

44th TERG Meeting Report

June 2021 (3, 4, 8 & 9)

Objectives of the 44th TERG Meeting

1. Discuss the final work of PCE and the external evaluation of PCE and implications for country-based independent evaluations and SI proposal phase 2;
2. Update on ongoing evaluations and reviews; and
3. Discuss draft M&E framework including KPI and an evaluation approach to C19RM.

Meeting Outcomes

- In the breakout sessions on the prospective country evaluations (PCEs), the TERG and the evaluation teams discussed the opportunities and challenges of working on PCEs during the last four years.
- The TERG provided guidance to the consultants on the areas that needed to be further strengthened on the evaluations of Strategic initiative (SIs) and Multicountry grants (MCGs), noting that the evidence from these evaluations feeding into the allocation discussions by the Strategy Committee for the next Global Fund strategy.
- The TERG discussed the conclusions of the extension period of the PCEs, which focused particularly on resilient sustainable systems for health (RSSH) and grant revisions and flexibilities. The TERG proposed that the PCE extension work should be added to the PCE Synthesis 2021 report as there are substantial overlaps. Additionally, the TERG provided guidance to the consultants on the recommendations and structure of the synthesis report.
- The TERG agreed to commission a quick review on partnership aspects of the recent work (a compendium of key findings, conclusions and recommendations) based on TERG reviews, as well as OIG and TRP work. Also agreed was the need to consolidate RSSH key conclusions and recommendations from recent strategic and thematic reviews to know their status to date.
- For the external evaluation of PCE, the TERG noted the need for clear linkages between findings and recommendations and also highlighted that more analysis on value for money (VFM) would be needed in the next version of the report.
- The TERG evaluations on Covid-19 response mechanism (C19RM) and wambo.org pilot were discussed and there was a broad agreement that the C19RM evaluation be focused on implementation at country level, while the OIG audit focused on the design, governance, fiduciary risks and control elements. Further discussed was the start date of the wambo.org pilot evaluation.

Next steps

- Validation workshop meeting for SI evaluation will be held on 29th June, with submission of final draft report on July 7th.
- The draft report for the MCG evaluation will be submitted on July 12th with validation workshop to be held in mid-July.
- The final report for the PCE external evaluation will be submitted on July 9th with validation meeting happening in late June to early July.

Introductory remarks and declaration of conflicts of interests

The TERG Chair opened the meeting by welcoming and thanking the participants for their extensive contribution and preparations, including pre-recordings. After introducing key meeting objectives, the TERG Chair asked the members to disclose any conflict of interest and to adopt the agenda.

PCE Extension

PCE teams and TERG members formed three break-out groups to discuss both the achievements and challenges of implementing the PCE approach over the last four years. The groups reconvened in plenary, where the TERG expressed deep appreciation of the PCE teams for their hard work over the four years. The Global Evaluation Partners then presented the PCE extension synthesis findings.

The PCE teams presented the synthesis of their findings, which were focused on RSSH investments (2S (support and strengthening) and alignment) and on monitoring, and on what shifts were made in funding to RSSH and community, rights and gender (CRG) related investments during grant making. For each of these areas the teams provided recommendations. During the discussion the PCE teams were asked to provide further details on the RSSH recommendations and make them more explicit in the report and presentation.

Key discussion points arising from the RSSH investment findings included:

- The analysis of the relative importance of factors that lead countries to request funds for health system ‘support’ v health system ‘strengthening’ interventions, whether these have to do with in-country structural issues or Global Fund business model issues;
- The type of technical support countries may need to request and implement interventions leading to longer term sustainability;
- How to reduce fragmentation and uncoordinated RSSH development partner funding in countries;
- The importance of looking again at lengthening the term of RSSH funding beyond the 3 year grant cycle to assure greater effectiveness of the investment and impact.

Key discussion points arising from grant-making findings included:

- Understanding better the importance of context for influencing what changes were made to areas of investment during grant making;
- Understanding better the factors underlying variety of diversity of transparency in decision making around changes to grants across the PCE countries.
- Understanding better the difficulties underlying the analysis of changes in funding for key and vulnerable population (KVP), rights and gender.
- Understanding the pros and cons of applying C19RM grant flexibilities more widely to other types of grants.

Executive session on PCE

Helen Evans

RSSH

The TERG discussed the need for conclusions and recommendations related to RSSH in the extension report to link with recommendations from recent work (e.g., PCE, SR2020, RSSH review, the TERG (+

TRP) RSSH summary to Strategy Committee (SC), the OIG report on RSSH, and the Secretariat RSSH roadmap). Also, that the report should explore and situate its recommendations in national health strategies beyond disease specific strategies, to help understand the context around RSSH.

