Strengthening the national response through working with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria:

A Guidance Paper for UN Joint Teams on AIDS

UNAIDS

UNHCR UNODC
UNICEF ILO
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UNDP WHO
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JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS

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Table of Contents

Executive summary

Purpose of this guidance paper

The Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) brings together the efforts of a Secretariat and 10 Cosponsors to mount and support an expanded response to AIDS.[1] UNAIDS has an important partnership with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) to strengthen the global response to AIDS and to accelerate progress towards universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

UNAIDS staff and other members of joint UN teams on AIDS (UNJTs) at the country level are investing considerable time and budget resources in support of processes relating to the Global Fund. This guidance paper provides UNJT members with information that will assist them in supporting countries to access and use funding from the Global Fund to sustain the national response to AIDS. The information relates to both the proposal development process and the effective implementation of grants.

Support from the UN family should be aimed at ensuring that Global Fund grants are aligned to national priorities in the AIDS response, that they are evidence-informed and responsive to the specific country context ('know your epidemic') and that they are based on a sound gap analysis and a realistic estimation of the national implementation capacity. This support is in line with the UN system's role in helping to strengthen national capacities to respond to AIDS (e.g. through the 'Three Ones' principles for coordination of national AIDS responses).[2]

This guidance paper describes a number of actions that UNJT members can take. Not all of the actions will be appropriate in every country; the actions to take will depend on the country context. Also, it is recognized that capacity restrictions—both human and financial—will affect just how much support UNJT members can provide. By the same token, the list of suggested actions in this guidance paper is not intended to be exhaustive.

Many more specific guidance papers already exist, particularly on proposal development. This paper does not replace them; rather, it attempts to provide an overview of what can be done at the country level and to provide references to the existing tools.

While this guidance paper targets primarily UNJT members, it will also be of interest to other UN staff and partners. The guidance paper was developed through a broad consultations process involving UNAIDS country and regional offices as well as all UNAIDS Cosponsors. The paper is a synthesis and overview of all of the various stages of UN involvement with the Global Fund at the country level. The guidance paper is meant to be a living document—comments on this draft are welcome and further editions of the guidance paper will be issued.

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1   The 10 UNAIDS Cosponsors are UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank.

2   The 'Three Ones' consist of one agreed AIDS action framework that provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners, one national AIDS coordinating authority, with a broad-based multisectoral mandate, and one agreed country-level monitoring and evaluation system.

Contents

This guidance paper is divided into six main sections. Sections 2–6 are the areas where the UNJT members are expected to provide assistance. Each section contains lists of actions that UNJT members can take to support countries.[3] This guidance paper also contains two annexes. Annex 1 lists relevant documents and links and Annex 2 gives general information on the Global Fund.

Note on terminology

In this guidance paper, when 'UNAIDS' alone is used, it refers to the UNAIDS Secretariat and the 10 UNAIDS Cosponsors. 'UNAIDS Geneva' refers to the headquarters of UNAIDS in Geneva. 'UNAIDS Secretariat' refers to the headquarters of UNAIDS, plus the UNAIDS regional support teams and the UNAIDS country offices. 'UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors' headquarters' refers to the headquarters of UNAIDS plus the headquarters of the UN Cosponsoring agencies.

1. Introduction

Background

In 2008, a memorandum of understanding[4] was signed between UNAIDS and the Global Fund. This memorandum of understanding sets forth the mutual intention of the two organizations "to collaborate to strengthen the global response to the AIDS epidemic and to accelerate progress towards universal access and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)." The memorandum of understanding provides the framework for cooperation between the Global Fund and the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors, as well as a clear definition of complementary roles and shared goals, summarized as follows:

■ **Empowering inclusive national leadership and ownership.** The Global Fund supports country ownership and leadership through a performance-based funding process that responds to country-owned proposals, based firmly on country needs and priorities. UNAIDS works to support countries as they develop, implement and monitor evidence-informed strategies and supports national efforts to make the funding from all partners work.

■ **Alignment and harmonization.** UNAIDS and the Global Fund strive to harmonize support to national programmes and to align financial and monitoring and evaluation processes in order to increase aid effectiveness. This involves linking the principles of performance-based funding, multistakeholder participation and national ownership with

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3 This is the first edition of this guidance paper. Updated editions will contain examples of actions being undertaken by UNJT members.

4 The full text of the memorandum of understanding can be found at http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2008/20080601_global_fund_mou_en.pdf.

the 'Three Ones' principles and the wider Paris Declaration[5] agenda. The Global Fund and UNAIDS are also committed to working together on gender equity, equality and human rights.

■ **Advocacy.** UNAIDS guides and supports global advocacy efforts to ensure high-level political support for a comprehensive response to AIDS. The Global Fund works closely with UNAIDS and other partners on advocacy and fundraising efforts. The two organizations complement each other in reaching decision-makers and key influencers around the world and in achieving maximum synergies in advocacy and resource mobilization.

■ **Partnerships.** For both organizations, partnerships and promoting inclusiveness across sectors is a defining feature of their work. The multisectoral approach advanced by UNAIDS and the Global Fund spans the public, private and civil society arenas as well as thematic sectors (e.g. education, health, workplace). When working in individual countries, partnership is critical to successful proposal development, grant implementation and grant oversight.

Implementing the memorandum of understanding may involve developing specific operational agreements between the Global Fund, the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors. At the country level, there may be a need for technical agreements between the UNJTs and Global Fund country coordinating mechanisms (CCMs), principal recipients (PRs) (of Global Fund grants), subrecipients and sub-subrecipients to further define relationships and spell out roles and responsibilities. The memorandum of understanding can be used as a basis for drawing up these agreements.

What UNAIDS can expect from the Global Fund

Share grant performance information.

▶ Be provided with an early warning of important policy changes.

▶ "To the extent possible, facilitate UNAIDS access to findings of LFA reports in order to better support grantees in the implementation and monitoring of programmes." (As per Article 3.1.9 of the memorandum of understanding between UNAIDS and the Global Fund.)

▶ Regularly invite UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors headquarters and regional support teams to Global Fund regional meetings.

▶ Make use of country team's and regional support team's knowledge of countries (planning of visits, strategic information, etc.).

▶ Inform country teams—and, where appropriate (e.g. for high-level missions) UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors' headquarters and regional support teams—about pending fund portfolio manager country missions, and arrange for meetings with him or her to exchange information.

▶ Have fund portfolio managers conduct joint missions with the country team members.

▶ Provide country teams with formal or informal briefings and debriefings on grant performance, possibilities for reprogramming and other relevant issues.

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5 The Paris Declaration, endorsed on 2 March 2005, is an international agreement to which over one hundred ministers, heads of agencies and other senior officials adhered and committed their countries and organizations to continue to increase efforts in harmonization, alignment and managing aid for results with a set of monitorable actions and indicators.

Roles of joint UN teams on AIDS, regional support teams and UNAIDS Geneva

Each UNJT should play a facilitating and enabling role to support in-country Global Fund processes. It should do so primarily by helping to strengthen national decision-making, supporting the governance capabilities of CCMs, brokering technical support where it is needed, and fostering alignment and harmonization. To fulfil this role, members of the UNJT need the tools and resources to stay informed of developments in Global Fund activities, maintain good communications with all stakeholders and be proactive.

The UNJT is also responsible for ensuring that UN agencies working in the country are speaking with a unified voice when dealing with the various stakeholders.

The UNJT should work within the context of the memorandum of understanding between UNAIDS and the Global Fund and draw from key UNAIDS documents, including the *Joint action for results: the UNAIDS outcome framework for 2009–2011*. The latter document has expanded the role of the UNJT.[6]

At the request of UNJTs, UNAIDS regional support teams, the Secretariat in Geneva and the regional offices and headquarters of Cosponsors can provide support to UNJTs for planning, proposal development and grant implementation related to the Global Fund, within the agreed UN division of labour. This support can include the following:

- Ensuring regular information-sharing and updating on policies, lessons learned and best practices related to the Global Fund (via e-mail, phone calls, country visits, etc.).

- Providing relevant information on Global Fund Board decisions, requirements and updates on resource mobilization for the Global Fund.

- Supporting the participation of UNJT members and country partners in Global Fund meetings.

- Providing UNJT members with financial support, technical training and 'backstopping'.

- Providing support for engaging countries in preparing for discussions with various Global Fund Board committees on policy and programmatic responses.

- Consolidating existing tools and developing and sharing new tools (e.g. Round 9 proposal development tools).

- Updating information and guidance packages.

- Establishing regular communication channels with the Global Fund to ensure the timely communication of any constraint in the performance of a grant and to help plan and support Global Fund visits to countries.

- Providing support to multicountry programmes funded by the Global Fund.

- Providing support for proposal development (including peer review services for draft proposals) and grant implementation.

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6   A copy of the *Joint action for results* document is available at http://data.unaids.org/pub/BaseDocument/2009/JC1713_Joint_Action_en.pdf.

