

Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI)

Independent Monitoring Board (IMB)

for Polio Eradication Transition

Terms of reference

Context

Polio transition planning aims to ensure that the investments made to eradicate poliomyelitis help sustain a polio-free world, and contribute to future health goals, through a programme of work to systematically document and transition the knowledge, lessons learned and assets of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) for Post-Polio Eradication Transition will monitor and guide this programme of work.

Polio transition ('legacy') planning is the fourth and final objective of the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-18. In totality, the Strategic Plan sets out how GPEI will: (1) detect and interrupt all poliovirus transmission; (2) strengthen immunization systems and withdraw oral polio vaccine; (3) contain poliovirus and certify interruption of transmission; and (4) plan polio's legacy.

Polio transition planning aims to benefit all countries, but particularly focuses on countries where GPEI's current infrastructure and staff are most concentrated. There are currently 16 designated priority countries.

Terms of reference

The Polio Transition IMB shall independently monitor and guide the process of polio transition planning, assessing the quality, sufficiency and impact of work being undertaken to achieve the aims stated in the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-18.

The Polio Transition IMB is established at the request of the Polio Oversight Board.¹ The Polio Transition IMB will issue reports to the Polio Oversight Board. The Polio Transition IMB is expected to express its own, independent view in these reports.

Specifically, the Polio Transition IMB shall, on a six-monthly basis:

- 1a) evaluate the progress being made in priority countries to develop a transition plan and the quality of that plan; then,
- 1b) monitor the timeliness and completeness of plans' implementation in priority countries
- 2) evaluate the work of governments, together with their partners (including, but not limited to, the core partners of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative), in undertaking polio transition planning
- 3) comment on the contribution and engagement of any other stakeholder or program that is involved in polio transition planning
- 4) comment on the degree to which all crucial stakeholders are being successfully engaged in the polio transition planning process.

¹ The Polio Oversight Board consists of: Director General, World Health Organization; Executive Director, UNICEF; Director, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; President 2016-17, Rotary International; and, President, Global Development Program, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The monitoring process should allow for the fact that planning may validly differ substantially between countries.

Relationship to other groups

Relationship to the Objective 1 Independent Monitoring Board: GPEI created an IMB in November 2010 to monitor and guide progress towards interruption of poliovirus transmission (which subsequently became Objective 1 of the 2013-18 Strategic Plan). The Polio Transition IMB and Objective 1 IMB will operate as sister bodies. Each will provide a report at the other's meeting. Each produces its own report without requiring clearance from the other.

Relationship to other Polio Eradication advisory bodies: The Polio Transition IMB may engage other advisory groups associated with the GPEI agencies at its discretion.

Membership

Members: Seven members, who are recognized experts in their field of specialty. Members serve in a personal capacity, not representing any institution with which they might be associated. Consideration will be given to ensuring appropriate geographical representation and gender balance.

Eligibility: Polio Transition IMB members shall be recognized international experts in disciplines relevant to the Polio Transition IMB Terms of Reference

Initial appointment of Polio Transition IMB Chairperson: by the Polio Oversight Board

Initial appointment of Polio Transition IMB members: A call for nominations will be issued, and members chosen by a selection committee chaired by the Polio Transition IMB Chairperson and also comprising one member from the GPEI Strategy Committee, one from the Polio Partners Group, and one from each WHO and UNICEF regional office in which there is a priority country.

Subsequent changes in membership: In the event of a member leaving the Polio Transition IMB before the end of the full term, a new member will be selected to replace them by agreement between the GPEI Strategy Committee and the Chair of the Polio Transition IMB. In the event of the Chair leaving the Polio Transition IMB, a new Chair will be selected by the Polio Oversight Board.

Conflict of interest and independence: Polio Transition IMB members cannot have a financial or professional engagement with a commercial entity whose products may be influenced by the Polio Transition IMB's decisions. Polio Transition IMB members will also be asked to disclose any public positions that they may have espoused or taken on polio eradication. Prior to being appointed to the Polio Transition IMB, nominated members shall be required to complete a 'declaration of interest'. The names and declarations of Polio Transition IMB members will be publicly available.

Polio Transition IMB members cannot be directly or indirectly involved in the management or implementation of the GPEI. In addition, Polio Transition IMB members cannot be:

- a) employed by a GPEI core partner agency or donor agency,

- b) a member of a regional or national Technical Advisory Group on polio eradication, of the Global Commission for the Certification of Polio Eradication, or of a Regional Certification Commission.

