

SUMMARY REPORT FROM THE CONSULTATIONS ON THE GLOBAL FUND STRATEGY 2012-2016

The following is an excerpt containing the main summary points from this report:

2. SUMMARY OF COMMON MESSAGES FROM THE CONSULTATIONS

2.1 There was broad consensus among participants in the consultations that the Global Fund has been a true “game changer” in fight against the three disease, providing unparalleled levels of funding to countries to address HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. The Global Fund also catalyzed focus on the three diseases globally and galvanized action at country level and among partners in addressing the epidemics. Acknowledging these achievements, stakeholders also recognized the opportunities for improvement in the Global Fund’s current mode of functioning and identified the new Strategy 2012-2016 as a unique occasion for the organization to optimize the way in which it does business in the future and maximize impact on the three diseases. This section provides a summary of the common messages received from participants during the various consultations.

2.2 There is support for the introduction of a more iterative, dialogue-based application and review process to enhance access to funding

- There was strong support for the Global Fund to change its current application and proposal review process by moving away from a rounds-based, “pass or fail” approach towards a more iterative, dialogue-based model.
- The most-commonly favored approach was a two-step process involving the submission of an initial “pre-proposal”, to be reviewed by the TRP, followed by the development of a full proposal through a collaborative process involving countries, partners and the Secretariat.
- There was a strong view that national strategies should form the basis of funding requests and decisions in order to enhance alignment of funding with country priorities and cycles, as well as promote mobilization and harmonization of partner contributions.

2.3 There is support for the introduction of a new funding allocation approach to optimize the impact and predictability of Global Fund financing

- There was broad support for the Global Fund to move away from its current, undifferentiated funding approach towards a new allocation model in order to optimize impact and improve predictability of funding levels and timing.
- A hybrid model that allocates a proportion of available funding to individual countries and the remainder to a pool for other purposes, such as scale-up for good performers and/or specific areas (like new technologies), was generally preferred.

2.4 There is support for a simplified and more systematic approach to reprogramming

- There was consensus that the current reprogramming processes are laborious and carry significant disincentives for recipients, including frequent fear of losing funds.
- There was strong consensus that reprogramming should be more systematic and actively encouraged at natural trigger points in the grant management cycle, as well as when there is evidence of new high-impact interventions and technologies.
- Care should be taken to provide incentives for reprogramming and to ensure that it remains a country driven process.

2.5 A range of new approaches is needed to enhance the long-term sustainability of programs

- There was strong consensus on the need for the Global Fund to more strongly and systematically engage all key country stakeholders, including Ministries of Finance, Economic Affairs or Planning, in a high-level, national strategic dialogue around long-term health financing. In such a dialogue, the Global Fund’s key principles were seen to offer unique leverage to influence non-financial aspects of national responses, including civil society participation and human rights.

- There was broad consensus that, to enhance sustainability, national strategies should consistently form the basis of national dialogue and Global Fund funding decisions.
- The need for increased domestic investment in health was widely recognized but the Global Fund's counterpart financing requirements were seen as having failed to achieve their objectives. There was some optimism about the potential of the new requirements provided that they are adequately monitored. Several other ideas to help ensure compliance with counterpart financing requirements, provide incentives to domestic investment and discourage displacement of resources were suggested.
- Increasing the Global Fund's resource base, for example through innovative financing and stronger engagement with emerging economies, was also seen as important to sustainability.

2.6 Partnerships are functioning sub-optimally in countries but proposed changes to the business model present new opportunities to strengthen them

- Many participants acknowledged that country-level partnerships to support proposal development, implementation and oversight of the Global Fund financing remain sub-optimal.
- Many participants felt strongly that the move to an iterative proposal development and review approach and enhanced partner dialogue based on national strategies were key measures needed to significantly strengthen in-country partnerships.
- There was some, limited support for the development of Global Fund partnership agreements/frameworks at the country level. However, the need for these was seen as quite country-specific and in general it was felt that they should be limited to defining key roles and responsibilities. By contrast, some participants felt that it was the role of countries, not donors such as the Global Fund, to lead such processes with their development partners.
- There was support for the stronger integration of CCMs with other national coordination mechanisms, including those used by GAVI.
- There was strong consensus that the Global Fund should not establish a country presence.
- There were mixed opinions on whether the Global Fund should establish a regional presence. Support for the Global Fund to more proactively engage at the regional level centered around technical assistance coordination with partners.

2.7 There is support for financing maternal, new-born and child health (MNCH) interventions that have clear synergies and potential for integration with existing programs

- The TRP's record in recommending funding of MNCH interventions was seen as very inconsistent. The Board was perceived as being unable to make up its mind about this issue over a lengthy period.
- There was agreement that the Global Fund should consider financing MNCH-related interventions that have clear synergies and potential for integration with existing Global Fund-supported programs (e.g., HIV prevention and family planning; malaria treatment and integrated management of childhood illnesses). The Global Fund should also be careful to avoid creating disincentives to integration of these services as it has in the past.
- Some TRP members were of the view that steps to expand the range of interventions supported by the Global Fund should commence as a pilot in a small number of countries, and focus on primary care rather than MNCH alone.

2.8 Funding for health systems strengthening should increasingly be based on national strategies, with more attention paid to multi-stakeholder dialogue and building sustainable systems

- There was general support for HSS funding, with a general view expressed that it should be based on needs and gaps identified through dialogue with the country and partners based on an appropriate national strategy.
- If the Global Fund moves to an allocation model for HSS, options could include a targeted HSS pool, country envelopes or ceilings. The Global Fund could also consider developing criteria to identify and prioritize “high-need” HSS countries.
- HSS investments need to further enhance long-term sustainability by building national systems and capacity.
- In Africa, the distinction between HSS and community systems strengthening (CSS) is not meaningful.
- The TRP would benefit from better evidence about which HSS investments make measurable contributions to health outcomes.

2.9 Achieving human rights objectives should be more explicit across the grant cycle; lessons from the SOGI and gender strategies should be expanded to support MARPs programming

- There was a general view that while human rights are implicit in the Global Fund’s current model, a more explicit and strategic approach to addressing these issues through the grant cycle would be welcome, including at the stages of grant negotiation and performance evaluation.
- It was felt that the Global Fund should focus on rewarding positive action (offering carrots) rather than punishing bad practice (wielding a stick). At the same time, it was recognized that the Global Fund should actively discourage and speak out against human rights abuses.
- Supporting civil society participation and financing MARPs and CSS interventions are key contributions that the Global Fund can make to the rights agenda.
- The adoption of a more iterative process for proposal development and a stronger focus on national strategies were seen as potential new entry points for increased dialogue and action on issues related to MARPs and rights-based policies and programming.
- The Global Fund could contribute more to mobilizing a partnership for rights and health.
- The MARPs pool has been welcomed and its level of ambition could be increased.
- The current range of approaches to “Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI)” and “gender” should be expanded to “MARPs”.
- The emphasis on promoting equity that was seen in earlier draft of the strategy should not be lost as the document is finalized.

2.10 Results and impact evaluation should include qualitative methodologies

- The Global Fund should pay more attention to quantitative results and evaluating the social impact of its funding rather than just counting services delivered.

The full report is available in English online at: www.asapltd.com