

Community Engagement Strategic Initiative

Update

June 2024



Looking Ahead – What’s New for the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative in Grant Cycle 7

How the Strategic Initiative Catalyzes Impact for the Global Fund Strategy 2023-2028

The Global Fund Strategy 2023-2028 has a new strategic objective on “Maximizing Engagement and Leadership of Most Affected Communities to Leave No One Behind”.

The Global Fund Board allocated US\$14 million for the GC7 Community Engagement Strategic Initiative.

The Community Engagement Strategic Initiative is central to affecting a step change and galvanizing a partnership-wide, coherent approach to meet the level of ambition set out in the strategy. There are two key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Global Fund Strategy which the Strategic Initiative directly supports:

- **KPI C1:** Community engagement across Global Fund grant cycle (Satisfaction of communities with engagement across the grant cycle consistently above minimum acceptable level).¹
- **KPI E3a:** Advancing gender equality – engagement in grant cycle (Satisfaction of women and gender-diverse communities with engagement in grant cycle consistently above minimum acceptable level).

Operational Model for the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative 2024-2026

The Strategic Initiative works through three **mutually-reinforcing components**:

- **Component 1:** Short-term peer-to-peer, south-to-south, technical assistance.
- **Component 2a:** Long-term capacity strengthening of key and vulnerable population networks and organizations to support engagement in Global Fund processes.
- **Component 2b:** Engagement Fund for women, girls, and gender-diverse communities.
- **Component 3:** Regional Learning Hubs.

Across the three components, there are four shared **high-level outcomes**:

1. Communities **generate and use data** to inform advocacy and decision-making.
2. Communities **have capacity to mobilize** and hold their representatives and decision-makers accountable.
3. Communities **access timely and relevant Global Fund-related information**.
4. Communities **drive program quality** based on adoption of global guidance and sharing best practice.

1. Initial results from the Global Fund key performance indicator KPI C1 survey indicate 68% satisfaction of communities with engagement in funding request development. The KPI C1 results are based on a reasonable but poorly distributed sample size for the funding request development process for Windows 1 to 3. As such, it is not yet possible to make definitive conclusions regarding relative levels of satisfaction across key variables such as regions, disease, and across/between the diverse range of communities who responded to the survey.

Community Engagement Strategic Initiative (CE SI)

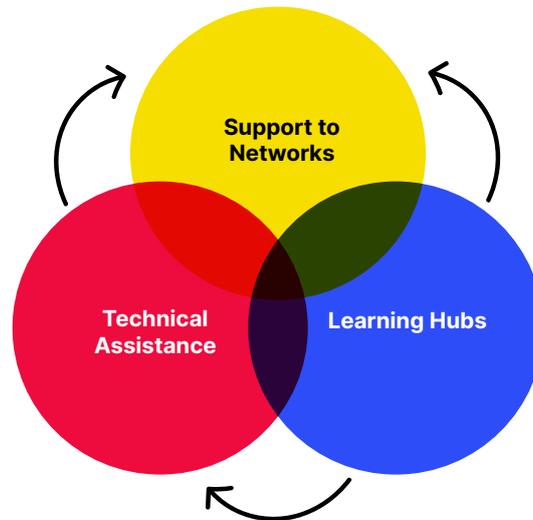


FIGURE 1. Components of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative 2024-2026

Key Changes to the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative in Grant Cycle 7

A More Diverse Technical Assistance Expert Pool

The Community Engagement Strategic Initiative has pre-qualified nineteen (19) technical assistance providers for the 2024-2026 implementation period. The **list of providers includes** 26 organizations in total, some working in consortium. All have a proven track record of working with diverse communities across Global Fund regions.

The Strategic Initiative upholds the commitment to community-led technical assistance enshrined in the **Global Fund Strategy 2023-2028**: “We will promote the engagement of communities as providers of technical support.”

In GC7, ten (38.5%) of the 26 pre-qualified technical assistance providers for the Strategic Initiative are community-led organizations.

Eleven organizations are new technical assistance providers in GC7. Among the new providers are two networks of people who use drugs, one community-led network advocating for prisoners, and one umbrella network of key population-led organizations.

