

**OUTCOMES FROM A MEETING OF  
IMPLEMENTERS OF GLOBAL FUND PROGRAMMES<sup>1</sup>  
Dakar, 28-30 April 2011**

The Global Fund was conceived as a partnership between governments, civil society and business, from donor and implementing countries, to finance demand driven, technically sound proposals. The key mandate of the Global Fund is to save lives.

As implementers – proud partners in the Global Fund - we want to see all efforts **focused on accelerating access to resources, in order to accelerate progress to saving lives.**

A robust reform agenda is pivotal to achieving health outcomes, mitigating the impact of HIV, tuberculosis and malaria, and thus saving lives. There has been exceptional progress through Global Fund supported programmes which have:

- saved 6.5 million lives by providing ARVs for 3 million people, anti-tuberculosis treatment for 7.7 million people and distributing 160 million insecticide-treated bed nets;
- made a substantial contribution to meeting MDG 6, and contributed to MDGs 4 & 5;
- promoted development of national health strategies and M & E systems;
- supported new and different actors, enabling civil society groups to reach where others cannot;
- promoted transparency, participation and accountability;
- promoted and protected human rights.

**Still, big challenges remain**, notably mobilizing sufficient resources to fund programme scale up. It is also important to address the questions of ownership and accountability, to recognize that one size does not fit all, and to improve communication between implementers, the representatives of their constituencies on the Global Fund Board and the Global Fund Secretariat. Clearly, business cannot continue as usual.

**Ownership & Governance**

The innovative partnership between implementers and donors serves both to govern the Global Fund and to support programme implementation at country level. This partnership is highly valued. However, representation and communication within Implementing Bloc Board constituencies is not working effectively. Implementers have been poorly involved in key Global Fund processes – and were particularly disquieted at being consulted very late about the Comprehensive Reform documents. At country level there are also significant problems with local governance through the CCMs, particularly the requirement for strategic oversight. Most CCMs are not “fit for purpose” and have not evolved with growing and changing requirements. Implementers call for urgent attention and action to:

- Secure proactive engagement with implementers on all important processes. This could include the development of, and monitoring of adherence to, minimum standards for Board Members representing the Implementing constituencies including:
  - Implementing and enforcing guidelines for constituency governance and participation;
  - Require a minimum level of consultation (at least one face-to-face meeting) of implementers in advance of each Board meeting;
  - Report back to the Board on measures taken to enhance participation, including the use of financing intended to support implementing constituencies;

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<sup>1</sup> Implementers from more than 35 countries (principally from Africa but also from Asia-Pacific, Latin America, the Caribbean and Eastern Europe) met for 3 days and found a high level of consensus on general points. In addition, a broad range of specific recommendations were identified. While they may not have had the opportunity to achieve consensus on all details, the proposals merit further discussion.

- Exploring enhanced use of technology to improve communication and participation;
- The appropriate division of labour between the Board and Secretariat on priority tasks is critical (there were different views on whether or not the Board should constitute an Executive Committee);
- Split the East and Southern Africa delegation into two separate delegations, given the number of countries in this region and the substantial burden of disease;
- Improve the level of representation and participation of implementing delegations in all committees, by making all permanent committees “committees of the whole”;
- Strengthen implementation of already existing agreements and MoUs intended to support partnerships at global and country level;
- Institutionalise CCMs, supporting the harmonisation and alignment of efforts within a single authority to reinforce ownership and sustainability;
- Build capacity to provide strategic oversight of grant implementation at country level, including the development of early warning systems to identify potential areas of concern.

Implementers are firmly committed to engaging more effectively in the Global Fund Board and related processes, as well as addressing CCM weaknesses.

### **Access to resources**

Flatlining and reduction of resources threatens the sustainability of the successful impacts of the Global Fund to date; and some current Global Fund processes impede effective implementation. Implementers call for urgent attention and action to:

- Mobilise resources to achieve a progressive increase in donor and domestic resources (including through dedicated taxation, AIDS Trust funds, as well as innovative financing measures such as Debt4Health, Financial Transaction Tax etc);
- Simplify access to Global Fund resources, moving forward multiple funding windows in a year, with more rapid, iterative engagement with the TRP;
- Accelerate the shift from rounds-based proposals to NSAs to improve predictability and alignment to country strategic plans;
- Adapt Global Fund procedures and standards to enable fragile countries with weak systems to have an equal opportunity to access resources
- Develop innovative approaches to deal with the problems of unpredictability, uncertainty of funding and delays in disbursement.

Implementers will take steps to reduce the heavy dependency on the Global Fund in some countries, as well as advocating forcibly for greater domestic financing from countries to increase sustainability.

### **Grant management**

Many implementers experience extensive delays between requests for funds, grant approval & signing. This defeats the purpose of a responsive, flexible Global Fund and can create excessive administration for countries. Many also experience inadequate and/or irregular follow up from fund portfolio managers - with problems allowed to drift for many years and then acted upon too severely. There are also substantial problems with micromanagement, which takes time and capacity away from bigger strategic issues, and affects planning and implementation. Implementers call for urgent attention and action to:

- Create more adequate and flexible processes including the ability to account for change and adaptation within the grant period;
- Tackle erratic, unpredictable disbursements which have a major impact, especially on procurement and sustainability of programmes;
- Guard against micromanagement and ensure strategic monitoring of grants, and appropriate interventions to manage risk;
- Improve communication and interaction between implementers at the country level and the secretariat, including introducing 360 degree reviews of performance;

- Increase Global Fund engagement in some countries and regions, and work more closely with donors and TA providers to link Global Fund operations with technical guidelines;
- Address the perception that, among some implementers, the Global Fund is perceived as a development instrument, not a funding mechanism.

Implementers commit to taking further steps to ensure that they are transparent and monitor grants closely and effectively.

### **Impact and Accountability**

The core purpose of the Fund is to achieve impact on people's lives. There is currently a tendency towards "mutual mistrust" between implementers and the secretariat. This needs to move to "mutual accountability". Implementers call for urgent attention and action to:

- Address the substantial timing and disbursement delays, and ensure that the impact of these delays on countries' capacity to implement is recognised and dealt with expeditiously both by Implementers and the Global Fund Secretariat;
- Address the culture of mutual mistrust, and take concrete steps to strengthen relationships and partnerships;
- Ensure close monitoring by revising and improving the roles of LFAs, ensuring that their control, audit and oversight function is given to national structures, or is strengthened through a more effective relationship with PRs and SRs;
- Make far greater investments in building country level capacity for governance, project, financial and risk management, including:
  - identifying high risk grants
  - developing early warning systems
  - creating a rapid response system to respond to areas of concern
- Ensure that all audits and investigations are undertaken in the spirit of mutual respect;
- Allow countries to rectify any misuse of finances, rather than simply to be punished;
- Build the capacity of PRs, SRs and others, paying far greater attention to the Human Resources issues faced by implementers;
- Eliminate the rigidity in the model of Fund operations, respecting the different scales and needs of countries

Implementers commit to developing their own accountability structures, tightening national fiduciary control systems to address fraud and mismanagement, and taking measures to safeguard investments to sustain the impact of programmes.