

Note: This is Online Appendix 2 of Mazibuko RP, Odendaal W, Cooper S, et al. Capacity development of researchers involved in guideline development in Malawi, Nigeria and South Africa: A mixed-methods study. Afr J Prm Health Care Fam Med. 2026;18(1), a5193. <https://doi.org/10.4102/phcfm.v18i1.5193>

## Appendix 2

# GELA: Capacity development study WP team lead interview schedule

### Introductory comments

Make sure I have the signed consent form before beginning the interview

Information sheet:

- Give a short overview of the study
- Remind the participant of her / his rights and anonymising information
- Overview of Consent information
- Check if the participant has any questions.

### Part 1: Demographic information

I want to begin the interview with a few demographic questions about your past and present work experience.

1. Can you please describe your professional background?

Prompts:

- Probe more on the ones relevant to their current position/guideline development
- With which institution(s) it is/was
- For how long it has been?
- If there is more than one, which one do you consider as the main one/s?

2. Can you tell me about any past experience in guideline development that you might have?

Prompts:

- What roles have you held, for example being the chair / the methodologist/panel member / producing the evidence?
- What were the topics?
- In which country/countries did it happen?

3. Is this the first time that you are leading a project component in a multi-national project?

If Yes, then continue with Part 2, but if the participant has had previous experience, ask the participant to tell you about it.

Prompts:

- When and where was it, and what did it entail?

### Part 2: GELA

The project is in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year, can you share your experiences and thoughts about the project in general:

1. What for you are the main objectives for the GELA project?
2. Did these objectives change over the project duration? Why/why not?
3. To what extent do you think these objectives are achieved? Can you elaborate?

### **Part 3:**

#### **Perceptions/ experiences of being a GELA WP lead**

1. Which work package are you leading, and can you please tell me what the work package is about?

Prompts:

- What were/are the objectives?
- What did/does it entail?
- Is the work completed or in progress?
- How many members does the WP have?

2. Can you tell me about your experience of leading the work package?

Prompts:

- What are/were the joys and challenges of being a lead?
- Are you achieving/did you achieve the WP objectives?
- What is it like working across three country teams?
- How much of your time does/did it take?

For participants who have had experience of leading a project component in a multi-national project:

3. May I ask you to reflect on how being a GELA WP lead differs from your experience of leading project components in a multi-national project?

#### **Part 4a: Your personal capacity development as WP lead**

1. What do you see as the key competencies needed to lead your work package?

Prompt:

- Of those, which did you have and/or did you acquire through being a lead?

2. Can you please reflect on whether any capacity development of your existing and/or new skills has happened/is happening through your work as WP lead?

Prompt: Skills as a WP lead.

3. How do you think it happened/is it happening?

4. What other lessons regarding your capacity development as a WP lead can you share?

#### **Part 4b: Your personal capacity development as a WP team member**

1. Are you also a member of any of the other WPs?

(If Yes, continue with questions 2 – 3)

(If No, proceed with Part 5,)

2. Please briefly describe your role/s as a WP team member.

3. If any capacity development happened for you as a team member, can you kindly reflect on how was/is similar and/or different to what you shared about your capacity development as WP lead?

*Note: If no capacity development took place as a WP lead, ask about how it took place as a team member.*

### **Part 5a: Capacity development of your WP team members**

1. Please tell me about capacity development within your WP

Prompts:

- What were the needs of the team members in your WP at the beginning of the project?
- How were these needs addressed? (prompt formal and informal training)
- How did the various capacity development activities help in getting the work done?

### **Part 5b: Lessons learned and recommendations regarding capacity development**

1. GELA had various capacity development training initiatives for staff, and I was wondering how you would approach capacity development for a similar guideline development project.
2. Do you have any other thoughts/lessons learned / recommendations on capacity development of staff members within the GELA project?

Prompts:

- Do you think guideline development skills can be retained over time, and if so, how can it be done?

Lastly, before we end, I am going to project the document I sent to confirm the members and the activities that you have covered.

Once again, thank you for being generous with your time and sharing your experiences.

Do you have any questions for me?

# WP Lead 4 interview guide

## Reminders

1. Make sure I have the signed consent form before beginning the interview.
2. In this interview I will ask you to kindly share your experiences/perceptions about:
  - GELA management.
  - how capacity development is playing out in the project.
  - being a WP lead and any personal capacity development; and
  - lessons learned regarding capacity development.
3. Ethics:
  - Remind him of his rights to withdraw, not answer some questions
  - Confirm anonymising all identifying information
4. Check if the participant has any questions

## Part 1: Demographic information

I want to begin the interview with a few demographic questions about your past and present work experience.

1. Can you please describe your professional background?

Prompts:

- Probe more on the ones relevant to guideline development
- If there is more than one, which one do you consider as the main one/s?

2. Guideline development experience

- a. Can you please tell me about your past experience with guideline development?

Prompts:

- The roles you held.
- In which country/countries?

- b. How are these guideline development experiences (i) similar, and/or (ii) different to the guideline development in GELA?