2. National AIDS strategy

The existence of a national strategy and an evidence-informed, fully costed national strategic plan, including an operational plan, a national monitoring and evaluation plan or framework and a technical support plan (if applicable), to implement an accelerated AIDS response are important prerequisites to submitting a proposal to the Global Fund. The Fund's proposal guidelines specify that the proposal should be developed in the context of an existing national strategy, and they refer to national priorities and recent country-specific analyses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A Global Fund proposal is much more likely to be funded if it can demonstrate how it fits into the wider picture of the country's entire AIDS response.

Furthermore, the Global Fund has recently introduced (on a pilot basis) a new stream of funding, National Strategy Applications (NSA), which involves submitting a national strategy itself—rather than a proposal based solely on the standard Global Fund rounds-based proposal form—as the primary basis of the application for Global Fund financing.[7] NSAs are part of the Fund's effort to streamline its applications and funding processes. A 'first learning wave' of NSAs, which aims to draw policy and operational lessons that will enable their broader roll-out, was introduced in 2009.[8] If the pilot is successful, the Global Fund plans to refine its policies and procedures for NSAs based on its experience with the first learning wave and then carry out a broader roll-out, probably in 2010. (Note that for the first learning wave national health strategies are not being considered.)

A national strategic plan should include sound goals and targets against which progress can be objectively measured and reviewed. Many countries may require technical support to articulate these goals and targets.[9]

Evidence-informed, comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment and care programmes should be based on sound principles, including:

▶ **'Know your epidemic'**—its drivers and the current response in the country, which should be evidence-informed and based on the most recent epidemiological data. Interventions will vary from country to country, based on the type of epidemic (generalized versus concentrated) and on the cultural, social and economic context.

▶ **Attention to human rights and gender equality**—in particular, the rights and special needs of people living with HIV, of women and girls and of populations at higher risk (e.g. men who have sex with men, transgender populations, sex workers, injecting drug users and vulnerable populations, such as internally displaced populations and refugees), who may not be adequately covered by the national response. Equity of access to information and services should be ensured.

▶ **Country ownership**—the proposal development process should be led and owned by national stakeholders. Any external technical support should be provided within the framework of national processes in consultation with local stakeholders.

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7 See www.theglobalfund.org/documents/board/18/GF-BM18-DecisionPoints_en.pdf.

8 When we went to press there was no information on the first learning wave of the NSA on the Global Fund web site. The most comprehensive information available was in an article in Aidspan's Global Fund Observer, issue No. 102, available at www.aidspan.org/gfo.

9 See Section 6 for more information on sources of technical support.

There is also a need to harmonize UN reporting between agencies and to streamline and align it with national systems and cycles. At present, UNAIDS is focusing on UNGASS reporting (using indicators that are only partially useful for the monitoring and evaluation of large national Global Fund grants), WHO has its own set of indicators and reporting requirements for assessing universal access in the health sector, UNICEF is using its own system for reporting on progress on prevention of mother-to-child transmission and on orphans and other vulnerable children, etc. Streamlining and harmonizing these reporting processes would enable UNAIDS to go a long way in properly supporting countries in accessing and properly managing Global Fund financing. This would greatly assist countries in strengthening country health information and the monitoring and evaluation systems that are needed to develop a proper country proposal, and would also enable proper performance-based management and evaluation of Global Fund grants.

Specific actions that UNJT members can take include the following:[10]

■ Advocate for the development, regular updating and costing of a prioritized national AIDS strategy. Identify, offer and help to broker technical support that may be needed to do this (e.g. conduct a gap analysis and provide strategic information about the disease and appropriate responses).

■ Advocate for the identification of programmatic and financial gaps in the national response.

■ Encourage the engagement of all relevant country partners, stakeholders and communities in developing the national AIDS strategy, through a process of broad consultation led by the national AIDS authority.

■ Advocate for the development or strengthening, as appropriate, of a national monitoring and evaluation plan for AIDS. Identify, offer and help to broker technical support that may be needed for this purpose.[11]

■ Promote the alignment of the national AIDS strategy with internationally recognized best practices and national development strategies.

■ Advocate for the national AIDS strategy to address the issue of sustainability (i.e. how the continuation of programmes funded by donors, including the Global Fund, will be ensured once support from the donors is discontinued).

■ Encourage the CCM to approve, develop and finalize proposals that support the implementation of the national AIDS strategy.

■ Review the possibilities for streamlining UN planning, reporting and monitoring and evaluation systems and cycles with the national monitoring and evaluation frameworks and systems.[12]

■ Promote a positive relationship between the national AIDS authority (as the government-recognized AIDS coordinating entity) and the CCM (as a cross-disciplinary group drawn together to consider and approve national proposals to the Global Fund). This could include encouraging the CCM and national AIDS authority to function in a complementary fashion (e.g. through sharing information on best practices and fostering dialogue among stakeholders).

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10 These actions support the development of the national AIDS strategy, not just Global Fund processes. However, as the text of the section points out, a sound national AIDS strategy is critical to the success of the Global Fund in the country.

11 As with the national AIDS strategy, the development of the monitoring and evaluation plan should be led by national AIDS authorities and should be developed through consultation with stakeholders.

12 For future editions of these guidelines, we hope to be able to include some concrete country examples of how best to achieve this.

3. Country coordinating mechanism strengthening

Note: this section is about strengthening the governance and general operations of the CCM. Later sections provide guidance in specific areas that fall under the purview of the CCM, such as proposal development and grant oversight.

CCMs are central to national ownership and participatory decision-making. Since they provide oversight of a major part of the funding of the national AIDS response, CCMs have a major impact on that response. When CCMs do not prepare carefully and on a timely basis, the chance of getting new proposals approved is reduced and the continuation of existing grants at the transition to phase 2 or when applying through the Rolling Continuation Channel (RCC) can be jeopardized.

In order for its proposals to be considered by the Global Fund, the CCM has to meet certain minimum requirements, which are as follows:[13]

- CCM members representing the nongovernment sectors must be selected by their own sectors based on a documented, transparent process, developed within each sector.

> "Wherever possible, CCMs should build on and be linked to existing mechanisms for planning at the national level and be consistent with national strategic plans."
>
> — *Global Fund CCM guidelines*

- All CCMs are required to show evidence of membership of people living with and/or affected by the virus.

- CCMs are required to put in place and maintain a transparent, documented process to solicit and review submissions for possible integration into a national proposal.

- CCMs are required to put in place and maintain a transparent, documented process for nominating PRs and for overseeing grant implementation.

- CCMs are required to create a transparent, documented process that ensures that both CCM members and non-CCM members have the opportunity to contribute to proposal development and to grant oversight.

- CCMs must have a written plan in place to mitigate conflicts of interest when the chair or vice-chair(s) of the CCM are from the same organization as the PR.

CCMs may face a number of challenges. A lack of financial resources, a lack of appropriately trained secretariat staff, weak management and decision-making processes, a poor understanding of how to fulfil their responsibilities to oversee grant implementation—any or all of these may compromise the ability of CCMs to operate effectively and independently.

The independent operation of CCMs may be undermined if they are dominated by one constituency and if there is underinvolvement of appropriate civil society representatives, including people living with HIV.

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13 See www.theglobalfund.org/documents/ccm/CCMRequirementsForGrantEligibility.pdf and www.theglobalfund.org/documents/ccm/Clarifications_CCM_Requirements_en.pdf. (The documents available on these sites are further described in Annex 1.)

Members from civil society (e.g. networks of people living with HIV or local nongovernmental organizations) may not have the capacity to participate fully in the CCM. This may be due to any of a number of factors, including lack of education, lack of meeting skills and inability to speak the language used at CCM meetings. It is the role of the UN to promote an equal and fair representation of government and civil society in CCMs.

To be effective, CCM members collectively require strategic management skills, including the capacity for rational decision-making about priority areas for proposals, and a sound knowledge of the epidemic and of the gaps in the national response.

UNJT members who are represented on CCMs should actively and consistently work with all CCM members to improve the CCM's management, as well as its ability to deal with operational challenges. Article 1.7 of the memorandum of understanding between UNAIDS and the Global Fund states that a "UNAIDS Country Coordinator or a Cosponsor representative sitting in the CCM should represent UNAIDS as a whole and ensure that a proper and timely consultative process with all Cosponsors is in place." Where UNJT members are not represented on the CCM, they can still offer support, but obviously they will not have the same direct access and opportunities.

Specific actions that UNJT members can take include the following:

- Work with the CCM to ensure that its roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood by its members. Encourage and assist the CCM to enshrine its procedures in bylaws or a terms of reference document.

- Ensure that the roles and responsibilities of the CCM are understood by other stakeholders in the country.

- Promote inclusiveness on the CCM—i.e. a well-balanced composition of the CCM from government, donors, civil society (including people living with HIV, women's groups and representatives of populations at higher risk), as well as expertise in gender, human rights, health systems strengthening and other cross-cutting issues.[14]

- Advocate with the CCM to ensure that membership is rotated regularly.

- Facilitate participation of all members in the activities of the CCM, especially

UN representation on CCMs

At the country level, the UN family is often represented on CCMs by different agencies, sometimes on a rotational basis. In these situations, UN representatives need to avoid or manage any conflict of interest situations (e.g. a UN representative on the CCM whose agency is or intends to become a PR or a sub-recipient).

Managing these potential conflicts should not be difficult if the mechanism has a good policy for mitigating conflicts of interest.

