

## PARTNERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

### OVERVIEW

This document lays out the Communications Strategy for the GFF for review, discussion and approval by the Investors Group (IG). This strategy is the result of extensive outreach with Investors Group members, their organizations and other stakeholders, and has been discussed in draft form on a conference call with IG delegations in advance of this meeting.

### ACTION REQUESTED

The Investors Group is requested to approve this Communications Strategy.

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Investors Group approve the Communications Strategy for the GFF and requests the Secretariat to implement the recommendations.

## BACKGROUND

In recognition of the importance of strategic and robust communications to the success of the GFF, the GFF Secretariat committed to developing a communications strategy. The strategy below was written after a wide consultation with IG representatives and other partners, including individual interviews, written questions and a follow up conference call.

## OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this communications strategy is to set forth overall objectives and vision, to provide an analysis of the current state of communications, and to recommend a strategic communications framework that addresses both internal and external audiences.

Transparency and inclusiveness are core principals of the GFF, thus robust, clear and creative communications is central to its success. For partners to fully engage and the partnership to grow stronger, they need timely, accurate and useful information and regular, easily accessible spaces to share ideas, experiences and feedback. Finally, the heart of the GFF is the work at the country level and thus the strong focus of GFF communications needs to be targeted at this level.

## COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

### Objectives and Vision:

1. To clearly and accurately define and describe the purpose, goals, and objectives of the GFF with timely and useful information geared towards the various audiences, both internal and external. The communications strategy should promote the dual goals of transparency and inclusiveness through information and guidance on both process and content, including results.
2. The communications strategy should enable the partners in the GFF to fully understand and champion the approach and goals of the GFF and to mobilize the smart, scaled and sustainable financing needed to meet the RMNCAH goals for 2030. Ensuring a strong base of support will help foster a coalition that can reach out beyond the partnership to engage new countries, development partners, and civil society.
3. GFF communications should also maximize the sharing of results and lessons learned to enable the approach of the GFF to grow and adapt. Information should be robust, timely and use, as much as possible, a standardized approach to reporting of programmatic and financial information.
4. GFF communications should be strongly focused on meeting the needs of country level implementers, building the country-level partnership, engaging civil society and other stakeholders, ensuring transparency and accountability around country activities, showcasing country results, and creating an enabling environment for mobilizing additional resources for RMNCAH priorities.

### Problem Identification and Analysis of Challenges

The GFF is an innovative approach to addressing unmet reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health needs that aims to scale up available resources through a new financing model. The

GFF operates as a facility that maximizes the comparative advantages of a broad set of partners. They are engaged at country level through a “country platform” that, under the leadership of national governments, builds on existing structures while embodying two key principles: inclusiveness and transparency.

The GFF Trust Fund is both a funding source and a springboard to additional funding through IDA and IBRD, as well as a pathfinder to other traditional and non-traditional funding sources.

The complexity, structure and processes of the GFF makes clear communications more of a challenge. Added to this challenge is the fact that this is a multi-stakeholder, multi-country initiative, which by its nature, involves a number of different partners and perspectives.

The communications challenges that have arisen to date have both internal and external components.

## 1. Internal

Internal communications refer to those between and among the GFF partners: members of the Investors Group, the Trust Fund Committee, the Technical Working Group, the World Bank staff, and the GFF Secretariat. Information needs vary, but there have been consistent issues with the accuracy, timeliness, and usefulness of information available to various internal groups. A certain number of the issues raised reflect questions or issues with the underlying design, roles and responsibilities of the GFF, some of which are already being addressed by the Investors Group and the current Task Teams. Other issues dealt more directly with communications issues and are summarized here:

- Lack of clarity on the basic principles of the GFF which could be addressed through short, useable, plain language materials. Issues raised include:
  - Roles and functions of the Trust Fund and Facility;
  - Financial framework – explanation of the relationship among the GFF Trust Fund, IDA, IBRD, and other financial flows, as well as transparency on resources committed and expected;
  - Requirements for a country GFF Investment Case and Health Financing Strategy
  - Criteria for selection of frontrunner, second wave, and next wave countries;
  - Country level processes, including various steps and requirements for approval and funding; and
  - Roles, responsibilities, and opportunities for engagement of GFF stakeholders, civil society and the private sector.
- Making the case for GFF. Need a strong and clear narrative that sets forth the value add of the GFF:
  - Why and how the GFF is different than previous global efforts to address the unmet needs of women, adolescents and children;
  - How this is a pathfinder to new ways of development finance;
  - How meeting RMNCAH needs link to the larger health care picture and efforts to achieve universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals; and

