

Global Fund COVID-19 Flexibilities and Response Mechanism

One of the largest multilateral organizations in global health, the Global Fund is acting swiftly and effectively in response to COVID-19, providing immediate funding of up to US\$1 billion.

Eligible countries can access support through grant flexibilities and the COVID-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM). Each country chooses whether they would like to fund their COVID-19 response from current country grants flexibilities and/or access additional funds from C19RM.

Grant Flexibilities

Grant flexibilities, announced on 4 March 2020, allow countries with current grants to: 1) use up to 5% of their current grant value if there are savings, and/or 2) reprogram up to 5% of the value of a grant to meet immediate COVID-19 response requirements. Repurposing equipment already purchased through a Global Fund grant is also an option to respond to COVID-19.

Countries are encouraged to analyze current grant savings and reprogramming before applying for C19RM.

Total available funding for flexibilities is up to US\$500 million. As of 5 May 2020, funding has been approved for 73 countries and five regional grants for a total of US\$109 million. This information is updated regularly through the [Situation Reports](#) on the Global Fund website.

Eligibility: Countries and multi-country grants with current grants from the 2017-2019 allocation period.

Application process: For the use of savings and reprogramming, the Principal Recipient issues a request to the Global Fund's Fund Portfolio Manager. Preferably, it is endorsed by the CCM. The Global Fund responds within five working days.

The request should include a brief budget, describe the activities to be funded, how it will fit into the national response, and outline potential consequences to and mitigants for HIV, TB and malaria programming.

Implementation: Global Fund financed activities must be implemented by an existing Principal Recipient (and/or existing Sub-Recipients). The main investment categories are (a) protecting Global Fund disease program against negative impact of COVID, (b) direct responses against COVID, and (c) address immediate gaps in health and community support systems. Guidance on eligible activities is available on the Global Fund's website.

Funding Source: Countries can use savings or reprogram current grants, up to 10% of the grant value.

COVID-19 Response Mechanism

The COVID-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM), approved in April 2020, authorizes US\$500 million in funding in addition to grant flexibilities. C19RM can be used across the three diseases and the health system, even if a country only has a single Global Fund grant for one component. The CCM will assess the most urgent needs and direct activities through one or more of the principal recipients.

Total available funding: USD\$500 million, initially. Public and private donors are able to direct additional resources to the Global Fund through C19RM to scale up the COVID-19 response and support systems for health across the grant portfolio.

Eligibility: Countries with a Global Fund allocation for the 2020-2022 period can access an amount equivalent to up to 10% of their allocation. This ceiling includes the use of savings and reprogramming under existing grants.

The immediate additional amount of funds available for each country is 3.25% of the 2020-2022 allocation period, provided the country has not yet used savings and reprogramming exceeding 6.75% of this allocation.

Application Process: The application is submitted through the CCM or the regional coordinating mechanism preferably by 31 May and no later than September 2020 so that emergency funding can reach countries as soon as possible.

The funding request is divided into two parts:

- **Priority 1 for the most urgent activities.** This is capped at 3.25% of the 2020-2022 country allocation. The Global Fund will respond within 10 days to this request.
- **Priority 2 for supplementary interventions.** This is capped at 10% of the 2020-2022 country allocation minus the amounts already requested for C19RM Priority 1 and approved grant flexibilities/reprogramming. These supplementary requests could be awarded later if more funds are made available.
- All applications should demonstrate that an inclusive engagement with civil society and key affected populations took place to formulate the demand.

C19RM funds are additional and will not be deducted from the 2020-2022 allocation. Funding must be fully utilized by June 2021.

Countries are asked to submit [this request form](#) completed and endorsed by the CCM to C19RM@theglobalfund.org with the Global Fund Country Team in copy. Instructions to apply can be found [here](#).

Implementation: C19RM funds must be implemented through an existing country grant and principal recipient, regional and multi-country grants. It can be used for three areas, to:

1. mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on current HIV, TB and malaria programs.
2. reinforce the national COVID-19 response
3. invest in urgent improvements in health and community systems

Funding Source: The US\$500 million that the Board approved for the C19RM response mechanism remained available from the 5th Replenishment and will be used to help counter the threat of COVID-19 in order to protect the Global Fund's ability to invest US\$13.6 billion for the three diseases and reinforce health systems in the 6th Replenishment cycle.

The US\$500 million were intended for "portfolio optimization", in which unused funds from grants are returned to the Global Fund and reassigned to other grants for high-impact investments. However, there is very limited scope for further portfolio optimization in this cycle, as in-country partners are focusing on the COVID-19 response and mitigation activities for existing programs, hence the Board decision to assign those funds to C19RM instead.