

Surveillance Group

Terms of Reference (Approved [September 27, 2021])

Purpose

The GPEI Surveillance group brings together all global-level functions from across the partnership supporting the surveillance system including epidemiological, laboratory, data and information systems. The group provides the vision and strategies on short-, medium- and long-term global plans for poliovirus surveillance. It assists regional- and country-level polio teams achieve and maintain the level and quality of poliovirus surveillance required for eventual polio-free certification; and to prepare for the maintenance of effective poliovirus surveillance following the eradication of WPV and VDPV and the cessation of OPV.

Responsibilities

The Surveillance Group is empowered and expected to do the following:

1. Provide an overall coordination function to the global efforts to enhance poliovirus surveillance by bringing together global-level functions from across the partnership supporting the surveillance system.
2. Ensure coherent implementation of the GPEI Strategy by developing a global Poliovirus Surveillance Action Plan every 2 to 3 years and based on the Action Plan assuring the sustained availability of needed human and financial resources for all components of poliovirus surveillance especially in priority geographies.
3. Ensure a robust global poliovirus surveillance system that's based on high-quality AFP surveillance effectively supplemented with environmental surveillance and other forms of supplemental surveillance activities.
4. Conduct surveillance and other data analysis to identify surveillance gaps, improve surveillance tools, and assess ongoing programmatic work.
5. Provide globally recommended, standardized guidance and tools to improve polio surveillance.
6. Enhance the overall capacity of the Global Polio Laboratory Network (GPLN) by accelerating capacity building in priority geographies, increasing the adoption of new technologies and methodologies, and supporting the provision of required support and resources.
7. Maintain and where necessary build and/or upgrade the data and information management system and infrastructure incl. the geographic information systems required to support and drive the global polio surveillance system.
8. Work closely with other GPEI teams to ensure alignment and synergy, particularly ORPG, PRAG, RRT, IMST.
9. Collaborate with other entities working on global disease surveillance including the Comprehensive Vaccine Preventable Diseases Surveillance Working Group and Health Emergencies, to support the continued integration of poliovirus surveillance into broader disease surveillance priorities.

Outputs:

1. Global Poliovirus Surveillance Action Plan
2. Annual medium-term risk assessment and country prioritization and quarterly surveillance-related risk review

3. Direct support to regions and priority countries in the implementation of the Global Polio Surveillance Action Plan
4. Regular updates on the implementation of the Action Plan and other activities to the SC and the EMU as necessary, including surveillance-related risks and country prioritization
5. Monthly reporting of performance against key performance indicators including timeliness of detection, to be shared through the EMU, with ORPG and other GPS Groups and stakeholders.

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 Surveillance Group 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 and secretariat

The Surveillance Group shall be led by a Chair and Vice-Chair and shall consist of as many other Members as needed to fulfill the group's responsibilities.

Leadership

- The Surveillance Group 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 Surveillance Group 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.

Membership Expectations

In general, individual members of the Surveillance Group have the following responsibilities:

- Be familiar with the charge and work of the Surveillance Group.
- Have pertinent expertise (e.g., epidemiology, laboratorian, data management analyst, 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, outside 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).
 - Communicate with the SG any activities that respective agency/group are planning or will be launching that will have a substantial effect on surveillance performance at the national-, regional-, and global-level.
- 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 Surveillance Group, 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 Surveillance Group.

Additional Surveillance Group Member Selection & Roles

- The SC shall assign two core members (i.e., primary and secondary member) from partner agencies in accordance with the needs communicated by the Chair and in alignment with these Terms of Reference.
- The Surveillance Group includes laboratory surveillance, managed by the Global Polio Laboratory Network (GPLN) whose TORs can be found here [link to be inserted]. The SC shall assign up to three core members from GPLN to the Surveillance Group in accordance with the needs communicated by the Chair and in alignment with these Terms of Reference.
- The core members shall form the decision-making organ of the SG

- Additional membership of the Surveillance Group shall consist of as many individuals as the group deems necessary to efficiently and effectively fulfill the group's responsibilities and at a minimum:
 - Field and laboratory representatives from the regional offices;
 - Liaisons from Global Program support groups to facilitate collaboration (e.g., OPRG, PRAG) and relevant groups working on global disease surveillance e.g., the Comprehensive VPD surveillance group;
 - And as necessary, additional partnering agencies/groups (observers)
- The Surveillance Group shall assign at least one liaison to Global Program Support groups that are key for surveillance collaboration (e.g., OPRG, PRAG).

Secretariat

- 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 Surveillance Group in its activities.
- The Secretariat supports the Surveillance Group 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 Surveillance Group is accountable to the SC via the EMU.
- Individual Surveillance Group Members serve in their roles at the joint pleasure of the SC and the Surveillance Chair.

Reporting

- The Surveillance Group, led by the Chair, shall periodically report progress to the SC as requested by the EMU.
- In coordination with the EMU, the Surveillance Group shall also contribute to status reports for the POB on a semi-annual basis, or as frequently as requested.
- The Surveillance Group shall be responsible for contributing to reports requested by any established body that requires global surveillance assessment feedback, including the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB), and the Global Certification Commission.

Decision-Making

- Unanimity is the ideal for all decisions made by the Surveillance Group 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 (i.e., primary core member, secondary core member in absence of primary) gets one vote. In addition, the three core members from the GPLN (regardless of their agency) shall have one vote.
- If a majority vote cannot be reached, the Chair of the Surveillance Group 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 partnering agency/group 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.
- The following activities shall always require formal approval by core members:
 - All decisions and actions requiring SC and/or EMU review and endorsement e.g., additional funding needs for priority activities;
 - Membership (excluding agency and GPLN representatives);
 - Formation and/or termination of Working Groups; and
 - Review and revision of the ToR of the surveillance group or any other associated working groups.

Rhythm of Business

Meeting Scheduling & Participation

- The Surveillance Group shall meet regularly (and no less than quarterly) by teleconference and have additional interactions/calls/email exchanges as deemed appropriate to address urgent issues.
- The Surveillance Group shall decide on the need for ad-hoc meetings and it is expected that Group Members will also be communicating/sharing information regularly through email.

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.