Duration of membership: From the date of the first meeting in 2016 until December 2019, with the possibility of extension by the Polio Oversight Board depending on the eradication and transition timeline.

Operating procedures and meetings

Secretariat: the Chairperson of the Polio Transition IMB will be supported by a secretariat, of his/her own selection, who will have particular responsibility for assisting the Chairperson and members by: (a) providing analysis and advice, (b) representing the Polio Transition IMB as needed, (c) setting the agenda and establishing dates/locations for meetings and teleconferences, (d) writing and disseminating reports, and (e) managing correspondence to and from the Polio Transition IMB.

Funding: Secretariat, meeting venue and member travel costs will be met by the GPEI, with a budget agreed annually by the Strategy Committee.

Meetings: Meetings will be held six-monthly, in-person. The frequency of meetings may, however, be adjusted as necessary. Decisions or recommendations will, as a rule, be taken by consensus. Decisions will require a quorum of at least 5 members.

Preliminary meeting: Before its calendar of substantive meetings commences, the Polio Transition IMB will hold a single preliminary meeting, from which no report shall be produced. The purpose of this meeting shall to be orient the group, to allow initial discussion of the relevant issues, and to plan for the substantive meetings. The first substantive meeting should follow within three months.

Agendas: the agenda will be set by the Chairperson, in consultation with members. Input for meeting agendas may be sought from Ministries of Health, GPEI core partner agencies, core donors, and any other stakeholder deemed appropriate by the Polio Transition IMB.

Documentation and background materials: Information to facilitate the deliberations of the Polio Transition IMB at each of its meetings will include:

- a) A progress report from the Global Polio Eradication Initiative
- b) A short report, using a standard template, from each of the priority countries
- c) When available, the draft and/or final transition plan developed by each priority country
- d) Transition plans and progress reports developed by any other partner
- e) Reports of the Polio Partners Group relevant to polio transition planning
- f) Other reports and materials, collected as deemed helpful through consultation between GPEI and the Secretariat of the Polio Transition IMB

All materials should be shared with the Polio Transition IMB at least five working days prior to each meeting, to the degree possible. All reports and meeting presentations will be made publicly available on the website of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

Reporting and reports: The Polio Transition IMB will issue a report within 15 working days of each meeting, directly to the members of the Polio Oversight Board. Within three working days, and without alteration, the report will then be published in electronic format on the GPEI website (www.polioeradication.org). WHO and UNICEF will have responsibility for sharing the reports with relevant Member States, particularly those participating in a specific meeting. The main findings of the report may also be published in the WHO Weekly Epidemiological Record (WER). Polio Transition IMB findings will form the basis for reports on polio eradication to the WHO Executive Board and the World Health Assembly.

Solicitation of expert technical opinions: for specific technical and/or programmatic issues, the Polio Transition IMB may solicit additional expert opinion by inviting recognized experts to submit their perspectives (in person or in writing), requesting GPEI partner agencies to convene an ad-hoc expert consultation, consulting with a relevant standing technical committee(s) or through other mechanisms as the Polio Transition IMB deems appropriate.

Participation of non-members in meetings & teleconferences: participation in open and closed sessions of meetings, either as active participants or observers, will be at the discretion of the Chairperson, in consultation with members. Depending on the issue, it is anticipated that participation may include representatives of Ministries of Health of priority countries, GPEI core partner agencies (both polio programme representatives and others), GPEI (and potentially other) donors, technical experts, and other relevant stakeholders. Participation may be in person or by telephone link, contingent on Chairperson agreement. Delegations participating in IMB meetings will be expected to combine both decision-making authority and relevant technical expertise within their respective Ministries or agencies.

Other roles of Polio Transition IMB members: in addition to participation in the meetings/teleconferences, members may be requested to interact by e-mail, review documents or participate as observers in other important GPEI meetings. The Polio Transition IMB may propose specific country visits, by one or more members, to facilitate and inform its work.

Remuneration: Members will not be remunerated for their participation in the Polio Transition IMB; however, reasonable expenses such as travel expenses incurred by attendance at the Polio Transition IMB or related meetings will be compensated

Life span of the Polio Transition IMB

The Polio Transition IMB will run until December 2019, at which point it will cease unless extended by the Polio Oversight Board (e.g. if the eradication or transition timeline changes).