

**Statement from Implementer Group (IMG) Members: LAC, ESA, WCA, WPR, SEA  
Developing Country NGO, Communities, and Developed Country NGO Delegations**

**The Global Fund's Strategy Development Process  
Submission for the 44<sup>th</sup> Global Fund Board Meeting.**

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As the Global Fund (GF) continues its new strategy development process, the IMG would like to recognize and support emerging Board consensus around: **i.** the importance of continued focus on the GF's core mandate – ending the three diseases of HIV, TB and malaria, underpinned by the principles of global health solidarity; **ii.** the engagement in and value of a unique multi-sector partnership and country led model as the foundation to build on for the upcoming strategy; **iii.** the ongoing critical importance and value of the GF's mandate to attract and invest resources to drive progress towards ending the three diseases; and **iv.** the focus on cross-cutting principles of equity, quality, accountability, people centred, rights-based and impact driven approaches.

We recognize and value the continued efforts of the Global Fund and its partners in using the lessons learnt in implementing the existing strategy and from this rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic in development of its new strategy, one which ensures that no one and no community is left behind. To ensure the next strategy remains steadfast in its commitment to end the threats of the three diseases, it will be critical to revisit global health strategies at each level and by all partners, and to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in coordination and implementation. We need to abandon an approach of only managing limited resources in favor of renewed ambition and focus on building capacity to do what is necessary to end the diseases. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that no one in isolation can meet all the needs and we therefore need to work in partnership and solidarity.

Please find below some of the key topics and strategies of concern that the group would like to highlight and urge the Board to consider in its discussions and actions as part of the Strategy Development Process. We note the important and obvious overlaps and interdependencies between a number of these issues, including, between RSSH and CSS, as well as DRM and STC. However, we believe these areas are also worthy of specific consideration as part of the development of the new strategy.

1. **Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health (RSSH):** Recognising the need for a more holistic and critical view on the GF's role in helping to strengthen countries' health systems, in support of equity, inclusivity and people centred, rights-based approaches; the GF should consider the following, as part of its Strategy:
  - The Global Fund's entry point to investments in RSSH should focus on supporting outcomes against the three diseases, building on its core strengths, differentiated by country context and priority needs.
  - Embedding RSSH support within national systems to ensure sustainability and stronger interventions (e.g. in areas such as HMIS, Community Health Worker programmes) especially in light of transitioning from GF's funding.
  - Prioritising community systems and structures as a cornerstone of systems for health and recognising the importance of engaging with communities as professionals with valued expertise essential to inclusive models of RSSH.
  - Investing in community health workers to provide primary health care services to address TB missing cases, malaria resurgence and advance HIV prevention particularly among AGYW and KVPs.
2. **Community System Strengthening (CSS):** Linked to the above call for a holistic approach to RSSH, there is an urgent need to increase investments in people centred, rights-based approaches and to align and strengthen national health and community systems. Regarding CSS, the GF should consider the following, as part of its strategy:
  - Committing to the prioritization of community systems and structures which tackle the social and structural drivers of the three diseases using rights and gender-based approaches, supporting broad-based and well-funded community system strengthening that incorporates strong investments in community-led monitoring (CLM), leadership, mobilization, participation, service delivery and advocacy to challenge social and cultural norms that limit equity, diversity and access and inclusion and to hold duty bearer accountable to achieving patient and community centred outcomes.

- Commitment to strengthening the meaningful involvement of communities affected by the three diseases at all levels, bringing their voice, experience and knowledge to effective programme planning, design, decision making and implementation.
- Address the need to increase investment in Community Led responses. This includes opportunities such as dual track financing as a requirement to guarantee resources to civil society and communities and strengthen community leadership; channeling resources, wherever possible, to local NGOs instead of repeatedly supporting international NGOs; and exploring other mechanisms to more effectively deliver this investment.

3. **Sustainability, Transitioning and Co-Financing (STC):** There is an urgent call to the Fund to re-evaluate the STC policy, in light of COVID-19, to take into account the challenges countries will now encounter in transitioning. It is recommended that, for the strategy, the following should be considered:

- Analysing the impact of economic crises which most countries now experience with the aim of understanding how this affects their income classification and ultimately how these countries can, if possible, sustain the gains across the three diseases.
- Establishing synergized efforts between Ministries of Health and Ministries of Finance, and other relevant stakeholders to increase overall fiscal space to finance health.

4. **Domestic Resource mobilization (DRM):** We observe that in many countries, donor support is either flatlining or declining, in addition many countries are now grappling with constrained fiscal space due to depressed economies on account of COVID-19. We further acknowledge our responsibility to progressively increase domestic resources across the three diseases in a predictable and sustainable manner to reduce out of pocket expenditure and deliver on the promise of UHC. Finally, we acknowledge that the clarion call for more money for health cannot be separated from the call for *more health for the money*. We therefore recommend the following emphasis in the next strategy;

- Support countries to increase fiscal space for health through innovative mechanisms that are anchored in evidence-based health financing policies
- Enhance country capacity to develop sound investment cases in order improve allocative efficiencies while identifying and addressing budget absorption bottlenecks
- Accelerate technical support for DRM initiatives and dialogues
- Transforming DRM, including allocative and resource utilization efficiency and providing countries with the necessary tools to expand their fiscal space, especially in light of the economic challenges faced by COVID-19.

5. **Commitment to ensuring equity, Human Rights and gender equality:** Emphasizing the need for enhanced accountability and a renewed commitment to put equity and solidarity at the heart of the next Global Fund Strategy. The Fund is urged to consider the following:

- Ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised drive investments to promote equity and access in service delivery, advocacy and policy engagement.
- Harnessing the value of regional and multi-country grants which make effective use of regional expertise; promote learning and dialogue; and are critical for civil society to do human rights-related work that cannot be done safely by local organizations, including in non-eligible countries.
- Introducing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for removing human rights-related barriers and strengthen measurement of performance towards SO3, including for key populations.
- Exploring strategies to leverage Global Fund Resources to support activities such as decriminalisation and other major barriers, which breach the fundamental human rights of individuals, especially of key and vulnerable populations.

6. **Enhanced focus on program quality to achieve impact:** The next Global Fund strategy and partnership should focus on quality of services, including a commitment to people-centred delivery, informed by local and community experience and monitored by end users. The Global Fund is urged to consider the following:

- Promoting and delivering the best approaches, science and innovative health technologies that consider value for money and access at the point of delivery; as well as investing in countries' ability to adopt and integrate quality data, science, and evidence into their own national strategies, systems and decision-making processes.

- Incorporating the metrics that assess the quality of interventions and activities into the next KPI framework as key indicators to help track efficacy of investments towards the Global Fund's outcomes and impact goals.
- Areas of focus for improving quality can include: strengthening the lab and testing capacities, developing treatment and prevention guidelines, fostering effective and inclusive multi-sector partnerships and collaboration, including within CCMs; expanding options and strengthening the supply chain for countries to access quality affordable drugs and other health products.

**Moving the Strategy Development process forward:** We are pleased to see some emerging alignment around cross-cutting principles and high-level themes discussed so far in the Strategy Development process. However, we remain concerned about the limited scope of issues considered so far; a lack in clarity of key concepts as they relate to the GF, and what this means for evolving the GF's strategic approach, priorities and focus. We would therefore request feedback from the Strategy Committee as to how and when these issues will be explored in more depth, enabling us as a board to develop, align and deliver an effective and operationalizable GF strategy 2023-28.