer anonymity).

The POB will invite major donors to in-person POB meetings and involve the PPG by facilitating its review of major issues for the POB in advance of POB meetings.

Major decisions will be accompanied by decision papers, which will be shared with donors and other partners prior to the meetings to allow time for donor/partner review and comment.

#### **4. Discussion of recent IMB Letter**

##### **a. Clarify Communication on Dates and Deadlines for Interrupting Transmission and Eradication**

###### **Summary:**

BMGF noted that in putting together the six-year plan, the intention was to focus on goal of certifying eradication by end of 2018. All partners agreed that a uniform approach to communicating dates with respect to the polio endgame was critical.

WHO, mindful of how important these communications are, suggested the PSC be tasked with looking at this issue closely so it can be re-visited during the June in-person meeting in greater detail. UNICEF agreed and reminded the group that the communications generally need to be understandable to the public and not too technical, noting that terms such as interruption versus eradication aren't as relevant for general public. UNICEF also notes that communicating the great progress being made toward interruption except in Pakistan may provide additional incentive/impetus for Pakistan efforts.

###### **Decisions and Action Items:**

- PSC to review the communications around 'timelines' and make specific recommendation to POB for approval at its June meeting. The POB suggests a focus on the messages agreed to in the six-year plan (i.e. certification in all regions by end of 2018).

##### **b. Polio Endgame Budget Briefing (WHO)**

###### **Summary:**

WHO provided a budget update, as the POB asked for additional clarity on the financing gap (long-term) versus the nearer-term cash gap (pledges not yet turned into money). The current six-year period



budget is US\$5.5B. When considering actual cash + projections and pledges, the current total 6 year is about US\$5B, and thus an overall 2013-2018 funding gap of about US\$500M. For 2014, there is a \$498M cash gap. While pledges are in place to cover that gap, realizing those pledges is a priority.

The POB asked for clarity on whether the six-year finance gap includes updated projections of US Government contributions. While there has been a significant increase from the US Government, continued advocacy is important in the coming years. GPEI will continue to engage high net worth individuals, and must remain focused on closing that long-term financing gap.

The POB is acutely concerned with short-term cash gap and fact that some pledges remain unfilled. A focus on conversion of pledges is urgently needed. The POB agreed that conversion of pledges is essential to ensure important activities are not cut.

#### **Decisions and Action Items:**

- WHO to revise budget projections, specifically in light of updated US Government commitments and partners to develop plan to convert pledges urgently.
- c. **Update from WHO Director General on IHR Discussions**

#### **Summary:**

The DG WHO convened a technical group to look at evidence and implementation details. That group met and made recommendations that will be reviewed by SAGE in early April. The emergency committee will meet and then make a recommendation to the DG WHO, who will then make a decision about what specific action to take. WHO indicates it will likely have the emergency committee's report by the end of April.

Rotary pointed out the impact of India's imposing travel restriction on several countries, noting that with so many remittances flowing into Pakistan, travel restrictions could have a very profound impact.

#### **d. Immediate Advocacy Issues:**

#### **Summary:**

POB Chair asked if there were any POB principals' activities that group ought to be aware of and coordinating on around Pakistan, Nigeria, or Israel.

The POB noted good progress continues to be made in Nigeria. The POB chair and representatives from WHO, UNICEF, CDC and Rotary will be meeting with Governors from key North Eastern states in Washington DC. The POB Chair is planning a visit to Nigeria. Rotary noted that its April 15 event in Abuja will include governors from key states.



WHO asked POB to thank Bill Gates for the work he's done in Nigeria and noted that Dr. Chan and Dr. Elias will be meeting with Ms. N'gozi at upcoming World Bank meeting.

The POB discussed the current situation in Israel. CDC noted the virus appears very confined but is still present. They noted that Israel is planning to reintroduce bOPV into its routine immunization program. The DG WHO met with the Israeli Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs to stress importance of additional SIA rounds. In addition, CDC has made similar recommendations and Rotary has sent e-mail requests to Rotary directors from Israel to activate its members to write and encourage their MPs.

**Decisions and Action Items:**

- POB to continue to support strengthening of Israeli efforts to eliminate transmission.
- WHO to send communication from Euro committee on potential de-certification

**4. IPV Tender Announcement** (*UNICEF - see UNICEF-GAVI joint press release and IPV pricing table*)

**Summary:** The POB reviewed the IPV tender announcement and expressed appreciation for the work UNICEF SD has done.

**5. June 20<sup>th</sup> POB Meeting**

**Summary:**

The in person meeting will be held June 20<sup>th</sup> in Geneva, following GAVI board meeting (which will also feature discussions on IPV and routine immunization strengthening). WHO offered to host the POB meeting.

**Decisions and Action Items:**

- Meetings will be held at WHO facilities in Geneva
- Extend invitations to IMB, PPG co-chairs, major donors, etc.
- GPEI partners to develop agenda concepts and determine appropriate country representation based on agenda.
- Dinner with GPEI partners Thursday evening before meeting

**6. Executive Session** (not held)