



## Securing Polio's Legacy

### Transition Planning

March 2015

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Context**

In May 2013, the 66<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly endorsed the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018. The plan outlines a comprehensive approach for the completion of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) by eliminating all paralytic polio due to both wild and vaccine-related polioviruses. The four principal objectives of the plan are: 1) detect and interrupt all poliovirus transmission; 2) strengthen immunization systems, introduce inactivated polio vaccine, and eventually withdraw all oral polio vaccine from use; 3) certify the eradication and containment of all wild polioviruses; and 4) document and transition GPEI's knowledge, lessons learned, and assets/infrastructure to address other health goals and priorities.

#### **What is meant by "transition planning"?**

During more than 25 years of operations, the GPEI has mobilized and trained millions of volunteers, social mobilizers, and health workers; accessed households untouched by other health initiatives; mapped and brought health interventions to chronically neglected communities; and established a standardized, real-time global surveillance and response capacity.

As the initiative nears completion, the primary goals of transition planning for the GPEI are both to protect a polio-free world and to ensure that these investments, made to eradicate polio, contribute to future health goals after the completion of polio eradication.

#### **What are the main guiding principles of the polio transition planning process?**

- Polio transition planning will aim to benefit all countries and the global community, not only those countries in which polio resources are currently concentrated.
- Enabling long-term transitions to country ownership of basic public health functions, wherever possible, is a priority.

- Under the leadership of the national government, a broad range of stakeholders must be involved in the polio legacy planning process at the country level, including donors and civil society
- Beginning the process of polio transition planning early represents the GPEI's desire to plan carefully and responsibly for the future.
- However, legacy planning should not distract from the current focus on interruption of poliovirus transmission and other objectives of the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan.

### **What are the key components?**

1. Ensure that functions needed to maintain a polio free world after eradication (such as immunization, surveillance, outbreak response, and biocontainment) are mainstreamed into ongoing public health programs.
2. Ensure that the knowledge generated and lessons learned from polio eradication activities are documented and shared with other health initiatives.
3. Where feasible, desirable, and appropriate, transition capabilities and processes to support other health priorities and ensure sustainability of the experience of the GPEI program.

### **What are the components and timeline for the transition planning process?**

In 2014 the Legacy Management Group of the GPEI carried out an extensive process of consultations and planning at the global, regional and country levels. This resulted in the development of a work plan with feedback from stakeholders, including member states, developing the evidence base, and holding stakeholder consultations and country engagement. This work is being utilized to generate the data and feedback to inform the development of the global transition framework, documenting the lessons learned and GPEI's contribution to other health initiatives over the past 25 years and more detailed regional and country transition plans, to be finalized in 2015.

The five major polio eradication partners are facilitating this process which includes consultations with a broad range of stakeholders at the global, regional and national levels, including country governments, partners, other global health initiatives, technical advisory bodies, agencies involved in polio eradication, academics, civil society organizations, private industry, and other interested stakeholders. The continued stakeholder consultations will aim

to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders are engaged on a regular basis to provide inputs to the global transition framework and regional and country transition plans.

Each country in which GPEI resources have been established is encouraged, together with in-country partners, to embark on preparing a polio legacy transition plan that articulates a clear roadmap for transitioning the GPEI's knowledge, lessons learned, and assets/infrastructure to address other health priorities, including addressing funding and sustainability issues.

GPEI has developed a set of transition guidelines to support countries to do polio legacy transition planning. These guidelines recommend a 12-18 month process for developing and reaching consensus on the transition plan, followed within 6 months by initiation of the transition process through execution of the transition plan until such time that the polio assets/infrastructure are fully operational in new roles and structures.

### **What are the anticipated outcomes of the transition planning process?**

The transition planning process is anticipated to result in a global framework that regions and countries can use to inform the development of their unique transition plans. The global framework, which will be reviewed by the World Health Assembly in May 2015, will aim to capture the evidence generated to inform the transition planning process and feedback received from stakeholder consultations.

Regional and country level transition plans for non-endemics are expected to be developed locally by the end of 2015. These operational plans will build on the principles captured in the global framework while ensuring that transition strategies are customized to best suit regional and country-specific health priorities.

Throughout the transition planning process, the GPEI partners will also share knowledge, lessons learned and best practices as documented through evidence generation activities and stakeholder consultations.

