



Working Concept note, 17 June 2013

WOMEN AND THE GLOBAL FUND:

Strengthening Women's Engagement with the Global Fund to Champion Gender Equality through the New Funding Model and Beyond

Overview:

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (the Global Fund) is a vital engine for investment in women's health and rights, particularly for women living with and affected by the three diseases. To date, this potential has been untapped. With the launch of the New Funding Model (NFM), the Gender Equality Strategy (GES) under consideration by the SIIC, and a strong emphasis from donors on the impact of the Global Fund on women and children's health, there is a critical opportunity to deepen and broaden the community of stakeholders who bring forward a gender equality perspective to key discussions and decisions. Despite the existence since 2008 of the GES, there is still not a robust community of gender experts and women, in particular women living with HIV, engaged with the Global Fund globally and in implementer countries in a sustained, strategic, and informed manner. However, interest in greater involvement has been growing rapidly since the start of 2013, with an awareness that the NFM creates new opportunities for communities and countries. There has been a growing momentum among women living with HIV, affected by the three diseases, and women's advocates more broadly, working at the global, regional, and local levels that this proposal seeks to strengthen and expand.

Duration of project:

ATHENA and ASAP (AIDS Strategy, Advocacy and Policy) have played complementary roles in supporting this movement, and are now seeking support to build on that momentum to secure a stronger and deeper engagement in the Global Fund from a gender perspective, to ensure that processes underway in priority countries, as well as at the global level, enable thorough implementation of the Global Fund's GES, and support excellence in programming of Global Fund resources to meet the needs of

women and girls. While ATHENA and ASAP hope that this will be an ongoing longer-term project, at this point we are seeking funds for the first 6 months, to build from a global workshop retreat that we are co-convening from 10-12 July 2013 and to run through the end of the year. This is a joint project co-led by ATHENA and ASAP, with regional and national partners.

Project objectives:

The transformations underway at the Global Fund, including the transition to the NFM, provide important opportunities for the Global Fund, technical agencies, women living with HIV, and advocates to work together to ensure that the Global Fund is truly responsive to the needs and rights of women and girls. Further, the substantial focus currently on the implementation of the GES and questions as to whether the Global Fund is adequately reaching women and girls, offers additional entry points for engagement by women living with HIV and women's rights advocates to ensure a strengthened strategy and implementation plan. The three Civil Society Delegations to the Global Fund Board (Communities, Developing Country NGOs, and Developed Country NGOs) often present perspectives from the grassroots, but gender is rarely a lead part of their interventions. All three delegations recognize the need to enhance the work of the Global Fund in respect of gender, and recognize the important opportunities created by the current changes, but other issues (eg human rights, the needs of key affected populations, often attract their attention more readily).

This project, focused on women and the Global Fund, is designed to build durable capacity whereby women's advocates, in particular women living with HIV, and grassroots advocates already engaged in Global Fund processes are all able to support the Global Fund to deliver its GES and ensure that Global Fund finance is supporting gender-transformative programmes that make a difference to the lives of women and girls. Through this capacity building project, our aim is to see the following results over the medium-term:

1. Women living with HIV, TB, and affected by malaria and representatives of organizations working on women's rights are supported to organize themselves to participate effectively and meaningfully in Global Fund country dialogue processes and CCMs.
2. Country dialogue processes include high quality gender assessments with a robust analysis of the specific impacts of the HIV, TB, and malaria epidemics on women and girls, including women and girls from key populations; barriers to services faced by women and girls, including stigma, discrimination, and punitive laws and policies; and evidence-informed responses to meet women's and girls' needs.
3. Concept notes include a quality gender analysis, and reflect the outcomes of country dialogues with comprehensive attention to the specific impacts of the

HIV, TB, and malaria epidemics on women and girls, including from key populations, and propose effective strategies and programs that contribute to a gender-transformative response.

