

Meeting of the Polio Oversight Board (POB)

14 September 2018 | 18:00 – 19:00 CEST

Meeting Minutes

POB Member Attendees: Chris Elias (POB Chair, BMGF); Mike McGovern, (Rotary); Robert Redfield (CDC); Omar Abdi, representing Henrietta Fore (UNICEF); Soumya Swaminathan, representing Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (WHO)

Opening Remarks

Dr. Elias welcomed all Polio Oversight Board members to the meeting, thanking everyone for their time and noting the Board will be together at the upcoming in-person meeting in two weeks.

I. Review Progress: Action Items from June POB

Presenter: Chris Elias (POB Chair)

POB members provided the following updates on action items from the June POB call:

Afghanistan:

- Dr. Elias noted that a meeting has been arranged between President Ghani and Mr. Gates during the weeks of the UN General Assembly.
- Dr. Swaminathan reported that the possibility of arranging days of tranquility for polio campaigns was discussed, however the decision was made to instead take advantage of currently planned ceasefires.

Pakistan:

- Dr. Elias reported that Mr. Gates has had a welcoming exchange of letters with the new Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan.
- Dr. Elias proposed a high-level meeting between the POB members and the new government of Pakistan and all POB members expressed interest in participating. WHO will coordinate with the Regional Director to propose specific dates for this engagement in early 2019.

Action item:

- WHO to coordinate with the EMRO Regional Director to propose specific dates for a high-level meeting between the POB members and the new government of Pakistan in early 2019.

II. Gavi and GPEI Collaboration

Presenter: Michel Zaffran (WHO)

The following update was presented to the POB:

- Gavi has increasing engagement with GPEI objectives, financing IPV in 2019 – 2020 as well as discussing financing IPV in the long term. GPEI also sees Gavi playing a critical role in transition activities and the post-certification period and will be a key participant in the November meeting of future owners.
- In the context of the 2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan, Gavi and GPEI are currently working to formalize partnership in countries with weak routine immunization leading to increased risk of outbreaks.

The POB thanked the presenter and noted the following:

- The POB members agreed on the importance of a strong partnership and need for increased engagement between Gavi and GPEI, both in the development of the 2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan as well as the future owner discussions of the post-certification strategy. The Strategy Committee will work to come up with recommendations on how best to increase engagement and collaboration between Gavi and GPEI.

Action item:

- The Strategy Committee will follow up with recommendations on how best to increase engagement and collaboration between Gavi and GPEI.

III. Finance & Resource Mobilization

Presenters: Dan Walter (WHO), Andre Doren (WHO)

The following updates were presented to the POB:

Finance:

- In January, the POB approved a 2018 budget of \$942M and asked the FMT to come back with a multi-year budget proposal after analyzing current and future program needs.
- Two multi-year budget scenarios were created. The 2019 -2022 scenario assumes interruption in 2019 and the 2019 – 2023 scenario anticipates interruption in 2020. This week the SC endorsed the 2019 – 2023 scenario with a few cuts, landing on a five-year budget of just under \$4.2B. This would add an incremental cost of \$3.3B to the overall budget (from the original \$7B).
- The budget includes increased costs for community-based vaccinators as well as adding outbreak funding. IPV costs were taken out of the budget, but it was noted that Gavi has not

yet come to a decision on IPV funding beyond 2020. Campaign costs are the single largest budget line item.

- As the GPEI budget shrinks over time, there is a need to identify new partners to cover essential costs outlined in the post-certification strategy.
- As of now, GPEI is unfunded after 2019. Given some degree of risk in having a budget that is not fully financed, GPEI will develop a contingency plan to avoid disruption of activities that are critical for interruption and will bring this to the Strategy Committee and POB in the coming weeks.

Resource Mobilization:

- For the 2019 – 2023 budget scenario endorsed by the Strategy Committee, the PACT estimates a funding gap of more than \$900M. To note:
 - This projection pre-dates discussions with donors, conclusions from the IMB external review and the issuing of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, all of which could influence future projections.
 - The projection assumes most donors could continue to support at their current share of the GPEI budget, though estimates will continue to evolve as discussions with donors take place.
 - The funding gap is based on a medium scenario funding projection, assuming the projected fundraising is possible with increased advocacy efforts. Low and high scenarios are also being developed.
- A few key major donors pledged up to 2020 at the Atlanta pledging event, however the situation has evolved and with current program expenditure levels, the \$7B budget will be reached by the end of 2019. Therefore, some of the contributions originally planned for 2020 expenditures have been advanced to 2019 without, at this stage, further pledges to fill the 2020 gap.
- Uncertainty on the date for interruption of transmission of the wild polio virus adds a layer of complexity and challenge with donor advocacy for the need for additional resources.
- The funding landscape in Global Health continues to be challenging as Global Financing Facility, Global Fund, Gavi, and WHO are in current or imminent financing and replenishment processes. It will be important to liaise with these processes to ensure coordination of efforts.

The POB members thanked the presenters and raised the following observations and questions:

- Dr. Elias recognized the incredible efforts of the FMT and the PACT on the multi-year budget, specifically acknowledging Michiyo Shima and Dan Walter, the FMT co-chairs. He noted the strong advocacy needed from the POB to ensure support of the resource mobilization plan.
- Mr. McGovern noted appreciation for the multi-year budget efforts and the need to ensure proposed budgets are aligned with accomplishing Objective 1 of the Strategic Plan and addressing any recommendations from the IMB External Review.

- Dr. Abdi expressed appreciation for the hard work of the team and support for further budget scrutiny and identifying cost efficiencies, noting UNICEF’s commitment to looking at these.
- Dr. Swaminathan thanked the team for their work, noting the importance of further discussions on identifying contingencies if the full budget cannot be raised.

Action item:

- At the next in-person POB meeting in early 2019, include on the agenda a full discussion on different fundraising scenarios and contingency plans.

IV. Future POB Chair

Presenter: Chris Elias (POB Chair)

The following update was shared with the POB:

- Six years ago, it was agreed to dedicate a chair for the POB. Dr. Elias took on the role the first two years, Tom Frieden was the chair during 2015 – 2016. Given leadership transitions at WHO, UNICEF and CDC at that time, the board asked Dr. Elias to accept another term. This two-year term is up at the end of 2018 and the board will need to determine a new POB chair for the next two-year term.
- Dr. Elias invited POB members to indicate their interest in the position via email. The POB members can then agree via email or if there is more than one interested party, hold a side meeting at the upcoming in-person POB to take a decision.

Action item:

- POB members will indicate their interest in the POB Chair position via email. A decision will be determined either via email or a side meeting at the 28 September in- person POB meeting.