In GC7, all countries with active Global Fund grants remain eligible for technical assistance through the Strategic Initiative. Find more information **here** on how to apply for technical assistance.

The Global Fund Strategy 2023-2028 promotes the engagement of communities as providers of technical support. In GC7, 38.5% of pre-qualified technical assistance providers are community-led organizations.

An Intensified Focus on Country-level Engagement Planning

In GC7, the Strategic Initiative will intensify efforts on coordinated country-level community engagement in 25 countries: Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Each country will conduct a rapid analysis of barriers and opportunities for community engagement, map key stakeholders and develop a Community Engagement Plan. The Plans will be reviewed on an annual basis.

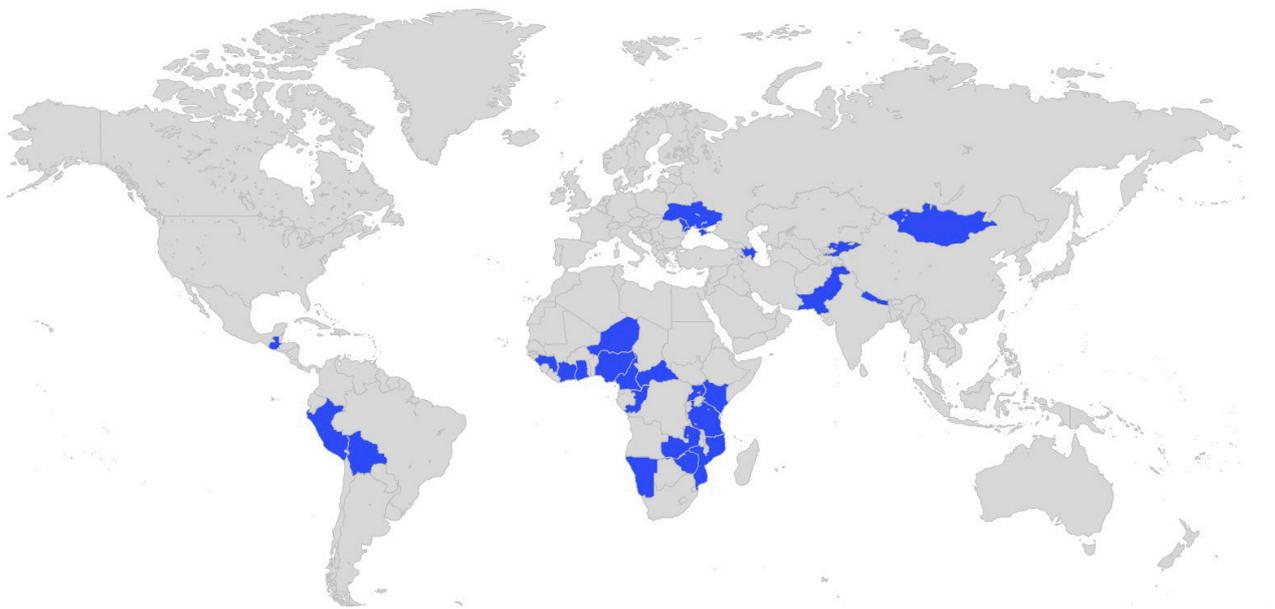


FIGURE 2. Countries with Intensified Community Engagement Planning, 2024-2026

A Differentiated Approach to TB and Malaria Communities

In GC7, the Strategic Initiative will start providing organizational development and core support funding to TB survivor and TB key population networks in five geographic regions. This includes DRAF TB, a community-led TB survivor network from Francophone Africa which will benefit from Strategic Initiative support for the first time.

The Strategic Initiative will furthermore support malaria community networks to conduct organizational self-assessments.





This responds to calls from community organizations and the Global Fund's technical partners. In the Stop TB Partnership's March 2023 **"Deadly Divide" report**, TB-affected communities and civil society applauded the significant support received from the Global Fund. However, they expressed the need for dedicated funding to build capacity for sustained community, rights and gender work, organizational infrastructure, and for TB survivor networks.

A Greater Emphasis on Regional Learning

The six Regional Platforms are now Regional Learning Hubs, with a stronger focus on promoting peer-exchange and experience-sharing in their regions. A regional learning agenda will be developed for each region, based on input from communities. This will include regular newsletters, webinars, and face-to-face meetings to exchange good practices within a region.