- The value proposition – how the GFF is a good return on investment by focusing on smart, scaled and sustainable financing which both saves lives and contributes to achieving the bigger goals of economic development and ending extreme poverty.
- Country level information on processes, procedures and progress. In order to strengthen inclusiveness:
  - Develop GFF operational guidance for the country level that aligns with country leadership, budget processes and timelines;
  - Share timely information on events/meetings (*e.g.*, country meetings and missions, with agendas and purpose), that is accessible to civil society, the private sector, and all interested development partners to ensure meaningful opportunities to engage. The IG also needs this information to communicate within their own organizations and networks;
  - Provide visibility on the extension of the GFF to all 63 countries;
  - Report on GFF progress and results, including lessons learned.
- Alignment with SDGs, EWEC, and other events and campaigns. These global goals, campaigns and events are mutually supportive and the GFF should take advantage of strategic opportunities to work with other partners, messages and events.
- Given that the Secretariat is hosted at the World Bank, ensure timely and consistent World Bank internal communications to ensure that key World Bank staff understand the GFF, what it is doing, and how it differs from regular business procedures, particularly at country level. Wider buy-in within the WB structure is critical to insure the success of the GFF and its catalytic approach.
- More timely and frequent communications with all stakeholders. As appropriate, use newsletters, emails, conference calls, and website postings to fill the information void. Consider a dedicated and password protected space for the IG to communicate, share drafts, and raise issues.
- Personalize the GFF, so that it conveys a set of compelling, human stories that gets beyond process and technical jargon. This will be useful for both internal and external purposes.

## 2. External

External communications refer to public communications on behalf of the GFF, including the website, social media, press releases and other public announcements, official communications to GFF countries, and representation of GFF in public fora. Addressing a number of the internal communication needs will also assist in the external communications:

- Clear, accurate and compelling messages. Concern was expressed that the initial announcement oversold the GFF, inaccurately accounting for the resources already committed and inflating the overall money behind the facility. This was followed by a lack of communications, leading to confusion and unhelpful media coverage (*e.g.*, The Lancet article and the necessary response from IG members). A strong communications strategy is needed to define and amplify the main messages of the GFF, including timely and accurate information on funding and a narrative that the supporters can rally behind.

- Useable and accessible information. In part because of its complexity and in part because of GFF’s “learning by doing” approach, short and clear informational products that can be used by a variety of external audiences will help answer questions about the GFF. The website currently under construction, with comprehensive country pages, will be a significant resource for key information on documents, funding, decisions, and results. Ensuring a strong interactive information flow, particularly with civil society and the private sector, will help facilitate better participation by these two critical groups. Similarly, the GFF needs to ensure that new and future GFF countries as well as existing and new donors – both traditional and non-traditional – can easily access GFF information.
- Personalize the GFF. The external communications must also address the human aspects of this effort, giving faces to an otherwise very technical discussion. The use of social media, blogs, infographics, videos and other less formal communications tools can help highlight the problem and how the GFF is offering a sustainable solution. To the extent possible, these communications tools also need to be offered in the primary languages of the participating countries.
- Build on other events, campaigns and platforms to advocate for the GFF and widen support. There are a number of opportunities to utilize other events, campaigns and platforms being led by other organizations and coalitions to raise the awareness and understanding of the GFF and to continue to build support among new audiences. These can also serve as opportunities for further consultations.

## **Strategic Directions for GFF Communications**

### **1. Provide clear, strong, accessible messaging on GFF’s vision and objectives**

Given the complexity and innovative financing approach of the GFF, clear overall messaging needs to be developed that speaks to the GFF’s vision, objectives, and value. The materials need to use plain language so that they are useful to broader audiences that are not immersed in the technical details. Advocacy materials that underscore the organizational interest of various GFF partners in supporting this new approach can help promote the GFF’s transformational goals. Such materials could include:

- User friendly materials to promote a better understanding of the GFF to non-technical audiences.
  - A short (two-page) document that explains the GFF in user friendly, non-technical language that clearly shows what? why? how? This is a priority;
  - A basic Master Slide deck that can be utilized by a variety of audiences to explain core vision and key concepts;
  - Handouts on key aspects of the approach: financing challenge; investment case; health financing strategy; and
  - FAQs that provide more in-depth information on specific topics and issues and are updated regularly to reflect the evolving situation in countries.
- Production of compelling materials (such as blogs, op eds and reports) that showcase GFF results and the strong support for the GFF at the highest political and organizational level, with different leaders addressing various issues and underscoring why leadership (from donors, partners and GFF countries) have elected to support the initiative;

- Promotion of the GFF through active story telling from different perspectives but focused on real change for real people, that underscores the value of the GFF, addresses issues, promotes the new model and humanizes the GFF;
- In the near term, information will necessarily be process heavy, but the longer term needs to clearly convey results and lessons learned – excellent data quality and transparency should be a key objective of GFF communications;
- Proactive media outreach to build an understanding of the GFF and to encourage coverage of country-level activities and results;
- A social media toolkit to build a supportive and active online constituency that amplifies the GFF at country level and taps into broader international processes;
- Look to existing opportunities and assets, including events, conferences and partner-convened meetings, to strategically showcase GFF and utilize existing partners and leaders to help amplify and promote the GFF.

## **2. Create and Maintain a Robust Information Flow to Inform and Build Support with Internal GFF Stakeholders:**

Although the GFF has been launched, there are still a number of internal audiences that need more and on-going information about the GFF, its processes, progress and results.

*Investors Group and Trust Fund Committee:* These representatives need to be equipped with sufficient information so they can understand and then champion the GFF including:

- Basic content information that can be shared with their staff/constituents/leadership;
- Governance documents shared in a systematic way that can be tracked and consulted (private site pre-meeting and transparency on post-meeting documentation);
- Information on roles and responsibilities particularly between IG and TF;
- Timely sharing of draft documents for decision/approval and meeting agendas;
- Information regarding country level meetings/missions to countries/other events with GFF components;
- More regular and informal communications, such as newsletters to communicate updates, conference calls, and email alerts to communicate information posted on the website.

*Country Level Participants:* Given that country results are the core of the GFF, clear information, both as to processes and requirements, is needed. (A number of these issues are currently the subject of the Task Teams, which should provide additional clarity on specific questions). Information needs include:

- Clear documentation on guidelines for the GFF Country Platform, Investment Case, the Health Financing Strategy, Accountability, Monitoring and Evaluation, Technical Assistance and Quality Assurance;
- Sharing of lessons learned both on process (e.g., consultative processes), innovative solutions, and results;
- Provision of a GFF supported communications resource person (located within the Ministry of Health) to act as an information conduit and to facilitate engagement between the government, local GFF and development partners, civil society, media, and other interested stakeholders;
- Country level communications toolkit to provide basic materials and tools for engaging stakeholders at the country level.

*World Bank Group Staff:* World Bank Group staff, at both the leadership and the country level, are critical to ensuring that the GFF is implemented and supported. In particular, this means:

- Continued education of staff at various levels and functions to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the GFF, its relationship to the Trust Fund, IDA, IBRD, and other sources of funding, as well as the how the GFF is to function at country level;
- Guidance on standard operating principles should be developed and shared to ensure that the GFF operates as it is designed (to be integrated into country plans and process, not as standard World Bank process);
- Regular communications about the GFF among the senior WGB leadership.

*GFF Partner Staff:* Partner organizations are also critical to the success of the GFF. They need timely and useable information to effectively brief their own organizations and networks, especially those which are active at the country and local level. This will help ensure a full understanding of, and support for, the GFF in the broader community.

### **3. Amplify the GFF Messaging with External Stakeholders to Build Support for the GFF as the Country-Led Model for Smart, Scalable and Sustainable Solutions**

Develop and use a strategic mixture of communications tools and tactics to tell the GFF story, including results, to a wide audience and facilitate engagement with various groups of stakeholders and interested parties. The focus should be heavily concentrated at the country and local level.