Whether a UN representative should consider becoming a chair or vice-chair is probably best decided on a case-by-case basis. Where possible, it is usually preferable that national mechanism members take on these roles. The regional support team and UNAIDS Geneva should be consulted on each case.

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14 Ideally, the CCM should include at least one nongovernment in-country representative with a focus on health systems strengthening and one government representative with responsibility for health systems strengthening planning.

people living with HIV, women's groups and members from civil society, by providing technical and, if needed, financial support.[15]

- Promote participative decision-making—i.e. full discussion of all members rather than decisions being made in advance by the chair and a few other members without consultation.[16]

- Offer to assist CCMs with the preparation of requests for funding for its operation from the pool of money available for this purpose by the Global Fund Secretariat.

- Offer to assist CCMs in the administration of funding received from the Global Fund Secretariat for its operation.

- Offer to assist CCMs to strengthen their management and governance capacities, including strengthening the capacities of CCM secretariats.

- Promote transparent and regular communication within the CCM, between the CCM and national AIDS authorities, and between the CCM and the Global Fund.

- Offer to help the CCM establish a web-based mechanism for information sharing.[17]

- Advocate with the CCM to conduct an analysis of its strengths and weaknesses. Offer to assist the CCM to monitor its own performance.

- Support the development of internal CCM policies, such as for managing conflicts of interest, assuring a gender-balanced approach and proper participation of vulnerable populations.

- Work with the CCM to ensure that it meets the Global Fund's minimum requirements for proposal eligibility by providing guidance on the Fund's requirements and by providing secretarial or technical support, where needed.[18]

- Where the CCM does not meet all of the requirements, broker technical support in appropriate areas in order to address shortcomings (e.g. partnership-building, institutional development, governance and participatory processes).

- Provide advice to the CCM concerning whether (and when) to prepare a proposal[19] and concerning the need to ensure that the CCM leaves enough time to identify and secure the appropriate technical assistance from regional support teams, technical support facilities, specialized UN agencies and other sources.

- Offer to provide support to the CCM's technical subcommittees.

- Offer to assist the CCM by mediating political issues and conflicts of interest that may arise among stakeholders and within governance structures.

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15 This includes strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations to fully participate in CCMs. UNJT members should also consider how they can advocate for and facilitate the strengthening of national civil society organizations so that they may become future PRs, although this is not about strengthening CCMs per se.

16 For more information, consult *The Aidspan guide on building and running an effective CCM*. See Annex 1 for details.

17 As of May 2009, 11 CCMs had established their own web sites. Portions of some of the sites are still under construction. The most extensive site is that of the China CCM (at www.chinaccm.org.cn/en). For a complete list of the sites, see the article on this topic in Aidspan's Global Fund Observer, issue No. 104, available at www.aidspan.org/gfo.

18 For more information, see the Global Fund's CCM guidelines, available at: www.theglobalfund.org/documents/ccm/Guidelines_CCMPurposeStructureComposition_en.pdf. See also *The Aidspan guide on building and running an effective CCM* (see Annex 1 for details).

19 In the rounds-based or RCC channels, or as an NSA.

■ Work with the UN agencies represented on the CCM to ensure that the UN comes to the CCM meetings with a coordinated and harmonized position.[20]

UNJT members should endeavour to ensure that the needs of populations that have little or no representation at the national level are adequately represented on the CCM, even if only through the UN members.

There are situations where a CCM plans to apply in an upcoming round of proposals even though there are implementation problems with current grants, or even though a grant from the previous round has not yet started. When this happens, UNJT members should review with the CCM the prospects for success of a new proposal. The risk, of course, is that given the implementation problems referred to above, the Technical Review Panel of the Global Fund may not recommend a new proposal for approval.[21]

Note: Section 6 deals specifically with coordinating and brokering technical support.

4. Proposal development[22]

Producing a proposal is a political and technical process that begins with adequate planning. The chances of producing a sound proposal are enhanced when:

■ There is a sound and up-to-date national AIDS strategy in place, including a well-developed, costed action plan for the national response, based on recent epidemiological data.

■ There is a strong, inclusive and well-functioning CCM, aligned with existing country structures and mechanisms.

■ Planning for the management of proposal development, including identification of needs for technical support, is undertaken early.

Developing a proposal, including ensuring inputs from multiple stakeholders, requires a strong management approach. First of all, the CCM, in consultation with its partners, must make a timely decision on submitting a proposal for an upcoming round. The decision should allow at least four months for the proposal development process. The CCM must set priorities early in the process, leaving sufficient time for forming an appropriate proposal writing team and for identifying and selecting partners and technical support providers. The more time allowed and the better the preparation, the better are the chances of approval. One country, Zambia, started the development process for its Round 8 application one year before the deadline for submission.

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20 This should include the need for the CCM to address the needs of marginalized populations, which may not be adequately covered by the national response. In most countries, Global Fund grants are not discussed by the whole UNJT. Instead, individual team members work with the CCM or the government to ensure that their concerns are represented. This disadvantages those UN agencies that do not have staff working full time in HIV.

21 For more information, see *Report of the technical review panel and the secretariat on Round 8 proposals*. See Annex 1 for details.

22 Unless otherwise indicated, the term 'proposal development' refers to the Global Fund's rounds-based applications channel.

Changes to the Global Fund applications process for the rounds-based channel

At its 18th meeting in November 2008, the Global Fund Board adopted the following provisions designed to streamline the procedure for applying for funding:

■ An applicant whose proposal is rated Category 3 by the Technical Review Panel is entitled to resubmit, in the next round, a revised version of the proposal (the Technical Review Panel will comment in more detail than in the past on the weaknesses of Category 3 proposals).

■ When recommending a proposal for approval, the Technical Review Panel may make the recommendation conditional on removing a limited set of weak elements.

The Board also decided that there would be a new round of funding every six months, starting with Round 10. However, given the unexpectedly large amount of funding approved in Round 8, and the recent global economic downturn, it is not clear whether (or when) the Fund will be able to implement this policy.

(The decisions of the Board at its 18th meeting are available at www.theglobalfund.org/documents/board/18/GF-BM18-DecisionPoints_en.pdf.)

CCMs should therefore be encouraged not to wait for the call for proposals from the Global Fund before beginning the proposal development process. Since the proposal form and guidelines for a given round of funding are usually released when the round is formally launched (about four months before the date proposals are due), planning ahead could require developing a rough draft proposal based on the guidelines and forms used in the previous round.

If the CCM had a recent proposal that was not successful, it is important for the CCM to review feedback from the Technical Review Panel concerning the weaknesses of the proposal. It is equally important to identify strengths and highlight lessons learned from the successful implementation of previous grants and to incorporate them into the proposal.

UNJT members should advocate for, and support, a strategic rather than a piecemeal approach. The key feature of a successful proposal is that it be based on national needs and national capacities. At the same time, however, UNJT members should advocate for the inclusion in proposals of initiatives to address the needs of vulnerable populations that may not be adequately covered in the national response.

A proposal should be as ambitious as possible, but also realistic enough to ensure that the proposal is not rejected based on fears that the country does not have the capacity to implement and meet the targets.

The Global Fund provides support for effective interventions that may be controversial for some donors or recipient countries (i.e. harm reduction programmes for injecting drug users, prevention among sex workers and men who have sex with men, etc.). The UNJT should work to ensure that the CCM takes full advantage to cover the gaps in the national response and not allow biases to limit what is included in proposals.

In a report prepared in 2008 for the Global Fund Board of Directors, the Technical Review Panel listed what it considers to be the minimum fundamental prerequisites for a recommendation for funding, as follows:[23]

- A disease proposal that is based upon and responds directly to the current, documented, epidemiological situation.

- A coherent strategy that flows in a consistent order throughout the proposal—with the implementation plans having the same objectives, programme areas (i.e. service delivery areas) and interventions or activities as are stated in the budget, the workplan and the performance framework (the latter is an attachment to the proposal).

- A robust gap analysis, both programmatic and financial, that accounts for the full extent of existing resources (including those planned or reasonably anticipated based on past practice) and not merely signed arrangements.

- A clear and realistic analysis of implementation and absorptive capacity constraints (whether disease-specific or broader health systems) that relate directly to the in–country social, environmental and other contexts.

- Logical strategies to address capacity constraints, whether through the existing funding application or through other domestic or partner-supported initiatives (which are also subject to performance assessments and adjustments).

- Implementation arrangements that recognize and respond to the need to broaden service delivery channels to multiple sectors to achieve universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support services for people most affected.

- Demonstrated effort to address the more challenging drivers of, especially, the HIV epidemic in ways that will have a meaningful impact on preventing further infections.

- A clear plan for how to monitor activities and to evaluate the impact of interventions.

- A budget that is sufficiently detailed to allow the costs of activities to be assessed.

- A workplan that makes clear the timing and sequencing of activities and the responsibilities for each activity.

- Planned outcomes (included as indicators in the performance framework)[24] that address and respond to current epidemiological data and that demonstrate that the incremental investment of additional Global Fund resources will improve disease-specific and broader health outcomes for those at higher risk.