The TERG also felt that more clarity is required on the use/non-use of RSSH indicators and on how/why the choice of using RSSH indicators in the modular framework is made (e.g., because the indicators don't reflect the RSSH activities done in the country) and the alternatives (e.g., customized indicators). The TERG also suggested the report should highlight to what extent the Global Fund guidance on the use and flexibility around the RSSH indicators are well translated and understood at country level. The TERG indicated that the report needs to specify how the evidence is similar (or different) across the seven PCE countries and how this affects the decisions that are made about the including RSSH indicators. In addition, the cost implication for collecting indicators for RSSH should be clarified, including whether or not countries have to make budget shifts for this purpose.

Grant making, revisions and flexibilities

The TERG indicated that more in-depth analysis is expected on the equity effect of grant cycle changes. While acknowledging differences across countries in understanding what happened between funding request and grant-making (GM) processes (e.g., different measurement and reporting between NFM2 and NFM3), the TERG requested that the PCE strengthen their analysis. The report could be made clearer on reasons for the funding that seems declining for KVP groups.

The TERG also welcomed any recommendation about a systematic, structured and transparent way of reporting what changed during grant making and why, and the best way of sharing that. The TERG also suggested that the report needed to provide recommendations on the mechanisms the Global Fund could put in place to trigger the grant revision process more systematically and to simplify the revision processes.

Day 2, Thursday June 3

Session 1: Update on M&E

Cindy Carlson

The session began with an overview of the M&E framework, focusing on the independent evaluation and the ongoing discussions amongst the three M&E working groups (the TERG, the Secretariat and the SC) in delineating the critical areas on what a comprehensive M&E framework should look like. The Secretariat representatives summarised the main areas of current work, which include:

- Review and refining the key performance indicators (KPIs), to be fit for the purpose of monitor progress of the new strategy.
- Developing options for the future independent evaluation function. The options have been narrowed down to two (1. Embedded in Office of Executive Director (OED) with fully independent oversight and 2. fully independent from the Secretariat). The Secretariat prefers option 1. These options will be elaborated and decided on by the Board in November.
- Developing a Theory of Change to inform the monitoring and evaluation of the new strategy

The Secretariat Chief of Staff provided further detail on option 1 of the independent evaluation in terms of safeguards, e.g., post profile, reporting line, recruitment process, performance evaluation, and ways of working. There was also discussion on TERG document procedure of evaluations as well as timely and wider dissemination of evaluation findings.

C19RM evaluation approach

This evaluation will be TERG-led, building on and complementing the OIG audit of C19RM, which focuses on secretariat processes and ensuring accountability of investment. The key objectives include but are not limited to assessing how effectively C19RM has been achieving the goal(s) of grant, how C19RM supported countries in achieving the country-led targets for HIV, TB, and malaria as well as evaluating how effectively countries executed proposed budget and how the Global Fund mitigated risk. The initial evaluation questions, timelines and next steps were highlighted.

Discussions reiterated that this evaluation should be:

- complementary to the OIG work on C19RM
- focused on implementation issues and results in country;
- coordinated with Access to Covid tools accelerator (ACT-A) evaluations .
- emphasizing an understanding of how C19RM investments that are responding to mitigating Covid-19 effects on HIV, tuberculosis and malaria needs are important.

The TERG also acknowledged that measuring the impact of C19RM investments at this stage would not be possible and appreciated the proposal of taking a staged approach to this evaluation.

Other update on the evaluation calendar

Status Update of TB prevention review.

A TB prevention review – a hybrid model which is secretariat-led with TERG oversight – was briefly discussed. With prior inputs from the TB advisors, it was agreed the review should commence during the first part of the last quarter of 2021 with a draft report due in early 2022. The final report should be ready in advance of the high-level UN meeting on TB in the second quarter of 2022.

Evaluation of Wambo.org pilot

The focal point for the Wambo.org pilot evaluation provided a status update. The background/context, objectives, scope, indicative evaluation questions and timeline of the evaluation were described. Also mentioned was the onboarding process for the selected evaluation team. Further discussed was the joint evaluation calendar and when some of the evaluation will be undertaken.

Secretariat-led review with TERG oversight: Global Health Security (GHS)

A process update was given on the global health security review, which is the first hybrid model of evaluation that is secretariat-led with TERG oversight. It included the background and objectives of the review as well as the scope, approach, methodology and high-level emerging findings. Discussion points included the strategic options and criteria for the strategic choices, potential risks to project success, timeline and workplans as well as initial lessons learned on the hybrid model of evaluation. The TERG raised concerns about the wide scope of the review, compressed timelines as well as a disproportionate focus on COVID-19. Also, there were discussions on what was not covered in the original TOR of the review, TERG's perspective and levels of comfort with this evaluation modality and sequencing of the report to feed into the strategy development process.