- Build a robust website that is a center of information about the GFF, including:
  - All basic materials about the GFF (vision, model, its value proposition, its goals and objectives, the Business Plan, governance arrangements, Annual Report, FAQs);
  - Country pages that provide links to key country documents, such as the Investor Case, Health Financing Strategy, financial information, timelines, outputs, outcomes and results, consultation opportunities and key contact information;
  - Results data and stories;
  - Monitoring and evaluation information and data;
  - Partners;
  - Media, blogs, knowledge hub.
- Strategic use of external events, platforms, and related campaigns as opportunities to raise the profile of the GFF and build support for it, mobilizing and showcasing the variety of voices of the GFF partnership.
  - Strong linkages with the EWEC campaign outreach and advocacy;
  - Link to the broader SDG advocacy;
  - Develop a multi-faceted advocacy calendar for 2016 which highlights GFF specific events as well as opportunities for mutually supportive engagement and outreach with partners and stakeholders;
  - Work with other partners in their communications efforts, including UNF, the EWEC, PMNCH, and other IG organizations, including donors, to maximize the synergies, harmonize messaging, ensure mutually supportive advocacy and amplify the overall effort to make progress on shared RMNCAH goals;
- Creative use of digital media that supports and widens the GFF messaging, and draws traffic to the website and fosters discussion, including:
  - Active use of social media tied to events, results and human stories;

- Strong graphics that deliver compelling visualizations of the data and results, including graphics for mobile phone use;
- Short videos that can tell stories of innovations and results;
- Blogs that bring in voices of beneficiaries and others.
- Creation of stories with robust media outreach including:
  - Stories that humanize what the GFF is, what it is intended to accomplish, and how it is changing the lives of women and children. This could be through blogs, videos and social media;
  - Financing perspectives and developments – production of materials and news items around key GFF milestones to help that explain how the GFF financing works, why it adds value, how it has attracted other financing, both traditional and non-traditional, and how it can be a model for other sectors;
  - Spotlight on innovations at the country level.
- Materials that are tailored to current and prospective donors, both traditional and non-traditional, that demonstrate the value of the GFF approach and the results that are emerging.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO SECRETARIAT FOR MANAGING THE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

### **Management and Approach to Communications Function**

The transparency and accountability pillars of the GFF underscore the importance of providing a wide range of information and data in a useable form and format. Managing the GFF communications will be a critical function of the Secretariat. It will be necessary to ensure proper resourcing, including sufficient capacity, the right skill sets, and knowledge of the intricacies and nuances of the GFF.

The Secretariat needs to speak for the partnership. There can be no well-functioning partnership without strong communications and there cannot good communications without the strong participation and support from the GFF partners. There is a perception that the GFF communications to date have been weighted heavily in the World Bank voice. This needs to be addressed so communications reflect the full voice of the partnership.

The demands for robust information flows will come from a number of different stakeholders. In order to manage this, the communications plan will need to set clear priorities and identify areas of responsibility within staff. It should also strategically utilize the assets and other opportunities of key stakeholders, partners, platforms, and campaigns to share the communications load and better amplify and promote the GFF. Finally, the flow and type of information will change as the GFF is implemented. The creation of a timeline of what information will be available and how it will be delivered, complete with responsible staff, will help keep delivery of new information and data on track.

There is the potential for conflicts in messaging between the GFF and individual members of the partnership and there needs to be an understanding on the how best to balance these communications needs and interests. Give the volume, demand, and nature of the partnership, the Secretariat should function as the voice of the partnership, exercising day-to-day responsibility over the communications function under the guidance of the IG Chair to ensure appropriate messaging.



Finally, there needs to be a risk management/crisis communications protocol and plan in place to more proactively handle negative stories or developments. This should be guided by at least two principles:

- The best prevention of negative coverage will be a proactive outreach to media at the outset, building relationships with key journalists and other members of the media, providing clear background about the GFF and sharing human interest stories.
- There is always the possibility of negative developments around the high impact interventions that are part of country programs. Protocols need to be in place to best understand the facts and circumstances and provide for an appropriate response.

### **Proposed Staffing**

The demands for information by a number of the GFF stakeholders are substantial and the current Secretariat does not have the capacity to meet those demands. Staffing needs are now being addressed through a combination of new positions, consultancies, and country-level communication focal points.

### **Opportunities and Challenges**

The Secretariat finds itself at a critical juncture with respect to communications. While many acknowledge that the information flow is improving, the capacity constraints in meeting priority information needs are significant. This is compounded by the high demand for information, including basic and clear information about the GFF and its value proposition, as well as its processes and requirements. Many perceive that the 2015 launch did not best serve the interests of the GFF. All of these factors are exacerbating the need to build trust and buy-in of existing and future GFF stakeholders.