The Strategic Initiative welcomes new partners as hosts of the Regional Learning Hubs in Asia-Pacific as well as the Middle East and North Africa. Both hosts are key population-led networks.

A New Engagement Fund for Women, Girls, and Gender Diverse Communities

The **Gender Equality Fund** was launched in July 2023, on the margins of the Women Deliver Conference in Kigali, Rwanda. The Fund is a US\$7.5 million initiative supported by the Global Fund, GSK and ViiV Healthcare. The Fund works with communities to design, deliver, advocate for and influence gender-transformative and gender-affirming approaches to health.

The Gender Equality Fund forms part of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative portfolio. It complements other existing engagement funds for AGYW and women and girls in their diversity, namely **HER Voice Fund** and **Voix EssentiELLES**.

Additional Resources

- **Overview** of Technical Assistance Providers' Regional and Thematic Expertise
- **Contact Details** of Long-Term Support to Key and Vulnerable Population Groups and Networks
- **Contact Details** of Regional Learning Hubs

Partners of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative 2024-2026

Component 1 Partners – Short-term Technical Assistance Providers

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Center for Health Policies and Studies (PAS) 2. Coalition for Health Promotion and Social Development (HEPS-UGANDA) 3. ENDA SANTE Cote d'Ivoire (Lead) + Réseau des Organisations des Populations Clés de Côte d'Ivoire (ROPC-CI) + JURISEXPRESS 4. Eurasian Coalition on Health, Rights, Gender, and Sexual Diversity (ECOM) 5. Eurasian Movement for the Right to Health in Prisons (EMRHP) 6. Frontline AIDS (Lead) + ATAC + Coact + Y+ Global 7. Health Advocacy Coalition (HAC) 8. Harm Reduction International (HRI) 9. HIV Legal Network (Lead)* + Attika 10. International Community of Women Living with HIV Eastern Africa (ICWEA) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Initiatives Conseil International Santé (Lead) + Civil Society Institute for Health - West and Central Africa (CSIH-WCA)* 12. International Network of People Who Use Drugs (INPUD) 13. International Council of Aids Service Organizations (ICASO) 14. Kenya Legal & Ethical Issues Network on HIV and AIDS (KELIN) 15. Kenya NGO Alliance Against Malaria (KeNAAM) 16. Mainline Foundation 17. Pangaea Zimbabwe 18. Plan Consortium 19. TB Europe Coalition (TBEC) |
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Component 2 Partners – Key and Vulnerable Population Networks and Engagement Funds

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+) 2. Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) 3. MPact Global Action for Gay Men's Health and Rights 4. Global Action for Trans Equality (GATE) 5. International Network of People who Use Drugs (INPUD) 6. Y2Y Consortium 7. Socios En Salud (SES) 8. Africa Coalition on TB (ACT Africa) 9. Regional Coalition of TB Activists in Asia-Pacific (ACT! AP) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. TB Europe Coalition (TBEC) 11. Dynamics of the Francophone African Tuberculosis Response (DRAF TB) 12. Civil Society for Malaria Elimination 13. HER Voice Fund, hosted by Y+ Global 14. Voix EssentiELLES, hosted by Speak Up Africa 15. Gender Equality Fund |
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Component 3 Partners – Regional Learning Hubs

1. Anglophone Africa, hosted by the Eastern Africa National Networks of AIDS and Health Organizations (EANNASO)
2. Asia-Pacific, hosted by Seven Alliance Consortium
3. Eastern Europe and Central Asia, hosted by the Eurasian Harm Reduction Association (EHRA)
4. Francophone Africa, hosted by Réseau Accès aux Médicaments Essentiels (RAME)
5. Latin America and the Caribbean, hosted by Via Libre
6. Middle East and North Africa, hosted by MENA Harm Reduction Association and MENA Rosa

Looking Back – Major Achievements of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative in Grant Cycle 6

December 2023 marked the end of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative's ninth year of implementation. It was launched in 2014 as one of the first six Special Initiatives of the Global Fund's New Funding Model.

In February 2024, the Global Fund published the **external evaluation** of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative's Grant Cycle 6 (GC6) activities. It builds on the **external evaluation** for Grant Cycle 5 (GC5), and the **external evaluation** for Grant Cycle 4 (GC4).

