

There's More To Be Done:

Delivering a Whole-of-Society Approach to Global Health Crises *(Second Session)*

June 20, 2023 • 8:30 - 10:30 AM EST (Virtual)

Business Partner
Roundtables

Topline Action Report

An initiative of



KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are the public health implications of weakened public respect for government and scientific authority?
- What steps can we take to reverse the measurable decline in respect for proven science, increased apathy towards public health measures, and decreased trust in the institutions of a democratic society?
- What steps are needed to establish 21st century systems to prevent, avert and address ongoing threats to our health and well-being?
- Which priority areas does this group believe we can address immediately, as well as in the short, medium and long term?

Leadership matters.

There's more to be done.

MEETING OBJECTIVE

The USCIB Foundation hosted more than 20 representatives from WHO, CDC, Business at OECD (BIAC), health organizations, academia, and the private sector to share ideas about ways to increase multisectoral collaboration to better respond to health crises in the post-COVID19 era.

The objective of the discussion was to build a better understanding of what is meant by a whole-of-society approach post-COVID19, taking stock of lessons learned, including the role of multilateral agencies and specific ways the business sector can be more fully engaged to address future health crises.

DISCUSSION OVERVIEW

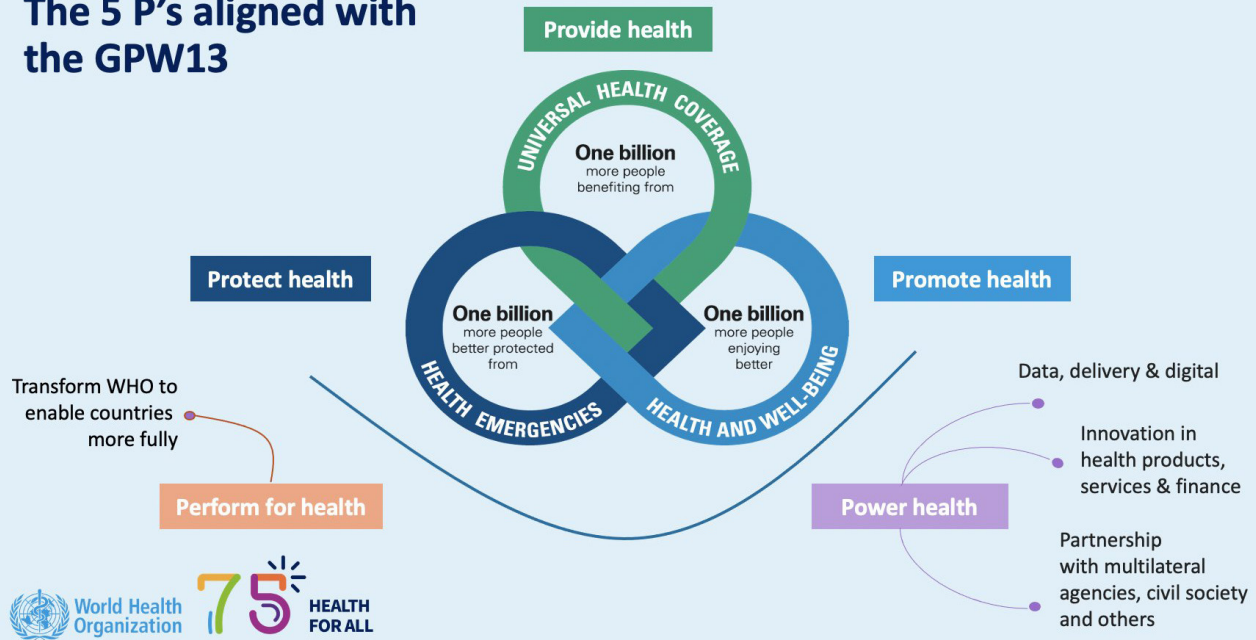
The discussion provided participants a unique off-the-record forum to discuss some initiatives that are already underway and served as a sounding board for robust discussion of opportunities to expand efforts to restore public trust, combat increasingly strident anti-science and anti-vaccine propaganda, and engage a fatigued public in the need for continued public health vigilance.

The session included a review of:

- recently published initial findings of *The Global Listening Project*, raising specific concerns regarding the number of children who have missed routine vaccinations due to the pandemic
- successful global research and communications from the *International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA)* to address vaccine literacy and promote understanding of rigorous vaccine development
- the Delphi Technique used to develop the *Nature Global Consensus Study* published in November 2022 for potential leverage to build greater consensus among specific constituencies critical to addressing future global health threats

These presentations recognized the current lack of investment for containment of future global health threats and suggested that “the road not taken” should perhaps be considered. From this starting point, and consistent with the Roundtable theme, *There's More To Be Done*, attendees offered ideas for action.