Despite this, there is still strong interest and excitement about the potential of the GFF to offer positive and long term results in a sector that has a significant need. There is the opportunity to capitalize on the existing support and create the strong communications program that will best position the GFF for success. However, the action needs to come quickly, with a strong prioritization and delivery of the most important information.

Key factors to consider:

- This is a partnership and the Secretariat needs to speak with the partnership voice. Input on key decisions and documents by the IG should be sought as a matter of practice, which will help build trust and a stronger partnership.
- The focus of the communications should be at the country level, showcasing best practice and innovative solutions, and ensuring that the information is conveyed in a user friendly, timely, and creative manner.
- The GFF needs to be framed as an innovative partnership. To underscore the “learning by doing” approach, sharing best practices both in the planning stages and in the implementation is important.
- Getting the communications strategy, work plan, and functions in place is a significant lift, but attention still needs to be paid to ensuring the right framework for reporting on progress and results in a consistent and compelling way.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

Ensuring smart and strategic communications is critical to the success of the GFF. There is a huge demand for communications across a wide spectrum of stakeholders. Some of the demand stems from questions about the design, roles and responsibilities that underpin the GFF. These issues need to be identified and addressed through Task Teams or other suitable arrangements.

The communication demands will be constant, so setting priorities and ensuring the right mixture of skills, management, and resources will be keys to success. The two immediate priorities are (1) providing clear, short, plain language materials on the who, what, and why of the GFF; and (2) getting the external website launched. There will always be a balance between technical accuracy and user friendly messaging and materials. The goal of the communications strategy is to build and widen support for the GFF among the many stakeholders – including future stakeholders – so the messaging needs to be clear, short and creative.

Utilizing our partners is also critical to success. Along with the development of the strategy and the messaging, there needs to be a clear commitment from the partners on their contribution to building the understanding of, engagement with, and support for, the GFF. With such a large and diverse partnership, communications cannot be the sole responsibility of the Secretariat.

Finally, the communications strategy must also mutually support the resource mobilization and the advocacy efforts. When all of these strategies work together, the technical work of the GFF is best positioned for success.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Investors Group approve the Communications Strategy for the GFF and requests the Secretariat to implement the recommendations.

## Annex 1: Communications Strategy – List of Interviews (as of February 3, 2016)

	Who	Role/Organization	Status
1	Diane Jacovella, Jo-Ann Purcell	Chair of IG/Government of Canada	Done
2	Ruth Kagia	IG/Government of Kenya	Done
3	Tore Godal, Ingvar Olsen, Lars Gronseth, Ase Bjerke	IG/Government of Norway	Done
4	Jane Edmondson	IG/UK Government	Done
5	Chris Elias, Mariam Claeson, Tim Thomas, Margaret Cornelius	IG/Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Done
6	Ariel Pablos-Mendez	IG/US Government	Done
7	Jan-Willem Scheijrond	IG Alternate/ Private Sector (Royal Philips)	Done
8	Mesfin Tessema	IG/ CSO (World Vision)	Done
9	Geeta Rao Gupta	IG/UNICEF	Done
10	Marijke Wijnroks	IG/The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	Done
11	Nana Kuo	IG Alternate/UNSG's Office (EWEC)	Done
12	Robin Gorna	IG Alternate/PMNCH	Done
13	Kadi Toure, Lori McDougall	IG Constituency/PMNCH	Done
14	Emiko Nishimura (on behalf of JICA)	IG/Government of Japan	Written responses
15	Tim Evans	IG/World Bank	Done
16	Nicole Klingen	IG Alternate/World Bank	Done
17	Mikael Ostergren	IG Technical Working Group/World Health Organization	Done
18	Anita Sharma, Flavia Draganus, Monica Kerrigan	Partners/UNF and FP2020	Done
19	Christine Sow	Partners/Global Health Council	Done
20	Monique Vledder	Program Manager/GFF Secretariat	
21	Soji Adeyi	World Bank Director, HNP GP	Done
22	Keith Hansen	World Bank Vice President, GGHVP	Scheduled
23	Magnus Lindelow	World Bank Practice Manager	Scheduled
24	Rekha Menon	World Bank Practice Manager	Scheduled
25	Carolyn Reynolds	World Bank Communications Advisor, ECRGP	Done
26	Dianne Stewart	GFF Secretariat	Done
27	Rama Lakshminarayanan	GFF Secretariat	Done
28	Toby Kasper	GFF Secretariat	Done
29	Jacqueline Sibanda	GFF Secretariat	Done