I would now like to move on to your views about GELA in general, and its focus on capacity development.

## Part 2a: GELA - overall perceptions about the project / your responsibilities other than WP lead

3. Can you please describe the overall management of the project?
4. I noted that 4 of the 6 WPs have two leads: what was the thinking behind this?
5. Before turning to your role as WP lead, can you kindly reflect on other responsibilities you may have in the project?

Prompt:

- Are these by design, when the project was conceptualised, or did it just happen over time?

## Part 2b: GELA aims to build decision-makers/researchers' capacity

6. On the website I found the following: "GELA aims to maximise the impact of evidence for poverty-related diseases by **increasing the capacity of decision-makers and researchers** to use global research to develop locally relevant guidelines for newborn and child health."
  - a. Can you please tell me what this is about?
  - b. Why emphasise capacity development?
    - c. How is it being affected?
      - If he doesn't mention 'formal and experiential learning', ask if either / both is happening.
      - Can you please share any examples of how it has happened/is happening?
      - Is it happening differently for decision-makers and researchers?
    - d. What for you, will be the most important evaluation result/s that will tell if GELA successfully built decision makers' / researchers' capacity as stated in its aim, and can you please explain why you say so?

For the last part of the interview, I would like you to share your experiences of being a co-lead for WP 6 and then end with asking you about the lessons that are being learned regarding capacity development.

## Part 3: WP 6 co-lead / personal capacity development

7. Can you please tell me about the joys (what works well), and challenges of co-leading the work package?
8. What do you see as the core competencies needed to lead any WP in GELA?

9. Has/is there any capacity development happening for yourself, firstly from your overall management involvement, and secondly from co-leading WP6?

**Part 4: Lessons learned / recommendations regarding capacity development in GELA**

10. You shared how the GELA management envisaged capacity development, and also how it has been happening over the past 2 years. In reflecting on these, what lessons are being learned regarding good practices in a guideline development project such as GELA?

Do you have any questions for me?

Once again, thank you for being generous with your time and sharing your experiences.

# WP Lead 8 interview schedule

## Introductory comments

Make sure I have the signed consent form before beginning the interview

Information sheet:

- Give a short overview of the study
- In this interview I will ask you to share your experiences/perceptions, firstly as the GELA's principal investigator; secondly, how you see capacity development playing out in the project, and lastly, reflections on your role as WP lead and personal capacity development for you.
- Remind the participant of her / his rights and anonymising information
- Overview of Consent information
- Check if the participant has any questions

## Part 1: Demographic information

I want to begin the interview with a few demographic questions about your past and present work experience.

11. Can you please describe your professional background?

Prompts:

- Probe more on the ones relevant to their current position/guideline development
- With which institution(s) it is/was
- For how long it has been?
- If there is more than one, which one do you consider as the main one/s?

12. Can you tell me about any past experience in guideline development that you might have?

Prompts:

- What roles have you held, for example being the chair / the methodologist/panel member / producing the evidence?
- What were the topics?
- In which country/countries did it happen?

3. Can you please give me a brief overview of your experience of being the principal investigator in projects similar to GELA?

Prompt:

- How is GELA similar and different?

## Part 2: GELA

1. Can you please describe the overall management and set-up of the project?
2. I noted that 4 of the 6 WPs have two leads: what was the thinking behind this?

3.1 On the website I found the following: “GELA aims to maximise the impact of evidence for poverty-related diseases by **increasing the capacity of decision-makers and researchers** to use global research to develop locally relevant guidelines for newborn and child health.” Can you please tell me what this is about?

Prompts:

- Why the emphasis on capacity development?
- How is it being affected?
- Is it happening differently for decision-makers and researchers?
- What are you learning about this?
- How will you know if it has been achieved?

3.2 Can you please share any examples of how it has happened/is happening?

### **Part 3: Perceptions/ experiences of being a GELA WP lead**

1. Which work package are you leading, and can you please tell me what the work package is about?

Prompts:

- What were/are the objectives?
- What did/does it entail?
- Is the work completed or in progress?
- How many members does the WP have?

2. I was wondering if you had anything specific in mind when you decided to be a WP lead too, in addition to being the PI?

3. Can you tell me about your experience of leading the work package?

Prompts:

- What are/were the joys and challenges of being a lead?
- Are you achieving/did you achieve the WP objectives?

### **Part 4: Your personal capacity development as lead investigator for GELA**

1. What do you see as the key competencies needed to lead a project of this magnitude?

Prompt:

- Of those, which did you have and/or acquire through being the lead investigator?
2. Can you please reflect on whether any capacity development of your existing and/or new skills has happened/is happening through being GELA's PI?
  3. How do you think it happened/is it happening?

**Part 5: Lessons learned and recommendations regarding capacity development in GELA**

1. You shared how the GELA management envisaged capacity development and also how it has been happening over the past 2 years. In reflecting on these, what lessons are being learned regarding good practices and where to improve?

Do you have any questions for me?

Once again, thank you for being generous with your time and sharing your experiences.