The 70% Success Coalition

The UNAIDS Secretariat, in collaboration with WHO and other international partners (GTZ, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, International HIV/AIDS Alliance, Global AIDS Alliance, Population Services International, Open Society Institute, CSAT, etc.) established a working group, the 70% Success Coalition, to boost the success rate of HIV proposals to the Global Fund.

Regular conference calls are held to enable information-sharing on proposal development and technical assistance required by countries and to ensure that gaps in technical assistance are addressed in a timely manner.

For Round 9, the coalition was also instrumental in organizing peer reviews and other opportunities to provide feedback on draft proposals to applicants.

(For more information contact UNAIDS or WHO headquarters.)

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23 This text is taken from the *Report of the Technical Review Panel and the Secretariat on Round 8 proposals*. Aidspan developed a list of 12 key strengths, based partly on the Technical Review Panel's prerequisites. See *Key strengths of Round 8 proposals to the Global Fund—an Aidspan report*. Annex 1 contains details on both documents.

24 The performance framework is the legal statement of the expected performance and impact over the proposal term and includes an agreed set of indicators and targets to be reported on a regular basis, against which the PR's performance will be measured.

The following list of the most frequent weaknesses of unsuccessful proposals is based on an analysis of Technical Review Panel comments on individual proposals and on information from partners in the country:

- Priorities not appropriate (e.g. lack of recent epidemiological data, wrong focus, inappropriate activities that are not related to the drivers of the epidemic in the country context).

- Proposal not sufficiently linked to the national strategy for the disease.

- Lack of clarity about the specific type of technical support needed, resulting in the wrong kind of expertise requested and received, or, in some cases, resulting in too many consultants with different views or specific agendas.

- Insufficient or no gap analysis of the national response.

- Inadequate narrative description of the programme—i.e. insufficient, unclear or questionable information on the rationale, the strategic approach, the objectives, the activities, the indicators, the targets or the expected outcomes.

- Inaccurate, questionable or insufficiently detailed budget information.

- Budget imbalanced (i.e. too much or too little allocated to one or more sectors or activities).

- Monitoring and evaluation plan either missing or inadequate.

- Failure to demonstrate complementarity or additionality—i.e. how the programme relates or adds to existing programmes, including those funded by the Global Fund through earlier grants.

- Failure to take into consideration recommendations and lessons learned from past experience and from reports, or challenges posed by the current situation (e.g. war, instability).

- Inconsistencies between the narrative, the workplan and the budget.

- Not enough information to assess the feasibility of proposed activities (it is important not only to say what will be done, but how).

Late decision-making on the part of the CCM with respect to whether to apply in a specific round (and, consequently, late requests for technical support) can also lead to a weak proposal.

Rolling Continuation Channel (RCC)

In November 2006, the Global Fund Board created a new mechanism for strongly performing grants to apply for continuing funding for up to an additional six years beyond the original proposal term.

The RCC is different in several respects from the rounds-based channel of funding. Unlike the rounds-based channel, applications for the RCC are by invitation only. Applicants whose existing grants have demonstrated strong performance,* potential for impact and programmatic sustainability may be invited by the Global Fund Secretariat to apply for funding. The Secretariat makes the determination of who qualifies (i.e. who gets invited).

However, at its 20th Board meeting in November 2009, the Global Fund decided to abolish the RCC. It will be replaced by the Single Stream of Funding and NSAs in the new architecture of the Global Fund. The eighth and last wave of RCCs will be called in January 2010.

‘Strong performance’ is defined as having received ‘A’ ratings in more than half of the reviews conducted by the Global Fund in the previous 18 months.

The Global Fund periodically modifies policies and requirements that apply to proposals. Generally, there are some changes to the guidelines and proposal forms for each new round of funding. It is important for UNJT members to stay abreast of these changes. UNAIDS Geneva, the Cosponsors, Aidspan and the Global Fund itself provide updates for countries and can also provide clarifications on direct request.[25]

For example, the Global Fund recently decided to strongly promote the concept of dual-track financing,[26] where each proposal nominates more than one PR, at least one of which comes from the government sector and at least one from the nongovernment sector. The Global Fund also recently decided to promote the concept of community systems strengthening, which involves improving the capacities of community-based organizations and systems to work together at the local level.[27] In 2008, the Global Fund Board approved the Gender Equality Strategy and Implementation Plan, which promotes policies, procedure and structures to effectively support programmes that promote gender equality.[28] This includes sections on the proposal form that request sex disaggregated data, a gender analysis and the opportunity to strengthen information systems in order to better understand the epidemic in gender terms.

The specific actions UNJT members can take include the following:

- Advocate for the early establishment of a proposal development process within the CCM. This process will usually involve the formation of a proposal development team with appropriate experience, including definition of roles and responsibilities, development of a budget, development of a timetable for the work of the team and planning for the involvement of all stakeholders.

- Stress to the proposal development team the importance of adhering to the guidelines and the instructions on the proposal form.

- Offer to broker technical support for the development of the proposal and, if appropriate, broker such support.[29]

- Coordinate the different providers of external technical support to ensure that they all work together.

- Stress to the CCM the importance of developing the proposal through a transparent, consultative process involving all stakeholders and offer to assist the CCM with this process, or to broker technical support to assist with this process, as appropriate.

- Ensure that the CCM, and the proposal development team in particular, are provided with information on what has changed from the previous round (e.g. income level eligibility rules, proposal content).

- Ensure that the CCM, and the proposal development team in particular, are provided with the latest evidence-informed, up-to-date data and analysis on the country's epidemic and its drivers and on the programming status and coverage in the country (to enable the CCM to ascertain the need to scale up towards universal access). This could include policy and programme documents such as national strategic plans, reports on UNGASS

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25 During the time period when the Global Fund is accepting proposals for a given round of funding, the Fund maintains (and regularly updates) a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on its web site. In addition, questions can be submitted directly to the proposals team of the Global Fund. Both WHO and the UNAIDS Secretariat participate in this process. Focal points in regional support teams and WHO regional offices also provide support.

26 See www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/8/R8DTF_Factsheet_en.pdf.

27 See www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/8/R8CSS_Factsheet_en.pdf.

28 For details, see www.theglobalfund.org/documents/board/18/GF-B18-04_ReportPSC_Addendum.pdf.

29 See Section 6 for more information on technical support.

commitments, surveillance and research data such as a demographic health survey, and reports of stakeholder consultations for nongovernmental organizations, networks of people living with HIV, etc.

■ Encourage and support the CCM to conduct a thorough gap analysis.[30] If the national strategic plan currently in place has been developed through a strong, consultative process, the gap analysis should focus on those elements of the strategy that are not already being implemented with national and international resources.

■ Advocate for the inclusion in proposals of initiatives to address the needs of vulnerable populations that may not be adequately covered in the national response.[31]

■ Advocate for the CCM to draw lessons learned from previous proposals and facilitate this process, if appropriate. This includes reviewing Technical Review Panel comments on the strengths and weakness of these proposals.

■ Offer assistance to the CCM in analysing the performance and experience of grants currently being implemented. (Any new proposal will need to describe the experience with existing grants, outline the complementarities between the new proposal and existing grants and activities funded by the government or other partners and explain how the requested funding will be additional to what is already funded through the national response.)

■ Offer assistance to the CCM in performing adequate planning to ensure responsible, strategic and sustainable investments.

■ Encourage the proposal development team to study the criteria established by the Global Fund for the technical review of proposals.[32]

■ Emphasize to the proposal development team the importance of ensuring that programmatic approaches are consistent with international norms, standards and best practices.[33] Offer to assist with this process.

■ Emphasize the importance of aligning the proposal with the national monitoring and evaluation plan and with universal access indicators and targets.

■ Provide support on the application of new policy developments and their integration into proposals (e.g. dual-track financing, community systems strengthening, emphasis on addressing gender inequalities, emphasis on addressing issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity, grant consolidation).

■ Emphasize the importance of ensuring that the budget, monitoring and evaluation plan, procurement and supply management plan, workplan and plans for technical support are complete and accurate.[34]

■ Offer to assist the proposal development team with an independent review of the draft proposal. This could involve liaising with the regional support team to set up either an in-country or regional independent panel of experts.

■ Provide other support, as required, for the review, finalization and timely submission of the proposal by the CCM.

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30 This includes gaps in both programme and geographic coverage.

31 This includes forcibly displaced populations and other populations caught up in humanitarian crises. In addition to advocating for the inclusion in proposals of initiatives to address the needs of these populations, UNJT members should participate in monitoring whether funds for such initiatives (in approved grants) actually reach these populations.

32 These criteria are described in the *Guidelines for proposals* that the Global Fund produces for each new round of funding. See Annex 1 for details.

33 See Annex 1 for more information on relevant documents.

34 See Annex 1 for more information on relevant documents.

- Offer to assist the CCM with the process of identifying PRs and subrecipients, including the development of a transparent and inclusive process for this purpose, and including documentation of the process and its submission with the proposal. UNJT members may turn to the regional support teams, technical support facilities and other partners for assistance in this task.

- For successful proposals, offer support to the CCM for the process of responding to Technical Review Panel clarifications.

In the event that the UN representatives on the CCM are part of the proposal development team, obviously the UN representatives will be more directly involved in the preparation of the proposal.