The 5 P's aligned with the GPW13



DISCUSSION OUTCOMES

Recent findings of The Vaccine Confidence Project (VCP) reported a concerning drop-off in confidence and trust among 18–35-year-olds, which should trigger specific opportunities for engaging that age group:

- The focus could be on translating ongoing findings from the VCP and The Global Listening Project into new initiatives for advocacy and action to leverage social media, and activate both community channels and employers, given the heightened trust in this specific sector
- The concept of a **Societal Preparedness Index** introduced by The Global Listening Project could be an opportunity where the Business Partner Roundtables and other leadership groups and individuals could contribute and help promote

The complexity of vaccine confidence as presented by IFPMA demonstrates the need to find credible industry pillars to communicate trust, safety, effectiveness and importance. Some reasons for this discussed include:

- The loss of trust in institutions may explain some of the portion of the loss of trust in vaccines and impact on hesitancy. Facts won't change the minds of those resistant
- The complexity of the vaccine quality approval process along with the speed of development of the COVID vaccine was hard for the average person to understand. In turn, education is critical

- Trusted and welcome messengers are critical. Tell more stories, use visuals, speak to the self interest of organizations and individuals

Given the reach of the *Nature* Delphi Consensus publication and its **whole-of-society approach**, participants considered the idea of research beyond an academic survey to identify actionable change, involving:

- Global Chief Medical and Health Officers Networks
- Human Resources Networks, i.e. Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)
- Coalition for Trust in Health and Science



DISCUSSION OUTCOMES (CONT'D)

Attendees identified an opportunity for the Business Partner Roundtables to engage others in the media community to support efforts to surveil and contain future public health threats:

- As the traditional media industry is in decline, could a new business model emerge that is not solely dependent on advertising?
- Social media companies aren't incentivized or regulated, however, how can the social media companies be engaged for more positive impact?
- Can the business community and other leaders address some systemic issues that would persuade social media companies to promote facts and science ethically?
- Are there opportunities for business and academic leaders to draw public attention to the models that support misinformation?

Disinformation is a business. Further discussion addressed the important progress that the **anti-vax movement** has gained globally, and that the movement is organized and impactful. We are on the defensive. An analysis of the movement's **business model** is required to identify opportunities to address the ferocity of its opposition and negative impact.

To reengage the population and rebuild trust, **a strategy must be developed** to determine if the best approach is to focus on COVID-19 vaccines or all vaccines. Because the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine slightly varied by age group and health status, this caused confusion for individuals. Leveraging scientists, local health staff, and faith-based groups is critical for addressing these subtleties.

A sub-group will convene to explore a multisectoral approach to provide clarity on the "misinformation business." Additional research, with the involvement of this group, will be critical to identifying opportunities. Areas of discussion will include the potential role of corporate social responsibility, ESG support for a healthier information ecosystem, and leveraging networks such as the United States Council for International Business (USCIB) and their affiliates.

Participants also expressed interest in becoming more active as "trusted sources" of information and dialogue on addressing future health crises, acting as "welcome messengers" to convey public health messaging on resilience and preparedness to businesses, employers, employees, and supply chains. The group suggested a future session with evidence-based approaches for building trust including digital innovation as an opportunity for engagement for the esteemed group. Overcoming Misinformation Starts With 1 Person at a Time

As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will undergo a top management transition, this represents an important opportunity for us all to aggressively promote the importance of elevating the role of professional health communications in the agency's management and decision-making.

The group will reconvene in Q4 2023.

CRITICAL INSIGHTS




- **Facts won't change minds**
Build a network of spokespersons that can tell stories, use visuals and speak to the self-interest of individuals
- **Focus on the hesitant or skeptical**
Communication must include social engagement and empathy to reengage the public
- **Disinformation is a business**
Identify how the anti-vax movement is effective to identify opportunities to overcome trust issues and barriers to success
- **Multisector engagement is critical**
Leverage the power of the Business Partner Roundtables attendees and networks to identify working groups and research opportunities to advance a strategy

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VACCINES ARE FOR LIVING.
VACCINES ARE FOR LIFE.



The Global Listening Project: What Was Unique to Each Setting?

	 Abuja, Nigeria	 Delhi, India	 New York, USA
General	Negative financial impact and food insecurity was the biggest challenge	Financial impact and job losses were the major challenge reported	Maintaining a healthy state of mind was heavily emphasized and was a major challenge for many participants.
Equity	Men reported feeling emasculated because they were not able to provide for their families	Class and wealth influenced ability to access new digital systems & healthcare	Racial discrimination caused anxiety and delayed community recovery from lockdown. The Black community was particularly affected.
Empathy	Neighbourhoods as networks that offered a sense of belonging & support. For some, they were unsafe and hotspots for crime	Communities were empathetic to their own and those in need; but the media lacked responsibility	Increase in polarisation and isolation. Community bonding & support through online platforms
Technology	Despite initial challenges, people embraced technology, notably for online learning	Significant digital leap forward for many. Exacerbated some issues re: access, misinformation & long term health concerns	Technology was already embedded in people's lives. People made the most of it for online shopping & professional development

Heidi@global-listening.org

<https://global-listening.org/>

THE ROLE OF BUSINESS PARTNER ROUNDTABLES

As the organizers of these programs, we recognize that we are aiming high and that, in particular, we are asking for a more inclusive, collaborative global approach to meet the challenges of future health crises that includes all stakeholders working together in transparent, proactive and creative partnership.

Our theme *There's More To Be Done* seeks to galvanize partnerships among all players – governments, multilateral agencies, business, medical and public health professionals – to be ready for future pandemics. Given recent shifts in public trust for the important sectors of civil society, it is clear that the private sector with engagement of international business can provide unique perspectives.