Executive session

George Gotsadze

M&E Update

TERG members discussed in detail the need for clarity on the implications of option 1 of the independent evaluation function. Discussions also included recruitment, reporting line, and other pertinent areas to safeguard and strengthen independence of evaluations.

C19RM Evaluation

The TERG highlighted the need to reduce indicative evaluation questions and to focus on areas that will not be included the OIG should audit, specifically on questions related to mechanism, but focus instead on the effectiveness and equity of implementation of the C19RM grants.. Concerns of evaluability of some evaluation questions were raised due to data gaps, lack of performance frameworks and targets. There were more discussions on the benefit of in-depth country case studies to illustrate how the C19RM funds were used, value of flexibilities and the Board risk tolerance of these processes during the emergency.

Global Health Security Review (GHS)

The TERG agreed there should be a documentation of the processes of the hybrid model of evaluation and reflect on the lessons learned from the hybrid approach.

Day 3, Tuesday June 8

Session 2: Thematic evaluations and external evaluation of PCE

Evaluation of Strategic Initiatives

Evelyn Ansah

The evaluation team gave an overview of the preliminary findings largely drawn from their discussions with global stakeholders and Global Fund secretariat staff and their review of Global Fund data. Issues discussed included:

- the evolution of strategic initiatives (SIs) from NFM2 to NFM3 vis-à-vis operationalization and management
- the short duration for implementation of some SIs, particularly the RSSH-related ones.
- how SIs helped address some weaknesses for innovation mentioned in the SR 2020 report
- the high, and possibly disproportionate, cost of SI management and administration and related transaction costs.
- the shift in the types of contracts for partners, (from results based to input-based)
- lack of/limited performance/accountability frameworks for the first cycle, including weak frameworks for measuring outcomes and quality assurance of technical assistance.
- lack of a clear definition for catalytic impact/results was raised, strategy development and future allocation discussions.

The TERG discussed a possible consolidation of partnership related work (a compendium of key findings, conclusions and recommendations). This commentary on TA/partnership model will be evidence based and consolidated from a variety of recent TERG, OIG and TRP reviews/evaluations.

Evaluation of Multi- Country Catalytic Investments grants

The evaluators of Catalytic Investment Multi Country Grants (MCG) gave an overview of the background, objectives, scope and the emerging preliminary findings. Issues discussed included:

- The significant improvements from NFM 1 to NFM 2. Other highlights included
- Challenges of a shared definition and understanding of “catalytic effects” and its implications for design, review and performance measurement.
- Challenges of performance measurement especially in areas of advocacy, Human Rights and Gender (HRG), though some improvements particularly in indicators.

- Evidence of good outcomes related to partnerships for MCGs.
- MCGs leveraging additional funding or established platforms that are making an impact in the region.
- Evidence of MCGs creating safe spaces particularly around areas of HRG.
- Need to consider longer funding cycles for MCG grants;
- Need to consider the longer term sustainability of interventions funded through MCGs;
- Need for clarification of the utility of a clear theory of change (TOC) in order to identify common success factors and challenges as well as cross-cutting learnings and synergies of catalytic approaches.

External evaluation of PCE

Mira Johri

Mira Johri, a member of the Gavi's Evaluation Advisory Committee, chaired the PCE Evaluation Steering Committee (Steerco) and facilitated this session.

The evaluation team presented the draft findings and reminded the audience that the aim of the evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the PCEs 'achievements and to inform what should be the best way forward regarding independent country level evaluations. The preliminary results highlighted that the overall aims of the PCE were individually valid and important, but wide ranging and ambitious) for one instrument, resulting in implementation challenges.

In the discussion, the TERG discussed various areas that needed clarification, including regarding the aims of the PCEs and how they were designed. Several participants noted that the preliminary report did not make a clear connection between the findings, conclusions and draft recommendations provided. The participants agreed on the importance of independent assurance at country level.

Executive session

Dan Whitaker

PCE external evaluation discussion

During the executive session the TERG discussed the presentation of the PCE evaluation, in particular the draft conclusions and recommendations. Members highlighted important issues to reflect on regarding the future of country-based evaluation platforms and appreciated the effort the evaluation team to finish the evaluation within the very tight time frame given to them.

