GPEI Global Communications Group (GCG)

Final Terms of Reference
June 2020

Background
In 2020, the GPEI is facing new and growing communication demands as a result of technical milestones such as the rollout of nOPV, significant donor feedback, an evolving social context, and programmatic and operational challenges due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this environment, **global and country-level communications are increasingly interdependent** and efforts must be better streamlined, efficient and effective to facilitate programme success and address stakeholder needs.

The Global Communication Group (GCG) brings together the GPEI’s communications streams: technical and policy, reputation, crisis, C4D, communication research and internal communications with – where relevant – country and regional partners and the Amman Hub. **The GCG thus merges the Strategic Communication Working Group (SCWG) and the PACT Communication group.** As a result, both groups (SCWG and PACT Comms) would cease to exist and transfer their current 2020 workplans for consolidation in one joint workplan. Given the heavy current workload, and to avoid potential disruption, full consolidation of workplans and operational launch of the GCG is proposed before 1st of August, 2020. As per the request of the Strategy Committee, the GCG will be reviewed within the broader upcoming GPEI management review. Lessons learned will be consolidated and regional and country perspectives will be sought on how best to involve and support these offices.

The GCG will not replace operational communications at the field level or other C4D groups. It will support GPEI resource mobilization efforts with relevant programme content; communications materials tailored to specific donors will remain a function of resource mobilization efforts (PACT) that will retain donor communication capacity.

Purpose
In line with the GPEI endgame strategy (current and evolving), the Global Communications Group (GCG) will:

1. lead the development and implementation of a cohesive global communications strategy, products and tools and provide technical support and global resources to regional and country teams based on their programme needs;
2. advise the Strategy Committee and other GPEI management groups on communication implications of technical decisions and programme shifts and suggest mitigation measures across the whole spectrum of communication.

By aligning the various communication streams of the GPEI, the Global Communications Group will shape a an effective and consistent global narrative around the feasibility of eradication that positively shapes media discourse and public perceptions and contributes to polio programme efforts in countries and to donor confidence.

Duties
- Regularly monitor and establish a common understanding of communication risks related to the environment within which the GPEI endgame strategic plan is being implemented (**COVID context, restart of Polio SIAs, nOPV2 introduction, tOPV re-introduction, multi-antigen, mixed vaccine use, and mobile fixed-site campaigns**), advising the Strategy Committee and GPEI management groups on the potential public and social barriers of the decisions;
• Facilitate global support to manage high-profile crisis events originating in the field (attacks on frontline workers, GPEI reputational risk and rumours, Polio vaccine-related events, COVID response) and develop coherent communication response measures.

• Identify communication interventions to effectively resource regional and country teams in responding to emerging or unresolved communication challenges;

Specific bodies of work to which GCG will contribute include:

• **Technical/scientific/policy:** Translate scientific information into language suited for key lay audiences that can be adapted at country and community level

• **Reputation management:** Proactively set the overarching programme narrative; package and position comms content for media, stakeholders, and donor-facing interactions. *(The GCG will collaborate closely with the PACT for communications that specifically affect resource mobilization and donor confidence.)*

• **Polio Programme and Vaccine acceptance:** Provide clear, coherent guidance across communication platforms (external communication and C4D) to maintain high levels of stakeholder and community trust in the programme, and acceptance of polio vaccines by safeguarding against misinformation;

• **Crisis communications:** Prepare partners to effectively respond to any crises that have the potential to negatively impact the program; liaise closely with PACT.

• **Internal communications:** Ensure stakeholders across the partnership have the information and tools they need to communicate about the programme to target audiences.

**Outputs**

The following is a non-comprehensive list of key communications products that the GCG will be responsible for developing for **global audiences**:

• Global program narrative, strategies for programmatic milestones (e.g., World Polio Day) and content (including fact sheets, messages and tough Q&A, donor-market media materials that can be tailored to audiences)

• Crisis communications plans and protocols

• GPEI website content; social media strategies and content

• Analysis and risk assessment of community perceptions

• Technical support to country communications strategies

• Digital engagement research and tactics and infodemic management

**Composition**

• **Core global members (subject to agency decision):**
  - WHO: Oliver Rosenbauer
  - UNICEF: Miraj Pradhan, Rustam Haydarov, Marianna Zaichykova
  - CDC: Yolonda Freeman, Gena Hill, Amy Rowland
  - Rotary: Audrey Carl, Katie Fusco
  - BMGF: Rachel Lonsdale
  - Gavi: Susan Mackay, Frederique Tisserand

• **PACT liaison /focal point (depending on management group review and PACT restructuring)**

• **Core regional members (WHO and UNICEF HQ will bring in regional members regularly/as needed, at least 1X a month):**
  - WHO EMRO regional focal point
  - UNICEF Middle East and North Africa focal point
  - WHO AFRO regional focal point
  - UNICEF West and Central Africa / Eastern and Southern Africa focal point
  - Hub Communications
The GCG will be co-chaired by two communications leads from core partners, one with external relations expertise and one with C4D expertise.

