

Developed Country NGO Delegation

Communiqué from the 44th Board Meeting of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Civil society and communities: essential partners in the fight against HIV, TB and Malaria – in the wake of COVID-19 crisis

The Developed Country NGO Delegation to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (Global Fund) participated in the second virtual Board Meeting held on November 11th-12th 2020. The following is a summary communique from that meeting to our constituency partners and stakeholders.

The Developed Country NGO Delegation is one of the twenty voting delegations represented on the Board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (The Global Fund). Our Board member is also the Chair of the Implementer Group - a 10 constituency grouping of country delegations, civil society and communities.

Our delegation's mission, comprised of organizations from countries that are not eligible for Global Fund grants, is to bring the voices of civil society to the Global Fund and ensure that the Fund remains transparent, ambitious, and impactful as it works toward the vision of a world free of HIV, TB, and malaria.

We focused our participation in the 44th Board meeting of the Global Fund board on the following:

1. Assuring that the continuity of treatment, prevention and care and work to end these deadly epidemics continues unabated even in the face of sweeping global disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. Continuing to push for a robust post-2023 Global Fund's Strategy that centres communities, enhances human rights and gender equality and leverages the comparative advantage of civil society in the response to the three diseases.

"We know that whether it is political, economic, climate, natural disaster, conflict or health related, crises are always difficult. They expose the deepest of our world's inequities, most particularly for the poorest, the most vulnerable and most marginalized communities. As we stand on the doorstep of World AIDS Day 2020 and reflect on our collective progress towards achieving our 2020 targets and 90-90-90 - the first of our milestones to achieving our 2030 goals, it's clear that the road has been diverted by the onset of COVID-19. Although we have

backtracked on progress made, that backtracking doesn't mean that we've lost our way. Rather, it's an opportunity for us to look critically at our strategies for how we can regain the ground and harness the momentum needed to get us to our target destination", said Robin Montgomery, Board Member and Chair of the Implementer Group in her opening remarks to the Board.

Our input on two key Board sessions is summarized below.

COVID-19 and business continuity

We strongly urged the Global Fund to continue to center its work on the prevention, care and treatment of AIDS, TB and malaria to maintain and expand the gains that have been achieved over the last 17 years.

Responding to the Covid crisis has placed additional burden on domestic health budgets and we expect to see a reduction of fiscal space in many implementing countries and challenging operating environments (COEs), in particular. We encouraged the Global Fund to address the co-financing requirement as it relates to programmatic sustainability - as opposed to primarily financial sustainability. We believe that the quality of domestic funding investments should be prioritized over primarily quantitative financial targets.

We also commended the OIG team for their rapid adjustment to the COVID-19 crisis in carrying out Country Audits and adapting the Audit Plan 2020 and encouraged the Investigation unit to collaborate with civil society to investigate cases and build local capacity to de-centralize audit and investigation.

We believe that community-led monitoring (CLM) is an important tool in both supporting advocacy to ensure that governments are making greater investments in the "right" things and as a mechanism to track in real time that investments are being used as intended for the greatest impact. Greater investments in CLM can bolster vigilance against human rights abuses, strengthen inventory monitoring to prevent stockouts and track the use of the COVID-19 funds.

Additionally, we sounded the alarm on modelling estimates in Global Fund's "Catch-up" Plans to Mitigate the Impact of COVID-19 on Tuberculosis Services, that now project that disruptions in TB programming due to COVID-19 mitigation measures may cause an additional 6.3 million TB cases and an additional 1.4 million deaths between 2020 and 2025. COVID-19 related interruptions in antiretroviral therapy (ART) in 2020 are projected to result in 500,000 more HIV-related deaths in sub-Saharan Africa alone. The Global Fund must ensure the continuity of HIV, TB, and malaria programs and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on deaths due to the three diseases. We are deeply concerned about the outstanding resourcing needs and that the additional USD 5 billion outlined by the Global Fund as needed to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the 3 diseases through June 2021, has yet to be found.

Global Fund Strategy

The Developed Country NGO delegation passionately supported the importance of ensuring meaningful and continuous engagement of and consultation with civil society and communities living with and affected by HIV, TB and malaria. **We highlighted the critical need for accelerated investment and response to address the work required to catch-up and get us back on track for 2030 and the unfinished mandate of the Global Fund's current strategy to end the epidemics of AIDS, TB and malaria.**

We also expressed our concerns about the virtual nature of this strategy development process, particularly as the Partnership Forums often are marked by many informal discussions and consensus building that is far more complicated online.

Our input into the next Strategy has focused on the following priorities:

1. We strongly oppose any mandate expansion without a commensurate and substantial increase in resources - the **Global Fund should remain focused on HIV, TB and malaria** and the unfinished business of ending the 3 epidemics;
2. The Global Fund should **enhance its commitment to accountability** and position **equity** and **solidarity** at the heart of its investment strategy
3. The Global Fund should **focus on program quality** and track the efficacy of its investments towards impact and outcome goals;
4. The Global Fund should **support broad-based well-funded community systems strengthening**, including but not limited to community-led monitoring, leadership, advocacy, and service delivery.

We called upon the Global Fund to promote a community-led, rights-based person-centered framing that will move the Global Health Security paradigm beyond its current conceptualization to one that is rights-based, person-centred approach of **Global Health Solidarity**. This means moving beyond the current narrow state-centric fear of contagion towards a more globalist human rights-based approach where the most vulnerable and the greatest affected are at the centre of any response. We see significant risks associated with a narrowly defined Global Health Security agenda that could lead to a disproportionate focus on short-term emergency responses, and the considerable potential for militarization, discrimination and exclusion that skews resources and attention towards issues that pose security threats to wealthy nations.

The Developed Country NGO Delegation, along with 7 other Implementer Constituencies, signed on to a Statement on the new Strategy highlights our collective articulation of a number

of key cross cutting principles such as *equity, solidarity, ambition, quality, inclusivity, impact* and *accountability* that we demand to see reflected in the next Strategy,

Read the full version of the Developed Country NGO Delegation's initial statement on the next Global Fund Strategy, our Constituency Statement on the 44th Board Meeting and the Joint Statement of 8 Implementer Constituencies of the Global Fund Board in the links below

- [Developed Country NGO Delegation Statement on the next Strategy](#)
- [Constituency Statement on 44th Board Meeting](#)
- [Joint Statement of 8 Implementer Constituencies on the next Strategy](#)

The Global Fund's Strategy Development process is an iterative and evolving one. We want to hear from you in terms of your priorities, concerns and ambitions for the next strategy!

We kindly request that civil society and community partners share evidence, case studies and consultation reports as part of the Strategy Development process.

For more information or to arrange a call or submit a letter or join our contact group, please contact Kataisee Richardson, Constituency Focal Point, Developed Country NGO delegation, Kataisee@yournextconsultant.com

The Developed Country NGO delegation to the Board of the Global Fund is a voting constituency that represents NGOs from the global North, serving those living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, TB, & Malaria. We advocate for the participation of civil society throughout the Global Fund's structure, give a voice to the issues that are important to our constituency, ensure the Global Fund is transparent, accountable, accessible and easy to understand, and ensure the fund is fully funded to achieve maximum impact.

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