While fund portfolio managers do not actively engage in proposal development, they can assist in the process. When the Technical Review Panel assesses new grant applications, it has increasingly been reviewing the performance of previous grants, on which the fund portfolio managers provide information to the Technical Review Panel. Therefore, UNJT members should contact their respective fund portfolio managers to ensure that they will:

- Sensitize CCMs on the need for early planning and the involvement of partners (UNAIDS and others).

- Sensitize the CCM on the need for early selection of technical support providers.

- Disseminate, with UNAIDS and other partners, information and toolkits to facilitate proposal development.

- Provide the UNJT members with informal briefings on previous grant performance, information on changes in eligibility status and guidelines for upcoming or other funding channels and other relevant issues.

Non-CCM proposals are not discussed in this guidance paper, since they are only possible under certain, rare circumstances (e.g. in conflict countries and countries that suppress or have not established partnerships with civil society). The vast majority of these proposals are screened out before even being reviewed by the Technical Review Panel. The UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors do normally not support the development of non-CCM proposals. In the event that a UNJT wishes to support a non-CCM proposal, it should consult with the regional support team or UNAIDS Geneva on how best to go about it.[35]

As for regional proposals, the Technical Review Panel sets the bar very high; it does not often recommend regional proposals for approval. Those that have been successful have either come from small, well defined regions (e.g. the Caribbean, Pacific islands and Central America) or have focused on migration (e.g. the Lagos–Abidjan corridor). The Technical Review Panel is especially critical regarding the lack of value added of a regional versus a country-based approach, the often high overheads and unit costs associated with regional proposals and the fact that regional proposals sometimes include countries that otherwise would not be eligible or that do not fit into the Technical Review Panel's understanding of 'region'. It is recommended that UNJT members consult with the regional support team or UNAIDS Geneva before assisting in the development of regional proposals.[36]

For a list of the resources available to assist with the proposal development process, see Information on the Proposal Development Process in Annex 1.

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35 See Annex 1 for information on guidance from the Global Fund and Aidspan concerning non-CCM proposals.

36 See Annex 1 for information on guidance from the Global Fund and Aidspan concerning regional proposals.

5. Grant implementation

Although many countries are using Global Fund grants effectively, some countries have experienced problems.[37] Some PRs in these countries may need help in meeting the challenges of programme implementation and performance-based funding. The problems range from a shortage of technical expertise to insufficient absorptive capacity. PRs do not always fully understand the Global Fund's minimum requirements, expectations and systems, or have the necessary capacity to deal with a large number of administrative and reporting requirements. These problems lead to bottlenecks in implementing programmes and to grant monies not being used effectively and, potentially, being lost.

There are several opportunities during the grant implementation process for UNJT members to lend assistance, including the following:

- During the negotiation of the Programme Grant Agreement.
- During the implementation of the programmes financed by the grant.
- When the Global Fund's Office of the Inspector General audits Global Fund grants and makes recommendations.
- During phase 2 renewal of the grant.
- During grant consolidation.
- When the CCM is performing grant oversight.
- When continuation of Global Fund support is provided upon termination of a grant.
- When a country is disengaging from Global Fund support.

Each of these opportunities are discussed below.

Negotiation of the Programme Grant Agreement

Once a proposal is approved, and the Technical Review Panel clarifications process is completed, negotiations begin for the signing of the Programme Grant Agreement. (Note: if there are multiple PRs nominated in the proposal, a separate grant agreement is signed with each one.) The negotiation of the Programme Grant Agreement is a critical moment in the Global Fund's grant lifecycle, and UNAIDS would like to see UNJT members become more involved in the process.

As of 2008, it takes about 11 months between Global Fund Board approval and the signing of a Programme Grant Agreement. At the outset of this period, the local fund agent (LFA) conducts a PR assessment. The assessment includes an analysis of the organ-

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37 UNDP has an important collaboration with the Global Fund, helping to develop the capacities of national stakeholders to implement Global Fund AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria programmes. In circumstances where there are no suitable national PRs, countries have requested UNDP to provide financial and programmatic oversight for Global Fund grants with the view that UNDP will build the capacity of a national entity to take over the role of PR. As a PR of last resort, UNDP is operating in the most exceptional circumstances in environments characterized by poor governance and limited transparency and accountability and working in countries with inadequate capacities, political constraints and/or humanitarian emergencies. To date, UNDP has successfully transferred one or more grants to a national entity in nine countries. This transfer often takes place at the start of phase 2.

izational set-up of the PR as well as its financial, procurement and monitoring and evaluation capacity. It is possible for the LFA to conclude that the PR does not have the necessary capacities to administer the programmes financed by the grant, but this happens only rarely.

Occasionally, however, the PR assessment will reveal deficiencies in the skills or systems of the PR that need to be addressed before the start of grant implementation or during implementation. Sometimes, these deficiencies are serious enough to be categorized as 'conditions precedent', which are included in the Programme Grant Agreement and which the PR must fulfil in order to receive a particular disbursement or, in certain cases, grant funds budgeted for a particular purpose. The LFA's recommended actions may also result in the inclusion of other special conditions, not necessarily linked to disbursement, in the Programme Grant Agreement.

The fund portfolio manager plays a central role in the negotiations for the Programme Grant Agreement, as well as in reviewing the performance framework, monitoring and evaluation plan, procurement and supply management plan, final workplan and budgets, all of which have to be prepared by the PR while the Programme Grant Agreement is being negotiated.

During this period, it is still possible to make some changes ('reprogramming') to the programmes that are to be implemented (e.g. funding for technical support, if this was insufficiently addressed in the original proposal).[38] The fund portfolio manager has the authority to approve reallocation between funding lines of up to 10% of the total value of the grant. Any amount exceeding this threshold would require a Technical Review Panel review—de facto, the submission of a new proposal. Note, however, that the total maximum amount of the grant is set when the proposal is approved by the Global Fund Board and cannot be exceeded.[39]

Specific actions that UNJT members can take include the following:

- Coordinate with the fund portfolio managers to obtain information on existing or potential weaknesses of a PR, which would help the UNJT members in the provision of targeted technical support.

- Provide technical support to the PR to ensure that at the moment of signing the Programme Grant Agreement the PR is fully prepared to start implementation.

- Include the development of technical support plans in support of grant implementa‑ tion.

- Advise fund portfolio managers on costing and budgeting and on other political issues that may affect implementation.

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38 If a PR wishes to make a change that materially alters the scope or scale of the original proposal (referred to by the Technical Review Panel as 'material reprogramming'), the PR must first seek CCM endorsement and present the change to both the LFA and the fund portfolio manager, along with a justification for the change, new indicators and targets, as appropriate, and a new budget and workplan.

39 The total cost of the Round 8 proposals recommended for funding by the Technical Review Panel exceeded the amount of money the Global Fund had available to pay for phase 1 (the first two years) of the proposals. Consequently, the Global Fund Board approved only 90% of the total cost, and the Fund asked all successful Round 8 applicants to look for efficiency savings of approximately 10%. (The Fund did not insist that each budget be cut by precisely 10%, but the overall savings had to reach this target.) The Board agreed to seek additional savings in RCC grants and phase 2 renewals. These decisions were made at the Board's 18th meeting in November 2008 (see www.theglobalfund.org/en/board/decisions/ for details).

■ Offer to broker technical support for the PRs and large subrecipients and sub-subrecipients. This could include the signing of 'special agreements'—agreements for technical support between, on one side, UN agencies, bilateral agencies, international or large national nongovernmental organizations, the private sector or academia and, on the other side, PRs and subrecipients.

■ Offer to assist the CCM and the PR to ensure that the Programme Grant Agreement accurately reflects what was in the proposal, particularly with respect to indicators, targets and timelines.

Implementation of the grant

Once implementation starts, UNJT members should closely follow the progress of the grant, offer to broker technical support where appropriate and work to ensure that there is a good flow of information among UN agencies and among the Global Fund stakeholders in the country.

To optimize collaboration and information-sharing between the UNJT and the fund portfolio manager, the UNJT should designate a specific contact person for the fund portfolio manager. Usually, this would be the UNAIDS country coordinator.

The performance-based funding philosophy of the Global Fund requires that implementation be coupled with effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting of outcomes. Increasingly, implementation is being done at the subrecipient level, where capacity for these accountability measures often still needs to be built up.

Wherever possible, monitoring and evaluation of grant performance should be linked to an effective national monitoring and evaluation system, with clear objectives, indicators and targets.

Specific actions that UNJT members can take include the following:

■ Monitor the quality of programmes implemented with Global Fund grants to ensure that quality standards are met and to enable cross-country comparisons of costs for defined intervention packages.[40]

■ Monitor whether funds for initiatives targeting vulnerable populations actually reach these populations.

■ Regularly analyse the reports used by the Global Fund to track grant performance (e.g. performance updates and disbursement requests, grant performance reports) and share important findings with partners.

■ Offer to provide advice to PRs concerning the interpretation and application of Global Fund guidelines and other materials concerning grant implementation.

■ Using the expertise available in the UN system, offer to assist the PR with the development of the procurement systems it will need for the grant.

