

## **Standard Operating Procedures for responding to a poliovirus outbreak in a polio-free country**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE: OUTBREAK TECHNICAL LEAD (National Level)**

#### **Introduction:**

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) seeks to ensure that future generations of children will be free from the threat of polio paralysis. Achieving this goal depends on interrupting poliovirus transmission in the remaining endemic countries and on ensuring rapid and effective responses to poliovirus outbreaks occurring in polio-free countries. The GPEI has recently revised its Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the response to new polio outbreaks in polio-free countries.<sup>1</sup>

This document describes the Terms of Reference for the Outbreak Technical Lead in the context of the new SOPs.

#### **Purpose of the position:**

The Outbreak Technical Lead is responsible for the overall management of the operational response to the poliovirus outbreak, working under the supervision of the head of WHO/UNICEF offices and in collaboration with health authorities and other health partners.

The technical lead will be deployed to countries as part of the Rapid Response Team (A) or the Surge Team (B).

#### **Summary of assigned duties:**

- Support heads of WHO/UNICEF country offices with strategic and operational oversight of polio outbreak response operations, ensuring that they address the needs of the population and are aligned with the government/Ministry of Health (MOH) plans and strategies and the polio outbreak response SOPs.
- Lead and guide Team A and Team B on outbreak response strategies and technical oversight of the response activities.
- Foster close coordination with MOH, in-country health and other partners, and regional offices and HQs and assist in the organization of regular coordination meetings, teleconferences, and updates.
- Work with MOH/WHO/UNICEF teams to develop a national outbreak response plan, including a budget, chronogram of activities, and human resources (HR) surge plan, periodically adjusting and adapting the plan, as needed.
- Collaborate with MOH/WHO/UNICEF teams to establish outbreak response structures that include the four components of outbreak response: outbreak investigation, outbreak response immunization, strengthening AFP surveillance, and strengthening routine immunization.
- Collaborate with MOH/WHO/UNICEF teams to produce updates of outbreak response activities (e.g., SITREPS, bulletins, and newsletters) for distribution to relevant partners.
- Collaborate with MOH/WHO/UNICEF teams to organize periodic external outbreak response assessments.
- Collaborate with MOH/WHO/UNICEF teams to document the closure of the outbreak.
- Collaborate with MOH/WHO/UNICEF teams to assess the security situation in the geographic areas included in the response; as necessary, engage appropriate partners to discuss special strategies and resources for insecure areas.
- Collaborate with the communications team to ensure the preparation of an overall outbreak response communication plan and the appropriate content of advocacy and messaging

strategies.

- Collaborate with the Outbreak Operations Manager to ensure that the logistical aspects of the outbreak response, especially financing and HR, are managed with optimal efficiency.
- Review and clear donor products and provide strategic guidance on resource mobilization and proposal development.
- Undertake other assignments and responsibilities as requested by heads of country offices, regional directors, and other partners to support the successful response to the outbreak.

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<sup>i</sup> Global Polio Eradication Initiative, Responding to a poliovirus outbreak, Standard Operating Procedures for a new polio outbreak in a polio-free country, February 2015. Available at <http://www.polioeradication.org/Portals/0/Document/Resources/PolioEradicators/1a.PolioOutbreakGuideline20150220.pdf>