Through its ecosystem of 45 civil society and community partners - including 26 technical assistance providers, 13 key and vulnerable population networks, and 6 regional platforms for communication and coordination—the Strategic Initiative continued to evolve and achieved significant results in GC6.

Component	Key Achievements in Grant Cycle 6
Short-term technical assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of 134 short-term technical assistance assignments, up from 125 in GC5.² • A mean cost of US\$38,359 per assignment, down from US\$42,890 in GC5. • A focus on malaria in 24% of TA assignments, up from 18% in GC5. • 81% of assignments were contracted within 3 months of request, up from 47% in GC5. • Regional or national experts deployed in 98% of assignments.
Long-term capacity building of key and vulnerable populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New community data generated or used in 27 countries. • Stronger participation of key and vulnerable population networks in Global Fund decision-making in 32 countries. • Co-investment of HER Voice Fund and Voix EssentEIES, delivering 185 small grants for women and girls' Global Fund engagement. • Key and vulnerable population communities successfully influenced program funding or design in 26 countries.
Regional platforms for communication and coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of timely and relevant Global Fund information to 101,781 contacts. • Enhanced quality control of technical assistance demand, increasing the eligibility rate to 90% in GC6, up from 75% in GC5 and 68% in GC4.
Cross-component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment of US\$19.6 million³ in community engagement activities over three years—the largest ever for the Global Fund. • Improved geographic equity, with first-time community engagement support provided to Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Haiti, and Kosovo. • Development of 178 resources in 13 languages, catalogued in the Community Engagement Toolbox. • Leveraging of Strategic Initiative partners to provide technical assistance for C19RM and CCM Evolution processes.

2. In 2021, the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative was leveraged to provide an additional 38 technical assistance assignments to support engagement in COVID-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM) funding request development. This was supported with separate funding from the C19RM Centrally Managed Limited Investment. Including C19RM support, the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative delivered 172 technical assistance assignments in GC6.

3. The Global Fund Board approved US\$16 million for the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative in GC6, plus an additional US\$1.5 million for engagement in funding request development for GC7, plus an additional US\$2.1 million for C19RM community engagement through Centrally Managed Limited Investments (CMLI).



Strengthening Community Engagement in Grant Cycle 7 Funding Request Development

The June 2023 Update included a detailed overview of the Strategic Initiative's contribution to strengthening community engagement in GC7 funding request development. Ultimately, the Strategic Initiative invested US\$2 million to deliver 55 short-term technical assistance assignments for community engagement in GC7 funding request development. With US\$1.5 million top up funding, KVP networks and Regional Platforms provided rapid consultation support to 64 countries. The majority of technical assistance assignments focused on setting community priorities for funding to inform the robust completion of the new mandatory **Civil Society and Community Priorities Annex**.

Strategic Initiative efforts complemented those of GIZ, L'Initiative, Stop TB Partnership, UNAIDS, and others who deployed community, rights, and gender consultants to serve on GC7 writing teams in more than 30 countries.

In its **October 2023 Observations Report**, the Global Fund's Technical Review Panel (TRP) noted greater and more active engagement of communities in funding request development, with the new Civil Society Community Priorities Annex proving to be a useful tool with important context.



The TRP highlighted several improvements in GC7 funding requests which are linked to community-articulated priorities:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased recognition of more HIV key populations, such as trans and gender-diverse people as well as women who use drugs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased attention to both HIV and TB prevention, including increased prioritization of new TB preventive treatment (TPT) regimens for people living with HIV and children.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased use of community-led monitoring (CLM) by the applicants.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of gender and malaria matchbox assessments that are used to guide interventions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater recognition of punitive legal environments as impacting access to services.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater reflection of the role of communities through a deliberate introduction of social (public) contracting.

Further, 76% of TRP members said the role of community-led and community-based organizations in grant implementation was well-articulated in GC7 funding requests.

The Applicant’s Survey from the Global Fund’s Access to Funding Department sheds further light on improved community engagement.

In the 2020 **Grant Cycle 6 Applicant’s Survey**, some representatives cited challenges with sub-optimal community involvement.