The TERG was of the opinion that the draft report raised valid points on the level of ambition and complexity and the challenges that this created for all parties involved. The TERG considered it critical to disaggregate various responses to differentiate the perspectives of the different stakeholder groups. There are needs for stronger linkage between findings and recommendations, and more analysis on value for money. Finally, the TERG found it helpful to situate the findings/recommendations within the context of the wider M&E framework discussions. Members agreed that it will be useful to the TERG, the SC and the Board to see further elaboration of the role of country level evaluation within the M&E framework to clarify what this means in principle, ways of working and scope and scale of country-based evaluation platforms.

TERG's Guidance on SIs and MCGs (common themes)

- Good progress on both reports.
- Need for the Evaluation team(s)' view on whether the GF definition of catalytic could be improved, if so how, and how catalytic effects could be better measured. What does success look like in the case of both SIs and MCGs?
- There are clear issues arising in the following areas that need further analysis:
 - Alignment of the strategic initiatives with country grants and leveraging the SIs in a way brings innovations into the core business of the three disease programmes in countries, including ways that country stakeholders could be included in SI design, perhaps using lessons learned from MCG design.
 - Overview analysis of how to improve the accountability for SI implementation and achieving results, in particular with technical partners, also specifying regional and local partnerships
 - Types of performance metrics that could be used to measure strategic initiative and MCG effectiveness and examples of metrics, what should be measured.
 - Which programme areas or interventions should and should not be addressed through catalytic funds and instead use core grant funding.
 - Clarifying funding relative to the workload. (unpacking funding levels vs ambition i.e. adequacy of funding to achieve expected results)
 - Extension of timeframes of implementation for both modalities.
- Examples of Theories of Change that could help inform future SI and MCG designs.
- Need further analysis and suggestions for improving the governance of these funds

Guidance on Strategic initiative evaluation.

- The preliminary findings indicate that the team is producing helpful findings and analysis
- Useful to have the mapping of the learning that's happened through implementing SIs and granular analysis of the improvements that have been made and which challenges still need to be addressed;
- Team's view on the move to input-based contracting for SIs – does this make sense when the overall purpose is to achieve some sort of catalytic effect?
- Balanced focus on the in-depth study of SIs e.g. on procurement and supply chain management (PSMs).
- Focus more on the second cycle of SIs in terms of measurements and what might constrain impact/success.
- More analysis of what may be the common conditions that appear to be necessary for strategic investments to leverage in-country investments into more effective programming.

Guidance on Multi-Country Catalytic Investments Grant evaluation

TERG welcomes the progress up to now. The emerging findings are encouraging and cover the important areas. The TERG wishes to see more analysis, including on the following areas:

- Other reviews on MCGs: Bring in analysis from other evaluations of MCG programs conducted by partners (ex. UNDP) and learnings from them.

- Long-term sustainability: Report should highlight the key point on long-term sustainability. What has been done and what can be done further? How do MCGs tackle political and cultural difficulties especially for KVPs?
- Efficiency (under objective 3): Conduct quantitative analysis to better understand the VfM / efficiency equation of the different MCGs.
- Innovative solutions given by the MCGs: What has been done and what can be done further? Would these solutions be applicable in other contexts? E.g. Engaging regional and country-based partners
- Potential overlaps between MCGs and country grants (Also see common themes): What is the value of MCGs tackling issues not covered by grants? What steps are taken to mitigate the risks of overlaps between MCGs and country grants?

Guidance on PCE Extension Synthesis

Structure:

- Frame it similarly to the OIG WCA report, if this would simplify reporting
- Provide a “layering” of PCE Synthesis Report 2021 with PCE extension findings, particularly for recommendations. For this, it is suggested to follow a similar structure (chapters) to the Synthesis 2021 report, including in grouping of recommendations;
- To minimize duplication, indicate where relevant the links to the Synthesis 2021 Report.

Recommendations section:

- More granularity on the RSSH recommendations is needed;
- TERG encourages the PCE to be bolder and more explicit in the recommendations;
- Compare how new findings from extension work is affecting the previous recommendations stated in the PCE Synthesis 2021 report;
- Update former recommendations and build on these, considering new findings and follow-up activities by the Secretariat.

PCE Synthesis 2021 Report

- Add information in the Executive Summary of the PCE Synthesis 2021 Report about its Annex and extension work.

Next steps and timelines were given to incorporate comments for the next iteration of the reports.

The TERG Chair closed the meeting with appreciation to the evaluation teams for their contribution and thanked other participants. The mini TERG meeting will be held on 13 July to discuss the evaluations of SIs and MCGs. The 45th TERG meeting will be held on 2-3 and 14-15 September.

Annex

44th TERG meeting participants TERG (June 2,3,8&9 2021)

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