



STUDY AREA 2 - EVALUATION OF THE GLOBAL FUND PARTNER ENVIRONMENT AT GLOBAL AND COUNTRY LEVELS, IN RELATION TO GRANT PERFORMANCE AND HEALTH SYSTEMS EFFECTS, INCLUDING SIXTEEN COUNTRY STUDIES

Evaluation Brief No. 7
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SUMMARY:

Study Area 2 of the Five-Year Evaluation describes the complex environment of partnerships at the global and country levels and some of the impact of these relationships on the successful implementation of Global Fund grants. The study found that six years into the implementation of its unique model, the Global Fund has made notable and significant contributions towards its original aims. While recognizing the overall achievements of the Global Fund during its first six years of operation, Study Area 2 highlighted a number of areas where improvements are required in the establishment of more effective partnerships.

BACKGROUND:

The Five-Year Evaluation is an independent, Board-mandated evaluation being conducted under the oversight of the Technical Evaluation Reference Group (TERG). Study Area 1 of the Five-Year Evaluation was completed in November 2007 and examined the organizational efficiency and effectiveness of the Global Fund, its progress to date and critical areas for improvement. The study of the Global Fund's partner environment in 16 countries and at the global level (Study Area 2) was presented to the Board in November 2008. The examination of impact on the three diseases in 18 countries (Study Area 3) is ongoing with data collection and analysis efforts at country level nearing completion. Both the Study Area 3 final report and the final Five-Year Evaluation Synthesis Report, which will synthesize the findings and recommendations from all three study areas, will be reviewed by the Global Fund Board at its meeting in May 2009.

TERG CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Overarching Issues

- A. Respecting country¹ ownership:** The primary objective of all development efforts must be to empower countries in their capacity and means to design and implement their own health plans, with a measurable impact on the health of the people. Country ownership should be seen as the basis of all Global Fund partnerships, with partners working together to support country-led programs. Too often, partnerships are not driven by this common goal.
- B. Country ownership and performance-based funding:** The principle of country ownership and the need to document results go hand-in-hand. A focus on results linked to disbursements is also in the interest of all partners, and will in itself contribute to improving the performance of country programs and strengthening country ownership. Performance-based funding as such does not undercut country ownership.
- C. Resolving misconceptions through consistent communication and implementation of policies:** The TERG considers that the basic principles underlying the Global Fund's policies are sound. The Global Fund, however, faces difficulties in communicating and implementing these policies effectively and coherently at the global and country levels. Consistent communications to and from all stakeholders at all levels is critical. Global Fund staff should act as "ambassadors" of these principles and should receive training and adequate support to be able to provide clear, consistent, reliable information on Global Fund policies, in particular to those partners working at country level.

2. Global Fund in the Development Architecture

- A.** The Global Fund should remain **true to its mandate as a financing entity**, with the awareness that its scale and scope influence both policy and development issues.
- B.** The Global Fund Board should seek to open "governing body to governing body" discussions aimed at leading to direct negotiations of a **Global Partnership Framework**.

¹ "Country" in the context of this paper means all the partners and implementers at country level who are represented on the CCM, assuming that the CCM is operating as intended.



3. Global Fund Partnerships

- A.** Development partners should strengthen their **bilateral engagements** with the Global Fund.
- B.** The Global Fund should pursue its pioneering and proactive engagement of **civil society**, through encouraging in-country and regional partners to empower civil society organizations to participate actively in Global Fund processes.
- C.** The Global Fund Secretariat should encourage countries to review and adjust the **roles and functions** of Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs), with the goal of **aligning more closely with country needs**.
- D.** The TERG strongly recommends that the Global Fund Secretariat should integrate and highlight **gender issues** in the development of its partnership strategies.

4. Grant Oversight Capacity

- A.** In efforts to improve grant oversight capacity, the Global Fund should support the introduction of **country-owned quality assurance mechanisms**.
- B.** The Global Fund Secretariat urgently needs to conduct a step-by-step **review of its policies, guidelines and procedures** in order to fundamentally streamline and simplify them.
- C.** The TERG recommends that the Global Fund Board clearly define circumstances, criteria and the processes under which **national strategies** can be funded by the Global Fund, especially ensuring the continued involvement of civil society and ensuring that fiduciary control, accountability and the principles of performance-based funding are maintained to allow program audits.
- D.** Country partners, together with development partners and the Global Fund Secretariat, should comprehensively address the critical issue of **improving data quality**.

5. Technical Assistance

- A.** The Global Fund and partners should reassure countries that **requests for technical assistance** are considered to be **a strength of any grant proposal**.
- B.** The Global Fund should **maintain the essential principle** that Global Fund monies are provided to fund **country programs**.
- C.** The TERG strongly recommends that partners should consider a **longer-term perspective in delivering technical support**, in particular, to support human resource capacity building over a horizon of five to ten years.

6. Health Systems Strengthening

- A.** The findings in the report may be the result of a discrepancy between the policies of the Global Fund relating to **Procurement and Supply Management** (PSM) and actual practice. The TERG recommends that the discrepancies between Global Fund procurement policy and practice be urgently investigated and resolved.

7. Determining Grant Performance

- A.** The TERG recommends that the Secretariat should make the continued improvement of the current **performance monitoring system** a matter of highest priority.
- B.** The TERG urges internationally-mandated technical partners to work with country counterparts to strengthen **country surveillance and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems**, taking into account the needs of performance-based funding.

TECHNICAL EVALUATION REFERENCE GROUP (TERG)

The Technical Evaluation Reference Group (TERG) is an advisory body providing independent technical advice to the Board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The TERG advises the Global Fund on evaluation approaches and practices, independence, reporting procedures and other technical and managerial aspects of monitoring and evaluation at all levels. Membership of the TERG is drawn from a range of stakeholders, including practitioners, research institutions, academics, donor and recipient countries and nongovernmental organizations.

FIVE-YEAR EVALUATION OF THE GLOBAL FUND

The Five-Year Evaluation is being planned and implemented under the guidance of the TERG. The first major report on organizational efficiency and effectiveness was published in late 2007 and the final evaluation synthesis report including a strong focus on impact on the three diseases, will be published in May 2009. Each element of the evaluation is designed to generate actionable findings. The Global Fund is committed to learning from and making concrete improvements based on evaluation findings.

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The Global Fund



Year Evaluation

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