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40 LFAs play an important monitoring role, but they tend to be stronger on financial monitoring than on programme monitoring. Thus, the UN can play a complementary role, checking if standards are met and if programmes are being delivered appropriately. An example would be having UNICEF check not only whether women have access to prevention of mother-to-child transmission services (and to what extent), but also the quality of what they have access to—the quality of testing, what type of prophylaxis, whether the women have access to antiretroviral drugs for their own health, standards of care, etc.

■ Stay up to date on changes to Global Fund policies and procedures as they relate to grant implementation.

■ Share information with the LFAs that will help the Global Fund review grant implementation and identify bottlenecks at an early stage.

■ Encourage development partners (e.g. the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), GTZ, ESTHER) to clarify their own division of labour in support of grant activities.

■ Develop a good working relationship with the fund portfolio manager. Engage in routine interactions with the fund portfolio manager in order to share information that will enhance grant performance (e.g. contextual aspect of the epidemic, new guidelines on procurement, new occurrences in the country, country performance). It may be useful to schedule regular meetings or telephone communications with the fund portfolio manager.

■ Establish a good working relationship with the CCM. It may be a good idea to schedule regular meetings or telephone conversations with the chair or other key officers of the CCM.

■ Work with development partners, the PR, the fund portfolio manager and the CCM to address problems and bottlenecks in a coordinated manner.

■ Keep in touch with the regional support teams and UNAIDS Geneva to (a) keep them informed on relevant issues and (b) obtain information from them on issues that the UNJT can address. Scheduling regular meetings or telephone conversations may be advisable.

■ Offer to broker technical support to resolve problems in grant implementation.

■ Provide assistance in grant reprogramming, where required.

■ Provide constructive reviews and comments to the PR and CCM on grant performance.

■ Assist in strengthening national monitoring and evaluation systems (including for, but not restricted to, existing Global Fund grants) in order to facilitate accurate reporting on grant implementation.

■ Monitor any indicators and targets that may change during the grant's lifetime in order to ensure that they are in line with national monitoring and evaluation plans. Bring any discrepancies to the attention of the PR and the CCM.

■ Facilitate development partners' participation in LFA monitoring and evaluation site visits and inform the CCM and the Global Fund of the results.

■ Offer to broker technical support from within the UN system to contribute to the design and strengthening of national, fully costed monitoring and evaluation plans. This includes developing indicators aligned to international measures and making consistent data on key national prevention, treatment and care activities available on a regular basis.

■ Assist the CCM to disseminate to in-country stakeholders grant progress reports prepared by the PR.

■ Encourage CCMs and PRs to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation systems for Global Fund grants are integrated with the national monitoring and evaluation system for the implementation of the national AIDS strategy.

Office of the Inspector General audits

The Office of the Inspector General may conduct and report on any audit, investigation or other oversight work it deems appropriate, consistent with the direction it receives from the Global Fund Board. Thus, the Office of the Inspector General periodically completes audits and investigations of Global Fund grants and provides recommendations, some of which may be directed at PRs, subrecipients, LFAs and CCMs. UNJT members can offer to provide support on the implementation of these recommendations. This may include helping to assess the resources needed (both financial and non-financial) to implement the recommendations. In some cases, the Office of the Inspector General audit or investigation may signal a need to change the grant's implementation arrangements; again, the UNJT can provide advice and support with respect to any changes.

Prior to the finalization of an Office of the Inspector General report, a draft is shared with the CCM and PRs, etc. They are asked to respond and provide timelines for the implementation of the recommendations. The UNJT can play a key role at this time in ensuring that the responses provided are accurate, that they clarify any contentious areas in the report and that the timeframes for implementing the recommendations are appropriate.

Phase 2 grant renewal

About six months prior to the end of the first phase of the grant, the CCM begins to prepare a request for continued funding in order to secure funding for phase 2. Although much simpler than a proposal, the request for continued funding, which should be prepared in close collaboration with the PR, nevertheless contains a CCM assessment of project performance, complementary contextual information and the proposed budget, objectives, major activities, indicators and targets for phase 2. The request is expected to reflect lessons learned from phase 1.

Once a decision has been made to extend grant funding for phase 2, the PR and the fund portfolio manager negotiate an amended and restated Programme Grant Agreement. This process is similar to that undertaken for the original Programme Grant Agreement.

In instances where there is a change in the PR for phase 2, involving a new PR, the LFA undertakes a complete PR assessment in order to determine the suitability of the new PR.

Specific actions that UNJT members can take include the following:

- Offer to assist the CCM in its review of phase 1.
- Offer to broker technical support to assist the CCM with the preparation of the request for continued funding or the negotiations for the amended and restated Programme Grant Agreement.

Grant consolidation

In order to reduce the administrative workload for both PRs and the Global Fund Secretariat, the Secretariat has promoted the concept of consolidating multiple grants being administered by the same PR for the same disease component.[41] However, initial attempts at grant consolidation have shown that it is a complex process. Results have been mixed. Examples of countries that have had some success with consolidation are Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

UNJT members should be prepared to assist with the grant consolidation process, if requested.

The best timing would be at the transition to phase 2 or when submitting a new proposal. However, the 'old' grant's lifespan should still be sufficiently long to justify the workload, and the time it takes to consolidate grants should also be taken into account. Thus, advice from the fund portfolio manager should be sought in order to identify grants that might be candidates for consolidation.

While grant consolidation so far has been voluntary, there may be substantive changes in the future. The Global Fund is considering adopting a single stream of funding (one grant per disease per PR), possibly starting in Round 10.

Specific actions that UNJT members can take include the following:

- Regularly review jointly with PRs and the Global Fund portfolio manager which grants might be candidates for consolidation.
- Offer to assist the PR to assist or broker technical support for grant consolidation.
- Assist the CCM and the PR with the preparation of a plan for consolidation of existing grants before embarking on the development of new rounds-based proposals.

Grant oversight

The CCM has an important role to play in overseeing the implementation by PRs of Global Fund grants. Most CCMs have only a general idea about how to perform oversight, having concentrated mostly on proposal development during the early years of the Global Fund. UNJT members should support the CCMs in the oversight process.

Annex 1 contains information on guidance issued by both the Global Fund and Aidspan concerning the CCM's grant oversight role.

In addition, a number of technical support providers have been supporting CCMs with grant oversight. One of these is Grant Management Solutions (GMS), which has been working with a number of CCMs to strengthen their oversight capacities. GMS is a USAID-funded project managed by the (US) Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator and led by Management Sciences for Health, a non-profit international health organization. In many of the countries with which GMS has worked, GMS has introduced the concept of dashboards, which are templates designed to show very concisely the most important information concerning grant implementation.

The countries whose CCMs have experimented with the use of dashboards are Honduras, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania. In

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41 See fact sheet on this topic at www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/8/R8GC_Factsheet_en.pdf.

addition, GMS is currently implementing a pilot project with CCMs in seven countries: Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia and Peru. The pilot project involves not only working with the CCMs on how to use the dashboard, but also educating the CCMs on the concept of grant oversight and on how to organize themselves to perform oversight.

Other technical support providers that may be assisting CCMs with grant oversight include the UNAIDS technical support facilities, GTZ's BACKUP Initiative and the International HIV/AIDS Alliance.

Specific actions that UNJT members can take include the following:

- Offer to work with the CCM (including CCM committees, if relevant) to help the CCM understand and implement its responsibilities to oversee grant implementation, and offer to broker technical support if needed.

- Specifically, offer to assist the CCM to establish an oversight committee or working group.

Continuation of support upon termination of a grant

If the Board does not approve a request for continued funding, grant funding terminates at the conclusion of phase 1. However, in situations in which Global Fund resources have been used to start people on lifelong treatment, or other treatment that is designed to extend beyond the termination of the grant, Global Fund resources can be provided to continue treatment for a period of up to two years (providing the grant recipient has been unable to secure the necessary resources from other sources).

A CCM whose request for continued funding is not approved may submit an 'extraordinary request for continued funding for treatment' to cover the costs of such treatment. Such a request can also be submitted in situations where a grant has been suspended or unexpectedly terminated, where a grant has reached the end of its natural term and in force majeure situations.

Specific actions that UNJT members can take include the following:

- Assist the CCM to locate resources from sources other than the Global Fund for the continuation of treatment.

- Assist the CCM to prepare the extraordinary request for continued funding for treatment.

Disengagement from Global Fund grants

A growing number of countries are reducing their reliance on Global Fund support or, in some cases, are becoming ineligible for continuing Global Fund support because their economic growth has resulted in a higher income classification by the World Bank.[42] Often, these countries include in their funding proposal a commitment that after two or three years of Global Fund support, the government will take over the provision of care.

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42 The eligibility criteria of the Global Fund are described on the Fund's web site at http://www.theglobalfund. org/en/eligibility/?lang=en. They are also described in the Fund's *Guidelines for proposals* and in *The Aidspan guide to Round 8 applications to the Global Fund*. See Annex 1 for information on how to obtain these documents.

This is not an easy transition, and both governments and civil society have been turning to the UN for help.

Specific actions that UNJT members can take include the following:

- Advocate with governments to ensure that commitments made are honoured, that national budget allocations are adequate, that policies are in place so that antiretroviral drugs are on the essential drugs lists and that the country does not adopt undesirable strategies (such as deciding not to put any new patients on treatment).

