Polio Research and Analytics Group (PRAG)
Ratified Terms of Reference [Approved: September 3, 2021]

Purpose
The Polio Research and Analytics Group (PRAG) exists to:

1. Support and coordinate research activities (including clinical, operational research; and development of new products) in order to generate scientific data and tools to accelerate and sustain poliovirus eradication; and
2. Review data and analyses on poliovirus epidemiology including modelling outputs; and provide evidence-based recommendations to the Strategy Committee on program actions, and projections on future vaccine needs and choices.

Responsibilities
By virtue of these Terms of Reference, the PRAG is empowered and expected to do the following:

1. Support and coordinate research activities (including clinical, operational research; and development of new products) in order to generate scientific data and tools to accelerate and sustain poliovirus eradication, the PRAG shall:
   o Function as a technical advisory group on behalf of GPEI to provide guidance on research ideas, technologies and methodologies as necessary with an aim to streamline and prioritize research activities across the program
   o Coordinate research activities in consultation with the existing Polio Research Committee (PRC) which is a scientific oversight and coordination body of WHO, founded in 2008;
   o Discuss and decide on new studies/products based on the research gaps and program needs , including, as an example, clinical trials on vaccine immunogenicity, product development projects as well as studies focusing on social science and gender
   o Support and coordinate implementation of studies/product development activities;
   o Provide liaison to the polio SAGE WG and full SAGE on program policy issues which require scientific data;
   o Provide liaison to Advisory Panels on vaccine development initiatives such as sIPV/VLP development as needed (as well as to other scientific advisory bodies such as Polio Antiviral Initiative; iVDPV Working Group and others).

2. Review data and analyses on poliovirus epidemiology including modelling outputs; and provide evidence-based recommendations to the Strategy Committee on program actions, and projections on future vaccine needs and choices:
   o Identify challenges and potential points of failure that require revision of GPEI strategy;
   o Advise Global Program Support (GPS) and Regional Operations (RO) groups as necessary on potential revisions to their approaches regarding:
      ▪ Outbreak response Standard Operating Procedures (in collaboration with ORPG, RRT, IMST);
      ▪ Data collection and analysis requirements (in collaboration with SG, ORPG);
      ▪ Vaccine needs and projections (in collaboration with VSG);

- o Review VDPV epidemiology, assess progress and risks towards VDPV elimination and advise on relevant adjustments to the strategy when necessary (in collaboration with the Surveillance Group); and
- o Collaborate with modelling groups supported by GPEI and relevant experts to generate modelling outputs and interpret different modelling outputs for program action.

Gender Perspective

Gender mainstreaming (the process of assessing implications for women and men of any planned action, in all areas and at all levels) is an integral dimension to the achievement of gender equality, which is considered a powerful determinant of health outcomes and a major factor in the movement towards polio eradication.

The PRAG is responsible for supporting gender mainstreaming and the GPEI gender strategy within the group by:
- • Dedicating time to develop and undertake activities to mainstream gender in their respective group, in conjunction with the Gender Mainstreaming Group (GMG), on an annual basis, and ensuring completion of activities (e.g., training via webinars, coaching, and/or mentoring).
- • Leveraging technical support from the GMG, where feasible and applicable, throughout the course of activities (i.e., across program planning, design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation) to ensure that a gender equality lens is being applied.
- • Being aware of GPEI's Gender Equality Strategy KPIs and implementing actions to help meet the expected results, leveraging support from the GMG, where needed.

Composition & Secretariat
The PRAG shall be led by a Chair and Vice Chair and shall consist of core members from each GPEI partner as well as additional regular or ad-hoc members as needed to fulfill the group's responsibilities. Each GPEI partner will have one voting member.

Leadership

- • The PRAG shall be led by a Chair and Vice-Chair.
- • The SC will appoint the named parties for the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair after soliciting feedback from the PRAG members, using coordination support from the SC Secretariat. It is recommended that the individuals nominated to these two roles do not come from the same organization.
- • The term for each role is 12 months, with the option for rotation (preferred) or renewal at the discretion of the SC.

Additional Group Member Selection & Roles

- • Additional membership of the PRAG shall consist of as many individuals as the Chair deems necessary to efficiently and effectively fulfill the group's responsibilities.
- • While the PRAG may include broad representation of GPEI partner agencies, the division of responsibilities across individuals and agencies shall be based on capabilities and capacities rather than a principle of institutional parity.

