TRP 2020 Lessons Learned

44th Board Meeting

GF/B44/08

11-12 November 2020, *Virtual*

Board Information

Purpose of the paper: The Technical Review Panel's (TRP) consolidated summary of high-level Lessons Learned from reviews of funding requests submitted for Windows 1 and 2 of the 2020 – 2022 allocation cycle.

Introduction

1. The Technical Review Panel (TRP) provides this consolidated summary of Lessons Learned from remote reviews of 120 funding requests submitted for Windows 1 and 2 of the 2020 – 2022 allocation cycle. The funding requests represent nearly 80 percent of the allocated amount for the funding cycle.

2. While the TRP identified a range of technical lessons learned across the two review windows, this paper focuses on high-level lessons and themes. For the full Lessons Learned for each respective window, including the technical lessons, please see the links below.

Lessons Learned from Window 1[1]

3. Compared to the past cycle, the TRP notes that many funding requests showed increases in attention to human rights and gender, HIV prevention, resilient and sustainable systems for health (RSSH), financial sustainability and value for money (VFM). In addition, many funding requests evidenced better use of disaggregated epidemiological data for developing the program rationale, and appropriately applied the newly differentiated application forms to ensure appropriate effort was made in funding request development and review.

4. Though advances were seen in individual requests, the TRP highlights key overarching areas of concern and recommends what it wishes to see more consistently in funding requests, including i) better prioritization of interventions and budgets, ii) greater consideration of longer-term sustainability, iii) setting and achieving more ambitious, realistic and comprehensive program targets, iv) higher quality of data and evidence, v) a focus of RSSH investments on systems strengthening rather than grant support activities, and vi) containment of program management costs.

5. It is important to note that the funding requests reviewed in Window 1 were largely developed ahead of the need to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore do not reflect the rapidly evolving global need for country-level responses. Rather than comment on COVID-19 related program risks for specific countries, the TRP issued a statement on COVID-19 during the May 2020 Global Fund Board meeting. The text of that statement calls on countries, partners and donors to not lose sight of the need to pursue HIV, TB and malaria elimination goals amid the response to COVID-19, and to accelerate efforts to build resilient and sustainable health systems, to ensure communities are engaged and to sustain attention paid to human rights and gender.

6. Please find the full Lessons Learned from TRP Window 1, including technical recommendations, here.

Lessons Learned from Window 2[2]

7. The TRP notes that its expectations as a review body are evolving to anticipate receiving funding requests that are not only technically sound but are results- and impact-oriented, requiring applicants to continuously improve. This requires countries to focus on ensuring that core evidence-based interventions are in place to respond to their specific epidemics, with priority on simple, efficient and effective solutions appropriate to their context.

8. The TRP identifies two significant areas of concern, namely:

   i. **Countries which, despite on-going Global Fund investment, have not translated this investment into programmatic results/impact over time**: The TRP advises the Global Fund to focus even more on national program results over grant performance driven by

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[1] TRP Lessons Learned from Review Window 1 2020-2022 Funding Cycle
[2] TRP Lessons Learned from Review Window 2 2020-2022 Funding Cycle

absorption and adjust investment value and disbursements downwards if results are not achieved**.**

ii. **Decreasing number of civil society Principal Recipients**: The TRP advises the Global Fund to carefully examine the implementation arrangements of Principal Recipients and Sub-recipients for the 2020- 2022 cycle to ensure that there is sufficient funding for civil society implementers to ensure the sustainability of key programs and service delivery. While social contracting is theoretically ideal it may be naïve to assume that governments are uniformly willing to engage with civil society organizations, or that governments will sustain these efforts

9. Please find the full Lessons Learned from TRP Window 2, including technical recommendations, [here](#).