4. Regional grant application and non-CCM processes and concept note requirements are clear, simple, and accessible to communities most affected by the three diseases, including networks of women living with HIV.
5. Global Fund performance indicators, budgets, and progress reports:
 - a. include gender- and age-disaggregated data,
 - b. use gender-transformative budgeting measures, such as weighting budgets according to the disaggregation reflected in indicators, and
 - c. are thoroughly monitored and evaluated in light of the above.
6. Strategic investment frameworks for the three diseases, and health and community systems strengthening, include specific and clear guidance on how countries can design gender-sensitive and transformative responses and better meet the specific needs of women and girls.
7. A robust and implemented GES, with strong support by women living with and affected by the three diseases, brings all of these elements together in design and in practice to advance the overall mission of the Global Fund.

A successful transition to the NFM requires changes in the way that the Global Fund operates, as well as adherence to existing strategies, including the GES. The Global Fund and its technical partners have a unique opportunity to build expertise and technical capacity of women living with HIV and women's advocates. This will contribute to the implementation of the GES that seeks to strengthen capacity on gender equality, SRHR, and RMNCH, as well as other human rights issues throughout the Secretariat, and particularly for Global Fund staff involved in country dialogues, grant management, and grant approval processes. It is only through securing deeper gender awareness among women's advocates, and a stronger gender awareness among broader Global Fund advocates, that this can occur.

Deliverables

ATHENA and ASAP therefore propose to:

- Convene a three-day global retreat, for up to 40 people, to begin to build the capacity of the women's sector. This retreat is designed to dovetail with other Global Fund related activities, and will be 10-12 July 2013 to occur before the 17-18 July SIIC meeting that will consider the GES. It will be held in Geneva, Switzerland. *(This element of the process has been funded by the Global Fund Secretariat, UNAIDS, and UNDP.)*

- The exact agenda for the global retreat will be broadly structured as follows:
 - o 1.5 days focused on building technical capacity and knowledge exchange about Global Fund processes and strategies among women's advocates, especially women living with HIV
 - o 1 day to engage with stakeholders already strongly involved in NFM and the Global Fund, including civil society Board delegations, key Global Fund staff, and technical partners; building mutual capacity in gender and Global Fund processes
 - o 0.5 day to develop advocacy and implementation plans
- Initiate dialogue to foster ongoing engagement with the civil society Board Delegations from a gender perspective, and to advance the active and meaningful participation of women living with and affected by the three diseases, in all Global Fund processes, and to deliver the GES most effectively
- Through ongoing support and engagement at local, regional and global levels, through workshops, a series of teleconferences, webinars, and a virtual communication/technical assistance hub to:
 - o Strengthen and expand a broadly collaborative process to build and sustain the capacity of a community of stakeholders, with a specific emphasis on women living with HIV, who are informed about and engaged with the Global Fund's strategic processes, including the roll out of the NFM from a gender equality perspective
 - o Support a community led process to secure high quality engagement in policy and strategic processes of the Global Fund from a gender perspective, including supporting the operationalization of the GES and the rollout of the NFM through a series of regional and local workshops, in addition to ongoing global organizing and information exchange
 - o Learn from experience to date and begin to strengthen the capacity of partners in NFM focal countries to bring a gender perspective, and to engage women living with HIV in the Country Dialogue process, the development of concept notes, and the implementation of forthcoming Global Fund grants
- The regional workshops will be convened adjacent to ICAAP, November 2013 and ICASA, December 2013
- Local activities will be cascaded immediately after the global retreat and the two regional workshops. In the first instance five countries will be identified, using a range of criteria including (imminent) engagement in the NFM, presence of

women living with HIV/women's advocates committed to leading change processes and engaging with the Global Fund

- Global organizing and technical assistance will be ongoing, with communication opportunities (eg Webinars) being held at least once a month
- The process will be documented throughout to share lessons learned, key findings, and knowledge exchange more broadly. This will include sharing experiences and lessons learned with other civil society actors, eg from key population groups, who are engaging in the NFM processes