“The TRP observed greater and more active engagement of communities and organizations representing people at higher risk of contracting HIV, TB and malaria, and key populations in planning, resource allocation, implementation, and oversight of the funding request development.”

– TRP Observation Report, Grant Cycle 7 Windows 1 and 2

In the 2023 GC7 Applicant's Survey (forthcoming), 90% of community-led organizations said their country dialogue experience was better in GC7 than in GC6. Across all stakeholders involved, 89% felt that civil society, community, and key populations were actively engaged in GC7 processes. Diverse constituencies agreed that community engagement in GC7 was less rushed, better supported, and more inclusive.

“Because we conduct a pre-consultation in the KAP community, that give us more time to contribute better ideas, with greater importance to the TB community, to be funded by the Global Fund.”

– Community-led Organization, 2023 GC7 Applicant's Survey

“The consultation with the community-based key populations and people living with HIV got started well before the country dialogue on the national strategic plan. This gave us the time to have a quality country dialogue on the current GC7 funding request.”

– Community-led Organization, 2023 GC7 Applicant's Survey

“This round was more inclusive, with civil society providing leadership in sharing data from community perspective.”

– Multi-lateral / Bi-Lateral Organization, 2023 GC7 Applicant's Survey

“There was support from the technical and financial partners for civil society organizations and for organizing the launch workshop for the country dialogue, something that was not done in previous cycles.”

– Government, 2023 GC7 Applicant's Survey

Across all stakeholders involved, 89% felt that civil society, community, and key populations were actively engaged in GC7 funding request development processes.

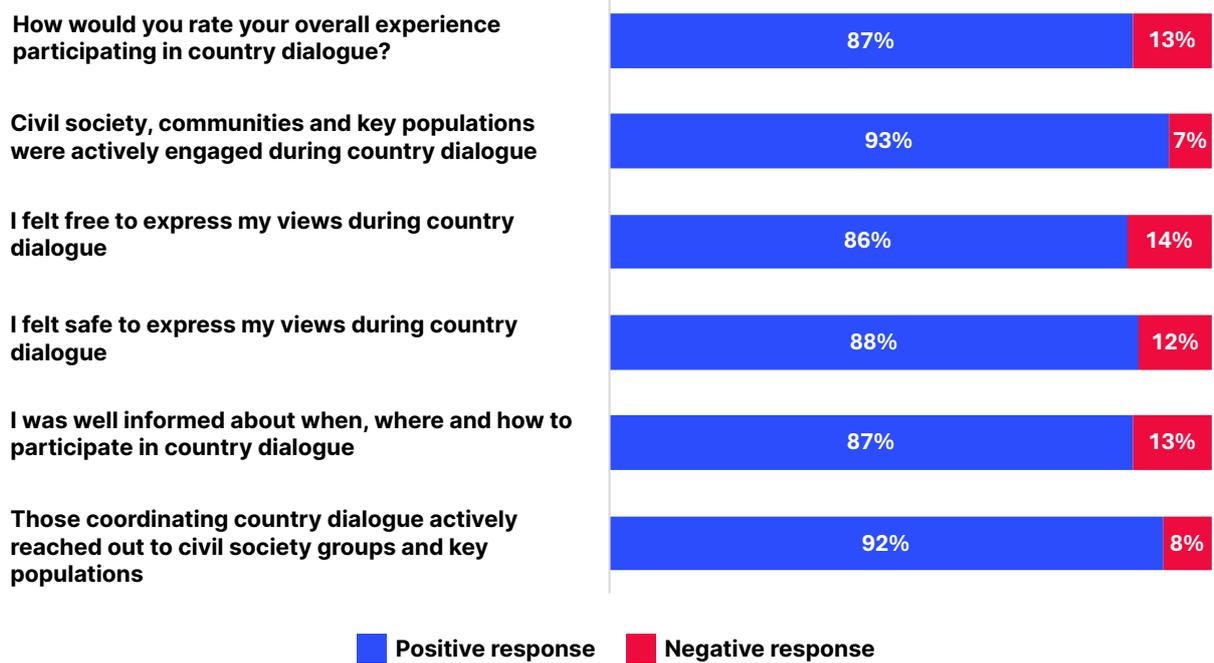


FIGURE 3. Responses from Community-led and Community-based Organizations to the Grant Cycle 7 Applicants Survey, Windows 1-3 (N=233)

Strengthening Community Engagement on Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs)

Throughout GC6, a partnership between the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative and the CCM Evolution Strategic Initiative strengthened technical assistance provision to communities. Partners of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative were leveraged to provide peer-to-peer support to civil society and community representatives on CCMs.