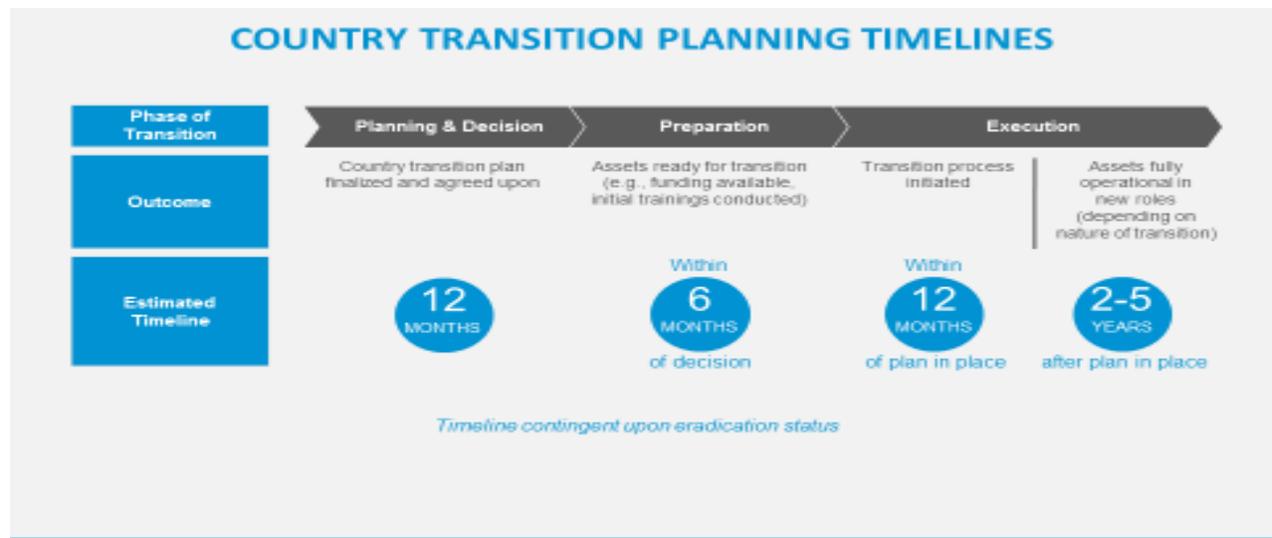
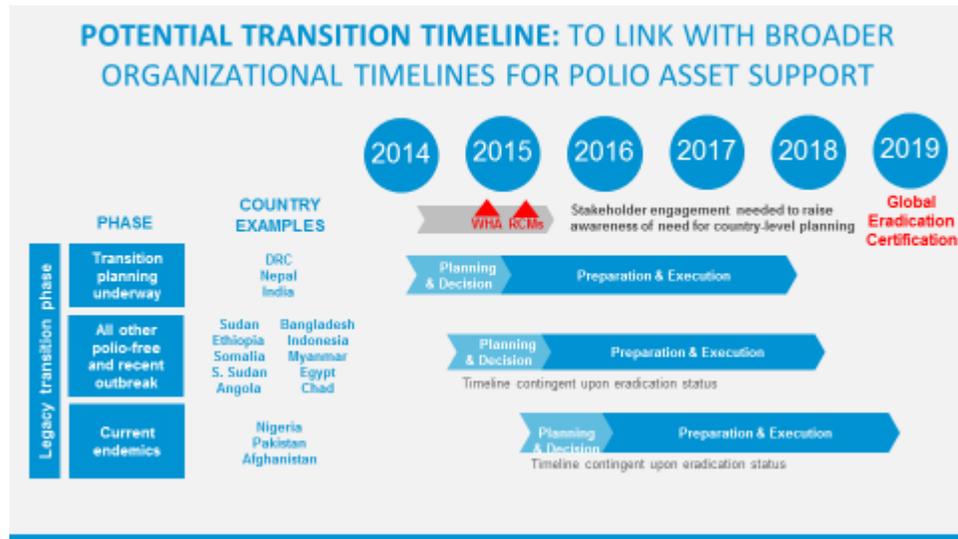
### **What is the time frame for the transition planning process?**

As per the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018, in 2015 the global framework for transition planning will be completed and for many countries the development of detailed regional and country transition plans will commence. Because executing effective plans will take several years, the GPEI expects all non-endemic countries to develop transition plans in 2015. Given the current epidemiology of poliovirus transmission and the desire not to distract from eradication activities in endemic countries, the GPEI expects that Nigeria, Pakistan, and Afghanistan will have transition plans in place by mid-2016. Regional and country transition

plans are expected to cover the period between now and the anticipated global certification of poliovirus eradication.

The timeline below demonstrates the suggested country level transition. Three countries have initiated the transition planning process. Nigeria has established a polio legacy planning working group through its emergency operations center. Ethiopia is also establishing a working group to begin transition planning. The India country program is in the midst of advanced discussions with the government on future transition strategies.

**Polio Transition Planning Activities Timelines:**



### **How can donors support polio transition planning?**

- Advocate with national/state governments and key stakeholders to prioritize transition planning, following the global framework.
- Actively contribute to transition planning discussions, globally and at the country level.
- Provide funding and/or in kind resources or capacity to ensure a rigorous transition planning process at the country level.
- Champion the polio legacy effort and the importance of transition planning with other donors and stakeholders the broader donor community.

### **How can country governments get started with transition planning?**

- Commit to finalizing a transition plan by end-2015 using the GPEI transition guidelines.
- Meet with GPEI partner agency (UNICEF, WHO) legacy focal points in country to begin transition planning.
- Solicit stakeholder input into the transition planning process, including from donors and civil society.
- Identify the opportunities and risks of transitioning GPEI resources, and develop strong transition plans linked with national health and development priorities.