- The SC shall assign individuals from partner agencies to the PRAG in accordance with the needs communicated by the Chair and in alignment with these Terms of Reference.
- PRAG membership should not be limited to GPEI partner agencies, members from PATH, FDA, modelling and other relevant research institutions/agencies could be included on regular or ad-hoc basis.

<u>Membership Expectations</u>

In general, individual members of the PRAG have the following responsibilities:

- Be familiar with the charge and work of the PRAG.
- Have pertinent expertise (e.g., epidemiology, business) and/or represent the perspective of an agency or stakeholder group.
- Attend 70% of all meetings (and for the entire duration of the meetings).
    - A committee member who misses two consecutive meetings, when the member has not made a case for exception to the Chair, may be replaced.
    - If replacement of a member is required, the Chair will flag the issue with the pertinent agency and make the request.
- Be actively engaged at all meetings and provide relevant and focused comments (e.g., ensure that you have read circulated pre-read materials and have developed perspective on the topic area prior to attending the meeting).
- Dedicate time to participating in and/or leading work/activities, <u>outside</u> of planned meeting times.
    - The specific amount of time is to be estimated by the Chair and Vice-Chair and discussed with individual members at the start of the year but is generally expected to range from 10 to 20 hours/month.
- Demonstrate flexibility in unanimity building discussions and take different perspectives into account.
- Relay discussions and updates on work undertaken, back to the member's respective agency, to ensure coordinated efforts across GPEI and the agency (e.g., to minimize duplicative activities).
- Efforts will be made to guarantee gender balanced representation of members (ideally 50% women and 50% men) and to alternate among different level positions (to avoid appointing only junior positions).
- All core members will be offered additional gender training opportunities according to their needs/competencies.

For groups that have distinguished Core Members vs. Non-Core Members in their respective TOR:

- For Core Members, the above applies.
- For Non-Core Members (i.e., Supplementary or Liaison Roles), the Chair determines the responsibilities.

For partner agencies that propose individual member names to serve on the PRAG, the above must be taken into consideration. The recommendation is to discuss capacity with the potential candidate, prior to a proposal to serve on the PRAG.

<u>Secretariat</u>

- The Secretariat role shall be determined by the Chair.
- There shall be one individual designated as the primary contact for the Secretariat, regardless of how many individuals actively work to support the PRAG in its activities.
- The Secretariat supports the PRAG with the following, as needed:
  - Facilitating work in collaboration with the Chair and Vice-Chair;
  - Scheduling meetings;
  - Planning logistics;
  - Compiling agendas;
  - Distributing meeting materials (pre-reads and post-discussion), including meeting minutes;
  - Tracking action items and coordinating on progress to closure of action items;
  - Scheduling and preparing progress reports, in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair;
  - Coordinating with other groups; and
  - Maintaining responsibility for relevant documents (e.g., knowledge management / information management/online portal for sharing materials).

Accountability

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- The PRAG is accountable to the SC via the EMU.
- Individual PRAG Members serve in their roles at the nomination of the SC and the Chair.

Decision Making

Key decisions made by the PRAG may include:
- What studies to be conducted and in which study sites to address research priorities;
- Study design; and
- Conclusions and interpretations from analytical/modelling work.
- Unanimity is the ideal for all decisions made by the PRAG and should be pursued wherever possible.
- If unanimity cannot be reached, a majority vote will be the deciding factor. Each agency stipulated in the TOR with voting rights (e.g., core member) gets one vote.
- If a majority vote cannot be reached, the Chair of PRAG will escalate to the EMU. The EMU will determine the appropriate next step on the escalation path (e.g., mediation attempt, escalation to SC).
- For decisions with significant strategic impact, if a member dissents with a particular decision, escalation may be made to the EMU. The EMU decides whether a further review is required by the SC, on a case-by-case basis; if escalated to SC, their decision will be final.

Reporting

- The PRAG, led by the Chair, shall report progress to the SC on a quarterly basis and as requested by the EMU.
- In coordination with the EMU, the PRAG shall also contribute to status reports for the POB as requested.

Rhythm of Business

<u>Meeting Scheduling & Participation</u>

- Monthly coordination TCs
- Bi-annual PRC meetings (face to face if possible)

TOR Ratification

- By February 28, 2022, this TOR is to be reviewed by the Chair and Vice-Chair; this timing equates to ~6 months after initial ratification by the SC.
- Post-February 28, 2022, this TOR is to be reviewed by the Chair and Vice-Chair, on an annual basis, at minimum.
- After reviews by the Chair and Vice-Chair, any proposed amendments to the TOR must be submitted to the EMU, for approval by the SC. Amendments can be submitted on an as needed basis.