In its **June 2023 Audit of CCMs**, the Global Fund’s Office of the Inspector General (OIG) remarked positively on the partnership between the two Strategic Initiatives to strengthen community engagement on CCMs, noting that it enhances coordination and reduces the risk of duplication.

In November 2023, the CCM Hub **reported** that 18 CCMs received support for their elections, and 30 CCMs received training on using community-led monitoring data to improve grant oversight.

This support and other efforts are improving community engagement on CCMs. For instance, in 2018, key affected populations (KAPs) constituted 313 (7%) out of 4501 CCM members. As of November 2023, the CCM Hub **reports** that 748 (17%) out of 4400 CCM members represent KAPs.

Representation of key affected populations (KAPs) on CCMs increased from 7% in 2018 to 17% in 2023.

In GC6, partners of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative provided technical assistance for CCM election processes in 18 countries.

Case Study: Generation and use of community-led data leads to first-ever inclusion of services for people who use drugs in Zimbabwe's Grant Cycle 7 funding request

Problem. In Zimbabwe, there has been a dearth of data on the HIV burden and risk among people who use drugs. In the country's GC6 request, the lack of data is mentioned and programming for people who use drugs was contained entirely in the above allocation request.

Input. The Community Engagement Strategic Initiative Technical Assistance Program invested US\$41,888.84 to support The Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network (ZCLDR) to conduct the first ever Situational Analysis of People Who Use Drugs in Zimbabwe. TA was provided by Mainline for the research study. Collaboration with the UNAIDS Technical Support Mechanism expanded the scope of the assignment.

Output. The first Situational Analysis of People Who Use Drugs was conducted in 2022. The study generated essential data on this underserved population. One third (33.67%) of the sample has ever injected, and 27.67% in the past 6 months. More women ever injected (over half of the female sample vs. 30% of male sample), also almost all whom did so in the past 6 months. Proportionally, more women declared to have tested positive for HIV (half female sample against 18% of male sample). 37% of the female sample mentions engaging in transactional sex. Sixteen percent of the sample report being harassed by police, creating human rights-related barriers to access.

Outcome. ZCLDN was invited to lead the drafting and costing of harm reduction sections in Zimbabwe's March 2023 GC7 funding request development process. ZCLDN circulated the Situation Analysis among the wider writing team, including the lead consultant, and used it to guide the process. The country's March 2023 describes the findings of the Situational Analysis, attached it as an official Annex to the funding request, and explicitly states "This new data compelled the introduction of the module on HIV prevention for people who use drugs in the third year of the GC6 grant, and an increased investment in the GC7 request, including gender-sensitive harm reduction for women who inject drugs." In GC7, US\$830,857 was requested for HIV prevention among people who use drugs, including a small-scale harm reduction pilot among 400 people in Harare (100 of whom are women). The Situational Analysis also influenced PEPFAR funding, as well as national prevention stewardship for this population. In COP23, PEPFAR will finance the first-ever IBBS among people who use drugs, implemented by the National AIDS Council (NAC).

Catalytic effect. Communities of people who use drugs were armed with data from the study and invited to participate on the Funding Request writing team for the first time in GC7. They used this data to successfully advocate for funding and inform the design of guide gender-transformative harm reduction programming.

Source: ZCLDN, UNAIDS, NAC, Mainline & MOHCC (2022). Zimbabwe situational analysis of drug use in five provinces to inform HIV and TB programming for people who use drugs. Online at <https://idpc.net/publications/2022/12/zimbabwe-situational-analysis-of-drug-use-in-five-provinces-to-inform-hiv-and-tb-programming-for>

The Global Fund/Vincent Becker



Case Study: Training key populations in community-led monitoring leads to expanded service packages and additional domestic funding in Moldova

Problem. In Moldova, a new tool was introduced in 2021 to monitor the HIV response in Moldova – the HIV Scorecard. The scorecard was developed by the UNAIDS Country Office, Positive Initiative and other local civil society organizations with support from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection and the National Programme for the Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections. With access to all this new data, Positive Initiative needed to develop systems and capacity to ensure that the data were used to shape their advocacy and create more effective prevention, treatment, and retention services.