The core group will work in close consultation with country and regional offices to ensure ownership, relevance and viability of interventions.

The GCG will seek to ensure a balanced reflection of GPEI partners and their roles and contributions to programmatic areas of work and seek the input of the partnership members to achieve this.

Project teams

A regular liaison will be established between the PACT and the GCG. As needed, the GCG will support other GPEI management groups in their sector specific needs through the establishment of dedicated multi-disciplinary project teams, composed of communication experts from within and outside of GPEI. These project teams, reporting to the Global Communication Group on a regular basis, will drive communications on specific areas of work, milestones, or events, with deliverables for the workplans of the relevant GPEI groups and information flowing back to the global group for coordination and overall strategy alignment. Examples of project teams include AFRO certification, nOPV2 roll out.

To ensure alignment and technical coherence, the Global Communication Group will coordinate with the relevant GPEI management groups and task teams and call upon members and experts in epidemiology, vaccine manufacturing and rollout, logistics and management (nOPV Working Group, EOMG, Vaccine Supply Task Team, SIA Task Team, ORT etc). On an ad hoc basis, the GCG may also involve immunization and communications experts from the broader polio partnership to provide insights into development of communications strategies and tactics.

Secretariat

Group Secretariat: Global Health Strategies (external) & UNICEF (C4D) will share logistical secretariat duties. The secretariat will perform the following functions:

- Update the GCG workplan and track actions
- Schedule GCG “meetings,” including teleconferences and in-person meetings
- Arrange logistics for these meetings (e.g. agendas, requests for papers)
- Prepare minutes from each of the meetings and circulate for comments
- Carry out relevant “knowledge management” functions, including maintaining a repository of relevant documents
- Assist in the provision of needed data, analysis and mapping
- Ensure appropriate interaction with other management groups and their secretariats, as needed.

Operating Mode, Rhythm of Business
Meetings

- The GCG core group will organize bi-weekly meetings, via teleconference or video conference.
- The GCG may organize at least 2 yearly in-person meetings as needed, at locations TBD (travel allowing) and with sufficient notice to allow adequate representation.
- A quorum will be reached when 2/3 of the GCG core members are present.
- Project teams will meet as required and will liaise with relevant GPEI management/technical groups regularly. A designated member of each project team and the donor communications liaison will report back to the GCG at each meeting with a verbal or written update.
- The number of observers and additional agency representatives at meetings will be kept to a minimum; request for extra attendees to be cleared by co-chairs.

Decision making

- Decisions will be made by consensus amongst the core global members, assuming each core global member can adequately represent the regional/country teams.
- When consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be escalated to the SC for resolution during a regular update.

Accountability

- The GCG will report to, and be ultimately accountable to, the GPEI Strategy Committee.
- The co-chairs will report to the SC bimonthly (written or verbal update depending on content), highlighting strategic issues for SC decision; urgent decisions will be escalated through the SC secretariat.
- All proposals made by the GCG that are beyond its mandate and scope will be submitted to the SC for consideration and decision.
- Communications deliverables and content created by the GCG Project teams will be technically cleared by the relevant GPEI groups (nOPV2, EOMG, OPRTT, VSTT, PACT, PFG etc.) or core agencies partners, as appropriate and efficient.

Budgeting & Operations

The Global Communication Group will aim to stay within the existing GPEI FRR communication funding to respond to the agreed programme communication priorities, to the extent possible, identifying efficiencies in operation, using in-house technical capacities, or leveraging outside of GPEI, such as in the Immunization Demand Hub. However, for specific projects for which FRR funding is not available or adequate, funding may be requested of the Strategy Committee either as a stand-alone communication need or as communications budgeted within the relevant GPEI groups, as projects needs are assessed and evaluated as critical to program advancement and success.