Description of activities:

This is as a timely opportunity to expand the cadre of stakeholders vocal, involved and invested in the Global Fund, the NFM, and the GES, and to ensure that gender perspectives are fully included as the Global Fund expands its role in financing the three diseases. The Global Fund must support gender transformative programmes to achieve its goals. Specifically, the Women and the Global Fund project aims to:

- ◆ Build the capacity of women's advocates, in particular women living with HIV, to engage effectively with Global Fund processes and governance
- ◆ Build the gender sensitivity and capacity of people from civil society engaged with the Global Fund, to engage effectively with Global Fund processes and governance through a gender lens
- ◆ Put in place mechanisms to ensure ongoing dialogue between women's advocates, in particular women living with HIV, and Global Fund processes, and to ensure a more gender sensitive Global Fund through its governance and other processes, operating principally at local level, but also through the global actions and decisions that inform the local
- ◆ Catalyze ongoing advocacy and engagement as well as strengthen investment in the health, rights, and dignity of women and girls in all our diversity, with a particular emphasis on women living with HIV.

The global retreat will be a focal momentum to generate and cascade action at the local level. This will be punctuated by convening a series of regional workshops adjacent to upcoming regional HIV for a, specifically ICAAP in Bangkok, November 2013 and ICASA in Cape Town, December 2013. The global and regional gatherings will lead to, and be in support of, local workshops and dialogues led by networks of women living with HIV and/or local women's rights groups. In the first instance five countries will be selected, that are a priority for the rollout of the NFM and strengthened community engagement; Ongoing work will be undertaken through virtual organizing, including Webinars, email groups, and other virtual discussions, bringing together a new community of practice

sharing expertise and strategies, building the capacity of key individuals, in particular those who are “multipliers” informing their broader global, regional, and national networks. The initial focus will be the first wave of NFM countries, and the timing of inclusion of specific representatives in global and regional events will be to feed into these processes. The proposed first wave of countries would Ethiopia, Indonesia, Malawi, Nigeria, and Thailand (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan or Jamaica could also be included to enhance regional diversity) At local level the model would be to convene workshops bringing together a range of partners in a handful of sites, working in partnership with a strong local partner, who would not only facilitate and organize the initial gathering, but would also take responsibility for maintaining participation and to keep the flow of information and linkages in place, to secure a robust ongoing engagement.

The purpose of this capacity building is to develop a stronger two-way dialogue between the women's movement and the Global Fund advocacy movement to strengthen the gender sensitivity of the Global Fund's functioning and governance so that Global Fund supported programmes are gender transformative, and meet the needs of women and girls, in all of their diversity, in order to have the full impact necessary to achieve the goals of the Global Fund. To achieve these goals the project must work both with women outside of, and advocates within, Global Fund structures who are keen to expand their understanding of gender dynamics. And we need to find ways of building the sustainability of these actions, by integrating with the existing Global Fund processes, and also through putting in place new mechanisms to sustain dialogue and engagement.

Concretely, a capacity building workshop would bring together women's advocates, in particular women living with HIV, for a three-day workshop that will include a "Teach In" working through the structures, procedures, and processes of the Global Fund at global and country level, and reflecting on recent innovations (eg the NFM) as well as processes by which communities engage with Global Fund through applying for and implementing grants, and through Global Fund governance. This session will also look at the Global Fund's overarching strategy, as well as the GES. The second half of the meeting will bring together women's rights advocates with civil society and community advocates already involved in the Global Fund to examine the GES in more detail and look at broader principle of gender transformative responses to HIV, TB, and Malaria. This will ensure that Global Fund advocates can integrate gender advocacy into their engagement with Global Fund processes to ensure that the GES is implemented effectively. This will create a space for dialogue between the two groups about ways forward, and the meeting will conclude with a final half day of action planning. This model of organizing will be piloted at the global retreat with lessons learned so that the model can be expanded and enhanced for regional and local workshops. As the project cascades from global to regional to local the role of international “experts” will diminish with the goal of achieving local sustainability over the medium-term.

In selecting stakeholders to engage in this capacity building project, we will be guided by the importance of respecting the meaningful involvement of women living with HIV, ensuring that the project engages women living with HIV who represent national, regional, and global networks. Women invited in this capacity will be openly living with HIV, actively working in women's rights and HIV, have an excellent understanding of programmes that work and don't work for women, and truly represent communities of women nationally with the capacity and mandate to consult and feedback. Efforts will also be taken to secure diversity of representation and an effective balance among regions, with an emphasis on priority NFM countries. We will also prioritise key advocates who already play a role in Global Fund processes, including through Board delegations, and who are prepared to champion gender issues.

Leading up to and as an outcome of the retreat will be the development of an ongoing virtual communication and technical assistance hub to also function as an organizing platform to sustain the dialogue among participants and continue to grow capacity among them and their networks. Building from the retreat, we will:

- Collaboratively convene a one-day regional workshop adjacent to ICAAP in Bangkok, Thailand with regional and national networks of women living with HIV, including WAP+, and other women's rights partners
 - o The outcomes and dialogue from this workshop will be taken forward throughout the entire conference through the Women's Networking Zone, of which ATHENA is a co-convening partner
 - o We will have a particular focus on young women living with HIV, and women from marginalized communities and key populations, including women who use drugs and sex workers
- Collaboratively convene a one-day regional workshop adjacent to ICASA in Cape Town, South Africa with regional and national networks of women living with HIV, and other human rights partners, including the AIDS Legal Network
 - o The outcomes and dialogue from this workshop will be taken forward throughout the entire conference through the Women's Networking Zone, of which ATHENA is a co-convening partner
 - o We will have a particular focus on young women living with HIV, care-givers, sex worker rights advocates and women from the LGBTI sector
- Initiate a community dialogue/local workshop process in five countries with networks of women living with HIV and women's rights organisations to share the outcomes and learning from the retreat and workshops, in order to catalyze a strengthened voice around the operationalization of the GES and increased participation by key affected women in the rollout of the NFM and to build a sustainable response. This will be a seeding project to build the capacity of women to participate fully in the civil society actions emerging around the Global Fund

- The five countries under consideration are: Indonesia, Thailand, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Nigeria
- We are also assessing the feasibility of a process in Kazakhstan or Tajikistan and Jamaica to increase regional diversity
- Run a series of monthly Webinars, and other virtual discussions to ensure that information is shared in a timely manner and that an on-going community of practice is forged

In the short-term, the virtual platform will be hosted and coordinated by ATHENA and we note that there are currently no major networks or projects funded to focus on gender and the Global Fund so that additional capacity and investment is required to secure follow-up, on-going communication, and sustained engagement.

Monitoring and evaluation:

The ultimate proof of effectiveness with this project will be if future Global Fund grants are supporting gender-transformative programmes, and that the GES is implemented more effectively. Such an outcome is overly ambitious for such a short-term project, but efforts will be made through the project to track key indicators, including women's inclusion in CCMs and country dialogues. ASAP and others have baseline data on current practice. In establishing the agenda for the workshop, baseline information will be gathered about knowledge and engagement in GF processes. Follow up data will be gathered at the end of the project, and a basic feedback process will be used at the workshop in July.

Budget:

A working budget is attached.

An overhead fee has been allowed for high bank transfer and other financial costs that may be incurred, as well as unexpected costs. Allowance has not been made for formal interpretation at meetings, but this would be a desirable element if funds could be made available.

This project includes travel costs which have been estimated according to UNAIDS rules and regulations, with flights calculated according to the most affordable economy prices available and DSAs pegged below or at the UN Standards.