Input. Through Component 2a of the Global Fund Community Engagement Strategic Initiative (CE SI) the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+) provided a sub-grant and mentoring support to Positive Initiative to ensure that communities could make use of the scorecard data. In Moldova, civil society engage with Global Fund processes through a body called the Committee of Key Affected Populations (CKAP). This is where the support was focused.

Output. Positive Initiative held training sessions for members of CKAP to strengthen their capacity to interpret and use research findings and data. Using the data from the Scorecard, Positive Initiative was able to see which services and goods were most in demand among various populations and use this evidence to decide on their advocacy priorities.

Outcome. Community representatives took part in discussions that led to the development of the Municipal Programme on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infection Prevention and Control for 2022-2025. Data from the Scorecard showed that many people accessing HIV prevention, care, and support services, concentrated in the municipality of Chişinău, needed a wider package of services that were not covered by the existing funding. Using the Scorecard data, community representatives successfully advocated for the municipal programme to include funding for these additional services for key affected populations.

Catalytic effect. The advocacy support for better data use contributed to an augmented service package for people living with HIV in Chişinău, Moldova. It also enhanced sustainability of Global Fund-supported programs by leveraging additional domestic funding.

Source: GNP+ (2024) Community-led Accountability, Influence and Monitoring (CLAIM) Change Stories. Page 10-11. Online at <https://gnpplus.net/resource/claim-change-stories/>

Case Study: Support for adolescent girls and young women to engage in national platforms influences decision-makers to act

Problem. All too often, adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) are excluded from Global Fund-related decision-making. The Global Fund Board has emphasized the urgency of providing more room for youth leadership and involvement in the response to HIV, TB and malaria (see Decision Point GF/B20/DP32).

Input. The HER Voice Fund was created to support the meaningful engagement and leadership of AGYW, and community-based organizations who are serving AGYW, within Global Fund and other related national processes. The HER Voice Fund offers small grants to organizations in 13 priority countries: Botswana, Cameroon, Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. From 1 July 2022 to 28 February 2023, HER Voice Fund Project Management Unit (PMU) awarded 91 grantees with an average of 4330 Euros per grantee.

Output. 5,981 representatives were supported by HER Voice Fund to participate in a range of Global Fund-related decision-making platforms. This includes 49 AGYW engaged in CCM level meetings, 83 AGYW engaged in National Strategic Plan consultations, 425 engaged in Technical Working Groups, 1070 at civil society meetings, and 4354 AGYW participating in other local and national meetings related to HIV, gender, and SRHR.

Outcome. Fifty-two grants increased access to and quality of programmes and services for AGYW. For example, grantees in Eswatini supported AGYW engagement with 10 Members of Parliament, which led to a commitment from the Health Portfolio Committee Chairperson that the motion for tax exemption on sanitary products has been tabled as a priority for discussion in parliament in 2023. Twenty-four grants improved the social, cultural and legal environment for AGYW. For example, grantees in Kenya engaged AGYW in different technical working groups, resulting in the development of the Gender Based Violence Policy which was launched on 1 March 2023. Forty-eight grants increased empowerment and participation of AGYW. For example, grantees in Malawi conducted meetings in Lilongwe, Salima, Dedza, Blantyre and Machinga which resulted in AGYW (through the CCM youth representative) documenting priorities for Global Fund Grant Cycle 7 which were then shared with the Principal Recipient, PEPFAR, National AIDS Commission, GC7 Civil Society Consultant, and MANASO.

Catalytic effect. Small grants to amplify the voices of AGYW had a significant effect on influencing leaders and decision-makers to respond to their needs. Global Fund grants and related national processes were strengthened to better serve AGYW in all their diversity.

Source: Y+ (2023) HER Voice Fund Annual Report 2022-2023. Online at <https://www.yplusglobal.org/docs/resources/HER%20Voice%20Fund%20Annual%20report%202022-23%20Final.pdf>



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