- Assist countries with the management of the transition by helping the government get ready to assume its responsibilities with procurement planning, delivery, further scale up of care, etc. (There are a number of countries that have done well in ensuring continuity of funding once grants were terminated; one example is Croatia.)

6. Coordinating and brokering technical support

General approach

Providing, brokering and monitoring technical support to the CCM, PRs and subrecipients are ongoing activities of the UN system during all phases of proposal preparation and grant implementation. In the earlier sections in this guidance document, we identify a number of instances where technical support may be required. In this section, we touch on some general issues related to technical support and we describe some of the main sources of technical support.

The following is a summary of some of the ways in which the UNJT can coordinate, advocate for, and facilitate the participation of UN agencies and other partners in the identification and provision of technical support to the Global Fund process:

- Facilitate the country-led development of a technical support and capacity-building plan. The development of such a plan can involve identifying the country's technical support needs through a comprehensive and participatory assessment of human resource needs and mapping. UNJT members can offer assistance in this exercise, with support from technical support facilities or bilateral agencies where applicable. UNJT members can also support regular updating of technical support and capacity-building plans.

- If the circumstances warrant, support the development of a technical support and capacity-building plan for the country that extends beyond Global Fund processes to include implementation of the national strategic plan.

- Assist countries with the implementation of their technical support and capacity-building plans.

- Produce a joint UN technical support plan covering the support that the UN will provide to processes related to the Global Fund in the country (or, if appropriate, to both the Global Fund processes and the national strategy).

- Identify possible sources of funding for technical support.

- Provide assistance in planning the scope of work, budget, timing, duration of work and profile of technical assistance providers.

■ Help to ensure coordination of technical support between stakeholders and providers.

■ Keep the regional support team and UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsor's head-quarters informed on the status of technical assistance requests and assignments in order to enable these entities to plan and avoid duplication.

■ Provide feedback to the CCM, local stakeholders and UNAIDS Geneva (through the regional support teams) on the outcome of technical assistance and on the use of extrabudgetary funding.

■ Provide guidance and oversight for consultants engaged through the UN system and give feedback on their performance to technical support facilities and regional support teams, where appropriate.

Sources of technical support

For requests from CCMs and PRs that are relatively simple, UNJT members may be able to provide technical support from their own resources and expertise, as per the division of labour.

Requests that the UNJT cannot handle itself may be referred to regional support teams and technical support facilities. Information on technical support facilities is available at www.unaids.org/en/CountryResponses/TechnicalSupport/TSF/.

Information on technical support providers is also available from Coordination of AIDS Technical Support (CoATS), which is a new UNAIDS initiative still being refined. CoATS was formerly known as the Global Implementation Support Team (GIST). The CoATS initiative has been piloted in 10 countries so far. CoATS provides up-to-date information on technical support needs, potential providers and the status of technical support being provided, and acts as a forum for harmonizing the different tools for technical support. CoATS serves as a place for all of the providers of technical support to report their proposed and ongoing technical support at the country level. CoATS will provide a clearer picture of technical support activities by region, country and activity type, and will show who is asking for the technical support, who is supplying it, who is paying for it, the consultant carrying it out, when the technical support will be provided, and what the status of the work is. It will be possible to upload terms of reference, reports, feedback, etc.

With CoATS, the various technical support providers are responsible for uploading their own information. The more information there is on CoATS, the more useful it will be. Providers of technical support will be the main providers of information for CoATS, but as nationally owned technical support budgets grow, the procurers and users of technical support at the country level will find that they have increasing amounts of data to contribute. CoATS can be accessed at http://coats.unaids.org/.[43]

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43 To gain access to CoATS, contact coats@unaids.org.

In addition, the UNJT may be able to help to broker technical support from the regional and head offices of the various UN agencies, particularly WHO and UNDP.[44] Finally, the UNJT may be able to arrange for technical support from bilateral agencies or other organizations. See Other Links in Annex 1 for a list of some of these other organizations.

Annex 1. Relevant documents and links

General information on how the Global Fund works

Global Fund web site

Who we are, what we do

Produced by the Global Fund in English and six other languages, this brochure provides a short history of the Fund, outlines the core principles by which the Fund operates, explains how the Fund is structured at the global and country levels, reviews some of the Fund's accomplishments, provides summary information on grants that have been approved and briefly describes the proposal development and grant implementation processes.

Available at: www.theglobalfund.org/en/publications/whoweare/?lang=en.

Guidelines for performance-based funding

These Global Fund guidelines provide operational details for grant recipients on the Fund's system for performance-based funding.

Available at: www.theglobalfund.org/en/policies/.

In addition, there is a wealth of information online on the Global Fund web site, including a section on 'Who we are'.

Available at: www.theglobalfund.org/en/.

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44 UNDP sometimes provides technical support to national PRs, including in project planning, subgrant and contract administration, financial administration, procurement and monitoring and evaluation. The countries in which UNDP provides or has provided this type of technical support are Armenia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Nepal and Uzbekistan. In some instances, as part of the UNAIDS family, UNDP may assist countries in developing Global Fund proposals, working under the lead of UNAIDS and WHO to ensure that HIV, tuberculosis and malaria are being addressed from a development perspective. UNDP also actively participates in the UNJTs to harmonize and coordinate the UN system response in supporting the implementation of Global Fund grants.

Aidspan

A beginner's guide to the Global Fund

This Aidspan publication is designed to provide a broad introduction to the Global Fund for people who have little or no prior experience of the Fund. The *Beginner's guide* includes chapters on Global Fund structures at the global and country levels, funds raised and spent by the Global Fund, CCMs, the applications process, grant implementation, progress reports and evaluations of the Fund. The guide comes in three versions: the full guide (about 60 pages), an eight-page summary and a two-page summary. All three versions are available in English, French, Spanish and Russian. The full version of the guide provides for people who need in-depth information numerous links to the web sites of the Global Fund and Aidspan.

Available at: www.aidspan.org.

Information on the proposal development process

Rounds-based channel

Guidelines for proposals, FAQs and fact sheets

For each new round of funding under the rounds-based channel, the Global Fund produces a series of documents. The documents for Round 9 are available at: www.theglobalfund.org/en/rounds/9/.

The proposal development process is briefly described online at: www.theglobalfund.org/en/rounds/applicationprocess/.

The Aidspan guide to Round 8 applications to the Global Fund

Aidspan produces a guide to applications to the Global Fund for each new round of funding. The guide for Round 8 came in two volumes. The guide is designed to assist applicants with the proposal development process and with filling out the proposal form. (Aidspan did not produce a separate guide for Round 9 because the Global Fund's proposal forms and guidelines for proposals for Round 9 were virtually identical to those used in Round 8.)

Available at: www.aidspan.org/guides.

Report of the Technical Review Panel and the Secretariat on Round 8 proposals

For each new round of funding, the Technical Review Panel and the Secretariat prepare a report to the Global Fund Board that includes, among other things, useful observations on the strengths and weaknesses of proposals submitted in that round.

Available at: www.theglobalfund.org/en/board/meetings/eighteenth/documents.

Key strengths of Round 8 proposals to the Global Fund—an Aidspan report

This report is based on an analysis of the Technical Review Panel comments for all successful Round 8 proposals. In the report, Aidspan identifies 12 key strengths and provides examples of (and links to) proposals that embodied these strengths.

Available at: www.aidspan.org/publications (click on Other Aidspan Publications).

WHO and UNAIDS resource kit for writing Global Fund proposals for Round 8

This resource kit has been developed jointly by WHO and UNAIDS to provide specific guidance in planning for and writing Global Fund HIV proposals for Round 9. The kit is primarily intended for use by WHO, UNAIDS and other UN staff and consultants as they support the development of HIV proposals. It is not an official WHO or UNAIDS publication. The resource kit consists of six sections:

- Technical guidance notes. This is the core component of the kit. It provides guidance on drafting the content of the HIV service delivery areas and cross-cutting issues relevant to Round 9.
- Reference documents that provide additional background information on the various technical areas.
- Practical tools, including guidance on managing the support needs of countries during proposal development, costing tools, logical matrix for planning (with a country example) and country strategic data.
- Global Fund Round 9 forms, guidelines and key tools.
- Other resources produced by other organizations.
- Information on finding support and providing advice, directives on seeking technical support, useful contacts, list of focal points, help lines, etc.

Available at: www.who.int/globalfund/hiv/en/.

Toolkit for using Round 9 of the Global Fund for health systems strengthening

Produced by Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), this toolkit includes information on how to use the Global Fund to support health systems strengthening, key opportunities that the Global Fund offers, information on technical support providers to assist applicants in developing proposals, background information on health systems and the health workforce and information on community systems strengthening. The toolkit includes PHR's *Guide to using Round 9 of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to support health systems strengthening*. The toolkit also contains information to support countries in developing approaches to their health workforce and health systems that are grounded in human rights.

Available at: www.physiciansforhumanrights.org/hiv-aids/globalfund_round9.html.

Regional and non-CCM proposals

Guidance concerning regional and non-CCM proposals is provided in the *Guidelines for proposals* that the Global Fund issues for each new round of funding and in the applying guides that Aidspan produces for each new round of funding. Both are referenced elsewhere in this annex.

Rolling Continuation Channel

Information on the RCC is available online on the Global Fund web site at: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/rcc/?lang=en.

Information on grant implementation

The Aidspan guide to understanding Global Fund processes for grant implementation

Volume 1: from grant approval to signing the grant agreement

Volume 2: from first disbursement to phase 2 renewal

This guide is designed to help grant recipients understand the Global Fund processes involved in implementing a newly approved grant and to deal with problems that may arise during implementation. It focuses on the interactions between the PR and other stakeholders, particularly the Global Fund and the LFA. This guide has been written primarily for CCMs and PRs, the major actors involved in the implementation process. A secondary target audience for this guide is subrecipients.

Available at: www.aidspan.org/guides.

Information for country coordinating mechanisms

Global Fund web site

Revised guidelines on the purpose, structure and composition of country coordinating mechanisms and requirements for grant eligibility

Clarifications of CCM requirements

Guidance paper on CCM oversight

CCM performance checklist and User's guide for CCM performance checklist

These are guidance documents issued by the Global Fund specifically targeting CCMs.

Available at: www.theglobalfund.org/en/ccm/guidelines/?lang=en.

A report on the country coordinating mechanism model

In 2008, the Global Fund released reports on 40 case studies that it commissioned on the work of 19 CCMs. Each case study tackled one of eight topics. The topics, and the CCMs studied for each topic, were as follows:

- Topic 1: conflict of interest within the CCM—Cambodia, Honduras, Mali.
- Topic 2: oversight of grants by the CCM—Ethiopia, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Peru, Caribbean (Regional Coordination Mechanism), Bulgaria, Tajikistan.

- Topic 3: CCM secretariat funding—Cambodia, Honduras, Mali.
- Topic 4: the PR and subrecipient selection process—Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Romania.
- Topic 5: partnership and leadership—Malawi, Zambia, Peru, Honduras, Nigeria.
- Topic 6: harmonization and alignment—Cambodia, United Republic of Tanzania, Mozambique, Nigeria.
- Topic 7: CCM, PR and LFA communications—Zambia, Peru, Nigeria, Mali.
- Topic 8: CCM governance and civil society participation—Cambodia, India, Ethiopia, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Honduras, Romania, Tajikistan.

For each of the eight topics, the Fund also released one mini report (which summarizes the findings of all the case studies within that topic) and one two-page information brief (which summarizes the mini report). Finally, all of the above are collectively summarized in a report entitled *A report on the country coordinating mechanism model*. Collectively, these documents highlight what is working well in the CCMs studied as well as areas where CCMs require strengthening.

Available at: www.theglobalfund.org/en/ccm/?lang=en.

Aidspan

The Aidspan guide to building and running an effective CCM, second edition

This guide provides advice on how to build a strong and effective CCM. The guide will be useful to CCMs that are experiencing problems with their structure or operations. It will also be useful for CCMs that are functioning well but that want to improve their performance. Some of the topics covered in this guide include the structure of the CCM, CCM membership, CCM operations, the CCM's role in proposal development and project implementation, and information-sharing and constituency communications. The guide provides many examples from individual CCMs. Available in English, French and Spanish.

Available at: www.aidspan.org/guides.

The Aidspan guide to the roles and responsibilities of CCMs in grant oversight

This guide describes what grant oversight is and provides basic advice on how a CCM can plan and implement oversight. It includes some real-life examples from CCMs that have already started to perform oversight. The primary target audience for this guide is CCMs. The guide will also be of interest to PRs and large subrecipient, as well as other stakeholders that are not on the CCM but that have an interest in the functioning of the CCM. Available in English, French, Spanish and Russian.

Available at: www.aidspan.org/guides.

Other links

AIDS strategy and action plan (World Bank)

Available at: http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ TOPICS/EXTHEALTHNUTRITIONANDPOPULATION/ EXTHIVAIDS/0,,contentMDK:20974001~menuPK:2754898~pagePK:210058~piPK:2 10062~theSitePK:376471,00.html.

Ensemble pour une solidarité thérapeutique hospitalière en réseau (ESTHER)

Available at: www.esther.fr/home.php?lang=en (English), www.esther.fr/home.php (French).

GTZ BACKUP Initiative

Available at: www.gtz.de/backup-initiative.

International HIV/AIDS Alliance

The Alliance has produced numerous publications providing guidance and tools for implementing HIV initiatives.

Available at: www.aidsalliance.org.

Global Fund Observer

This newsletter, issued several times per year by Aidspan, reports and analyses new developments with respect to the Global Fund. E-mail subscriptions are available.

Available at: www.aidspan.org/gfo.

Management Sciences for Health

Management Sciences for Health houses Grant Management Solutions, a project designed to assist PRs and CCMs with grant implementation.

Available at: www.msg.org.

Office of the (US) Global AIDS Coordinator

Available at: www.state.gov/s/gac/.

UNDP HIV/AIDS Group

Available at: www.undp.org/hiv/.

US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

Available at: www.pepfar.gov/c22835.htm.

Annex 2. General information on the Global Fund

Governance structures of the Global Fund

The Global Fund was established in 2002. It is a financial instrument, not an implementing entity. The main principles of the Global Fund are additionality and complementarity of funding, national ownership, inclusiveness of civil society and performance-based funding.

It is governed by a Board that is made up equally of donors and recipients from all regions of the world and civil society (people living with HIV, nongovernmental organizations from the North and the South and the private sector). UNAIDS, WHO and the World Bank are non-voting Board members. Several committees service the Board.

The Global Fund Secretariat executes Board decisions, within a defined range of flexibility. It has no country presence but works through LFAs and increasingly with partners, including UNAIDS and technical support facilities.

The Technical Review Panel is a mechanism that reviews country proposals. The main criteria for approval of grant applications are technical merit and proven ability to implement. The Technical Review Panel is fully independent from the Secretariat. The Global Fund may solicit UNAIDS' support in identifying Technical Review Panel members and in providing input on the content of technical briefings (see the memorandum of understanding).

Role of the local fund agent

Following its core principles of ensuring country ownership of programmes and maintaining a lean and efficient Secretariat, the Global Fund does not have offices outside of Geneva, Switzerland.

This is a significant departure from traditional donor arrangements, especially considering the substantial sums involved. Instead, the Secretariat relies on LFAs, which are selected through a competitive bidding process, to assess implementation capacities and to verify grant implementation progress at the country level.

LFA responsibilities include the following:

- Assess the PR's capacity to implement approved proposals by reviewing budgets and workplans and otherwise assist the Global Fund in grant negotiations.
- Independently oversee programme performance and the accountable use of funds (known as verification of implementation). This includes reviewing the PR's periodic requests for funds, undertaking site visits to verify results and reviewing the PR's annual audit report.
- Review grant performance as it approaches phase 2.
- Assist with grant closure.
- Conduct ad hoc assignments, such as investigations related to the suspected misuse of funds, at the request of the Global Fund.

The LFA is not the Global Fund's representative in the country, nor does it speak on behalf of the Global Fund unless expressly authorized to do so on a case-by-case basis. It is not empowered to make decisions on grants—the LFA recommends and the Global Fund decides—neither does it participate in the design or implementation of a Global Fund proposal, nor provide technical support to grantees.

Effective communication between LFAs, PRs, CCMs and other in-country stakeholders, in particular the development community, is crucial to ensure the accountability and effectiveness of Global Fund grants. The case studies found that much of the miscommunication between LFAs and other grant actors in the country is due to a poor understanding of the LFA's role and responsibilities by CCMs and PRs. LFAs are contracted by the Global Fund and report to the Secretariat. They do not report to the PR, CCM or other Global Fund stakeholders. To preserve LFA independence and impartiality, all interactions with CCMs, PRs and other stakeholders in the country should be conducted in accordance with the in-country Communications Protocol issued by the Global Fund 27, which provides a mechanism to systematize the sharing of LFA findings and to provide feedback and recommendations to the PRs.

Source: Global Fund (available at: http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/publications/other/CCM/CCM_report.pdf).

Role of the principal recipient

A PR forwards its disbursement requests and progress updates to the Global Fund through the LFA, which reviews and validates the request and update, performs ad hoc verifications of programme performance and financial accountability as deemed necessary by the Global Fund and advises the Fund on the next disbursement. As a basis for its advice, an LFA should highlight key achievements and potential issues and may identify certain performance gaps that need to be addressed.

A PR provides the CCM with copies of its disbursement requests and progress updates. CCM members may comment on the progress of implementation based on their local knowledge and experience through the LFA or directly to the Global Fund Secretariat.

The Global Fund decides on the disbursement request, including the level of disbursement and possible actions that may need to be undertaken by the PR, and instructs the Fund's Trustee (the World Bank) to make the next disbursement to the PR.

Initial implementation difficulties should not result in a permanent discontinuation of funding, except when there is evidence of misuse of funds. When difficulties arise, PRs must provide mechanisms to improve performance. The Global Fund, with advice from the LFA determines the appropriate level of funding as improvements are made.

Source: Global Fund (available at: http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/publications/other/CCM/CCM_report.pdf).

Uniting the world against AIDS

UNAIDS

UNHCR   UNODC
UNICEF   ILO
WFP   UNESCO
UNDP   WHO
UNFPA   WORLD BANK
JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS