Governance Effectiveness

55th Board Meeting

GF/B55/09
9 – 10 July 2026, Geneva, Switzerland

Board Input

Purpose of the paper: In a more complex and resource-constrained environment, governance effectiveness is a risk to be managed. This paper invites the Board's input and steer — on the principles that should guide governance effectiveness, the practical near-term measures to support it, and the longer-term questions to return to — so that governance remains focused, proportionate and an enabler of impact. It is for discussion and the Board's steer; no decision is sought.

Executive Summary

Context

The Global Fund is operating in a time of significant change and complexity. Heightened geopolitical and operational volatility, lower GC8 allocations across the portfolio, pressure on operating expenditure, leadership transitions and shifts in the broader global health ecosystem collectively create a more constrained and demanding environment for the organization and its governance bodies.

The Global Fund enters this period from a position of considerable strength. The partnership has demonstrated resilience and impact at scale, and its governance model has been independently assessed as broadly effective. The diversity of the Board and the breadth of perspectives it brings remain a core strength of the organization and a defining feature of the Global Fund partnership.

At the same time, the current context increases the demands placed on governance. The Board is being asked to provide clear strategic steer on difficult choices, levels of ambition, risk appetite and prioritization, while the Secretariat, Board and constituencies are all operating with constrained capacity. Effective governance will therefore be critical to sustaining trust, enabling timely decisions, and ensuring that governance effort remains proportionate, and focused on the issues that matter most for impact.

Input Sought

The Board is invited to provide input on:

a. The principles that should guide governance effectiveness in the current context, including the balance between focus, proportionality, inclusion, voice and timely decision-making;
b. The practical near-term measures that could support governance effectiveness, including the trade-offs that the Board is willing to support or accept; and
c. Which measures should proceed now, which require further development or socialization, and which potential longer-term adaptations should return at a later stage.

Questions this paper addresses

A. Where are we now? An overview of current context and risks to governance effectiveness.
B. What principles should guide us?
C. What practical choices do we need to make?
D. What longer-term considerations should we look ahead to?

Conclusions

A. The current environment is complex, changing and resource constrained, with elevated risk requiring governance to support sharper prioritization, clearer strategic focus and more deliberate engagement with trade-offs
B. The Global Fund governance model remains a source of strength, but it must be calibrated to the realities of reduced resources, increased complexity and constrained capacity.

C. Near-term measures propose focus on enabling good governance in a proportionate way: reducing unnecessary burden and duplication, strengthening decision pathways and preserving trust, representation and meaningful voice.
D. Longer term, in a changing global health ecosystem, considerations regarding the composition of the Board and governance structures may merit more in-depth analysis and a structured pathway for continued discussion, including through a future Governance Performance Assessment or targeted governance effectiveness workstream.

Input Received

This paper draws on the 2024 Governance Performance Assessment and Governance Enhancement Plan; prior EGC consideration of governance streamlining; the February 2026 Board Retreat; B54 and subsequent risk discussions; EGC30 input on governance effectiveness; and recent Coordinating Group discussions. It is also informed by the 55th Board Meeting risk materials, which identify an elevated risk environment and underline the importance of prioritization, simplification, leadership transition planning and deliberate strategic choices.

I. Where are we now?

A time of change and complexity

1. As noted in the Annual Risk Management Report and opinion of the Chief Risk Officer,[1] the Global Fund is currently operating in a landscape of unprecedented disruption and increasing complexity. Heightened geopolitical and operational volatility, and sustained pressure on available resources collectively result in a materially elevated risk environment.
2. Funding uncertainty, lower allocations for all countries in Grant Cycle 8, pressure on operating expenditure and significant strategic choices across the portfolio mean that countries, the Secretariat and governance bodies are all being asked to make difficult trade-offs.
3. The Global Fund enters this pivotal period from a position of considerable strength. Against a challenging global financing environment, the partnership secured US$12.6 billion through the 8th Replenishment, continues to deliver impact at scale, and remains anchored in a mature model and a proven ability to deliver impact at scale.
4. Maintaining that strength now requires conscious attention to the way governance supports the organization. The stakes for the people the Global Fund serves remain as high as ever. This is precisely the type of environment in which the Board's stewardship role is most important: enabling choices to be made with clarity, ensuring that scarce resources are focused where they matter most, and sustaining confidence in decisions even where trade-offs are difficult.

Governance model as a core strength – and an increasingly important strategic enabler

5. Governance is critical not as an end in itself, but because it enables the Global Fund to make the right decisions, at the appropriate time, and with confidence. The Board brings deep experience, diverse perspectives and a shared commitment to the mission. These features are central to the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Global Fund model.
6. At the same time, governance can only serve this enabling function if the level of process, reporting and engagement remains proportionate to the issues at hand and to the capacity available. Strong oversight, accountability and representation must be preserved, but the way they are exercised may need to adapt so that governance supports rather than dilutes strategic focus.
7. Over recent years, the organization has pursued multiple investments in governance strengthening under the oversight of the Ethics and Governance Committee. Global Fund governance has been independently assessed as broadly effective. The 2024 Governance Performance Assessment[2] noted: "[t]he Global Fund's governance has been on an upward trajectory, having been strengthened significantly over the past five years. For many, the governance design has been integral to the organization's success and impact." There is now an opportunity to build on the foundational strengths of the governance model to adapt to the context at hand.
8. The key question is not whether the Global Fund should maintain robust governance. It should. The question is how to ensure that governance remains agile, focused and effective in a more

[1] GF/B55/03A – Annual Risk Management Report
[2] GF/B51/13 – Governance Performance Assessment Report (2024)

constrained operating environment, while continuing to protect the values that make the Global Fund partnership distinctive.

Higher demands on Governance

9. The complex and evolving landscape combined with the realities of funding constraints result in a significant scope and volume of strategic issues requiring consideration at Board level, with higher demands on work plans and agendas, and decisions that are inherently more difficult, requiring careful consideration of tradeoffs. Within this context, the Board has significant priorities ahead. From the transition of the Board Leadership and the Executive Director, to guiding towards the next strategy period, the work of the Board is characterized by significant decisions, navigating change, and looking ahead to the future of the organization and the mission.[3]

10. This increase in both volume and complexity of governance deliberations is combined with the broader pressures of a volatile external context. Tightening resources exacerbate this complexity, with OPEX pressures impacting on both operating costs, constituency funding and Secretariat capacity.[4] Altogether, the governance system is under significant strain.

Navigating risk

11. The risk reporting to the 55th Board Meeting reinforces the importance of this discussion. The Annual Risk Management Report describes a sustained elevated risk environment driven by funding uncertainty, rising delivery complexity and constrained institutional capacity. It also points to a growing gap between institutional capacity and the complexity of the Global Fund's operating and governance model, including the cumulative weight of processes, oversight layers and reporting requirements.[5]

12. The governance risk monitored within the Organizational Risk Register[6] and regularly reviewed by the Ethics and Governance Committee, has long identified complexity, high burden, diverse stakeholder interests and varied constituency capacity as drivers of governance risk. The current environment heightens these longstanding risks by increasing the volume and urgency of strategic issues while reducing capacity to address them. This may dilute strategic focus, slow decision-making, increase duplication and create equity concerns. Role duplication and leadership transitions further heighten risks. If not addressed, they may undermine decision quality, stakeholder trust and the Board's ability to prioritize, provide clear steer and support delivery. Conversely, focused and proportionate governance can help mitigate risk by enabling clearer direction, more disciplined prioritization and timely decisions.

13. The Chief Risk Officer's Annual Report cited above calls for active, sustained Board engagement where Board decisions materially affect risk exposure. This includes clear prioritization and risk trade-offs, simplification in line with reduced resources, and deliberate choices on ambition and new initiatives.

14. Governance effectiveness considerations are therefore intrinsically linked to navigating an elevated risk context. Governance bodies may need to be more explicit about what should be

[3] GF/B55/15 – Report of the Coordinating Group and Board Leadership, Annex 1 sets forth the current governance work plans for the year ahead and the 2026-2029 priorities for the Board.
[4] GF/B55/04A – SCG 2027-2029 Strategic Costing and accompanying narrative 04B lay out the current OPEX challenges.
[5] GF/B55/03A – Annual Risk Management Report
[6] GF/B55/03B Organizational Risk Register and accompanying summary submitted to the 30th EGC meeting via document GF/EGC30/08 – Governance Effectiveness

prioritized, what can be sequenced or stopped, and where the organization is willing to accept trade-offs to protect impact.

Governance discussions to date

15. Recent discussions across governance bodies have created a foundation for the July discussions. Board-level reflection on the principles and behaviors needed to steer the organization through uncertainty, EGC consideration of the practical and risk-based adjustments required to preserve effectiveness under growing burden and capacity constraints, and Coordinating Group attention to system-wide coordination, trust and paced implementation across governance bodies pave the way to further Board consideration in July.

16. **Board.** At its February retreat, the Board engaged on what it means to steer, guide, and support the organization at this pivotal moment, upholding the duty of care and working collectively in the best interests of the mission. The discussion emphasized that Board effectiveness should remain anchored in impact and support to countries, focus at the right strategic level on long-term outlook and mission-critical priorities, and enable clear guidance to the Secretariat, including on prioritization and risk appetite. Members also reflected on the need for the Board to use its collective expertise intentionally, avoid overburdening the Secretariat, and sustain transparency, listening and trust as foundations for constructive governance. Looking ahead, the discussion also opened space for reflection on whether aspects of the current governance model, including the conceptual division between donors and implementers, may need to be reconsidered as the context evolves. Subsequent discussion at the 54th Board meeting further highlighted the importance of prioritization, strategic focus and effective governance as part of the broader response to an elevated risk environment.

17. **EGC.** The 30th EGC meeting (May 2026) provided a dedicated opportunity to consider governance effectiveness through a risk lens and engage in pragmatic reflection on what can be done in the near-term to enable strategic focus and respond to resource constraints. EGC expressed support for the need to simplify, while preserving the Global Fund's inclusive partnership model. EGC highlighted that the current governance rhythm creates significant burden without always improving outcomes, and that streamlining must be balanced with inclusiveness and constituency capacity constraints. Trust, clarity, timely communication, disciplined prioritization and clearer roles are essential to help the Board focus on the decisions that matter most. The EGC also shared practical suggestions and principle-based reflections on a suite of illustrative focus areas to streamline and strengthen governance in the near term

18. **Coordinating Group**. Following EGC30, the Coordinating Group considered how governance effectiveness considerations should return to the Board. As reflected in the Report of the Coordinating Group and the Board Leadership,[7] the CG has approached governance effectiveness as a matter of system-wide stewardship: helping focus governance attention on the most critical strategic issues, supporting equitable engagement, and pacing change in a way that protects inclusiveness and voice amid significant financial and capacity constraints. The CG emphasized that increasing pressure across the governance system makes trust, effective governance culture and constructive engagement across diverse perspectives even more important, and highlighted the need to strengthen clarity on roles, mandates and decision processes; improve communication, feedback loops and documentation; enable equitable engagement; and remain attentive to information asymmetry and the dilution of implementer voice.

[7] GF/B55/15 – Report of the Coordinating Group and Board Leadership

II. What principles should guide us?

Collective reflection

19. The upcoming Board Retreat provides an important opportunity to reflect as a Board on the principles that will uphold effective governance and to consider what is needed from the Board to effectively navigate the decisions ahead.

20. The framework below outlines a set of governance dimensions to enable reflection on what "about right" should be, for the organization, at the present time. The intent of this framework is not to define an ideal position for every circumstance, but to help the Board make conscious choices when governance principles pull in different directions. For example, in the current context, the Board may need to give greater weight to focus, proportionality and timely decision-making, while preserving the legitimacy, trust and voice that underpin the Global Fund model.

21. Creating space to articulate a shared understanding of what governance effectiveness means in the current context is an important first step to supporting agility and adjustment where needed, while protecting the principles and values which are most essential to how the governance functions.

A framework for discussion

Table 1

Dimension	Too little	About right	Too much
Mission focus	Governance becomes inward-looking or procedural	Governance choices are judged by whether they help the Global Fund deliver its mission	Mission used to override legitimate concerns about process, voice or accountability
Role & responsibilities	Roles unclear or not respected	Roles clearly understood and upheld, with clear boundaries and accountability	Duplication across governance bodies / overreach into operations
Voice	People affected are not heard	Relevant perspectives are heard and considered	Everyone expects a say on everything / some voices dominate
Representation & stewardship	Constituency concerns ignored	Balance constituency interests with duty of care to the institution	Act only as a constituency advocate
Consultation	Insufficient engagement	Proportionate consultation	Consultation replaces or delays decision-making

Dimension	Too little	About right	Too much
Legitimacy	Authority alone determines legitimacy	Decisions accepted as fair even where there is disagreement	Decisions only legitimate if everyone agrees
Trust	Persistent suspicion and second-guessing	Confidence with appropriate scrutiny	Blind faith
Agility & decision-making	Endless discussion and deferral	Timely decisions with appropriate safeguards	Rushed decisions
Capacity & proportionality	Important matters receive too little governance attention	Governance effort matches importance and available capacity	Process demands exceed institutional capacity
Information	Insufficient information to conduct oversight	Appropriate volume and elevation supports informed deliberations and decisions	Overload impacts on ability to engage and equity
Trade-offs & prioritization	Refusal to acknowledge trade-offs	Explicit choices between competing priorities	Decisions driven by expediency
Agreement on the right balance	No shared view of what “about right” looks like; the balance is contested case by case	Shared, explicit understanding of where the right balance lies, revisited as the context changes	Forced or rigid consensus that discourages legitimate challenge
Agreement on the prioritization of dimensions	No shared view of which dimensions take precedence when they conflict	A shared, explicit understanding of how to prioritize across dimensions as they pull against one another	Rigid prioritization in which one dimension always overrides the others, regardless of context

22. The above dimensions or principles are not merely theoretical; they are intended to help the Board make concrete choices about governance workload, consultation, documentation, meeting rhythm and decision pathways.

III. What practical choices do we need to make?

23. Alongside reflection on principles, the Board is invited to consider practical measures that could be taken in the near term to support governance effectiveness — while safeguarding balanced, inclusive participation across constituencies. The objective is not to narrow participation or reduce oversight. Rather, it is to ensure that governance effort is focused on the issues that matter most, that time is used well, and that governance arrangements remain proportionate to the current operating environment.

24. Many of the measures below are not new. Several have been discussed through the EGC-led Governance Enhancement Plan,[8] prior streamlining work,[9] EGC discussions and Coordinating Group engagement. The question now is whether there is sufficient appetite to take more deliberate action, including by stopping, scaling back, combining or sequencing governance activities where the current level of effort is not commensurate with value or risk.

25. This necessarily entails choices, and **navigation of tensions and tradeoffs**. These include:
    a. Enabling inclusion, representation and voice *despite* resource and capacity constraints.
    b. Maintaining appropriate balance between consultation and inclusion *and* driving progress and managing burden on governance and Secretariat.
    c. Ensuring governance effort remains *proportionate* to institutional capacity.
    d. Responding to information requests *while* managing practical limitations, avoiding information inequity resulting from differing capacity across constituencies, and upholding good governance standards in reporting.

26. Overall, this discussion seeks Board input on how to **maintain or adapt governance practices** which acknowledge realities and uphold governance effectiveness despite increased complexity and reductions in resources, to:
    a. Focus Board attention on the issues that matter most for impact;
    b. Maximize the role of governance itself as a strategic enabler;
    c. Avoid risk of undermining representational balance, and specifically the risk of dilution of implementer voice; and
    d. Avoid risk of governance drag which may impair ability to steer the organization, or detract from delivery.

27. The table below **summarizes illustrative near-term measures** for Board reflection. The focus is on proportionality and effectiveness. Each measure involves trade-offs, and any changes would need to be accompanied by deliberate mitigation to protect trust, inclusion, transparency and effective information flow.

Table 2

Focus area	What could change	Potential impact	Trade-offs and mitigation
1. Strategic agendas and work plans	Focus agendas and work plans on priority issues, clear objectives and expected outcomes. Scrutinize new items before they are added, reduce repeated or low-priority agenda items Use intersessional engagement deliberately where it enables meeting time to be used for strategic discussion.	Clearer steer on prioritization and trade-offs; reduced opportunity cost for Board members, constituencies, management and Secretariat; less fragmentation of discussions across risk, performance and impact.	May create actual or perceived concerns that constituency requests are not being sufficiently reflected. Mitigation requires transparent agenda-setting, clear rationale for prioritization and early engagement where issues are deferred or sequenced.

[8] GF/EGC27/02 – Governance Performance Assessment: Governance Enhancement Plan
[9] GF/EGC29A/02 – Streamlining Governance Phase 1v

Focus area	What could change	Potential impact	Trade-offs and mitigation
2. Streamlined reporting	Review reporting requirements, frequency, sequencing and legacy items. Identify where reporting can be combined, consolidated, rescheduled or shifted to lighter information-sharing formats, including tools-based approaches where proportionate.	Focuses attention on high-impact and high-risk issues; reduces burden on authors and readers; supports more equitable access to information where capacity to digest large volumes of material differs across constituencies.	Stakeholders may place different value on specific reports. Information access and information equity concerns need to be managed carefully. Technology-enabled approaches may also have cost and level-of-effort implications.
3. Enabling dialogue	Protect meeting time for exchange, listening, debate and convergence. Continue enabling written constituency statements in advance, while using meeting time to build on written input and support clearer steer.	Better use of limited meeting time; supports reaching conclusions; supports trust, collaboration and accountability.	Requires balancing pre-agreed constituency positions with the need for members to engage interactively in real time. Constituencies may need to adapt preparation practices accordingly.
4. Reducing duplication and clarifying roles	Clarify which issues should be resolved at committee level, which should escalate to the Board and how committees support rather than repeat Board deliberation. Strengthen reporting back and information flow so that the Board can rely appropriately on committee work.	Supports strategic focus at Board level; reduces duplication and burden; may enable faster conclusions and clearer accountability.	Greater reliance on committee work requires confidence that transparency, inclusiveness and opportunities for challenge are preserved. Mitigation should include clear reporting, early identification of issues requiring Board steer and disciplined use of mandates.
5. Clarifying governance processes	Invest in targeted effort to clarify roles, mandates, escalation pathways, decision rights and expectations for how issues move through governance bodies.	Reduces repeated discussion, diluted accountability and avoidable burden. Supports clearer outcomes and more predictable governance pathways.	Requires upfront engagement and acceptance across stakeholders. Clearer pathways must not be perceived as limiting legitimate debate, and should be paired with transparency and effective feedback loops.
6. An agile governance calendar	Consider whether the current rhythm of in-person and virtual meetings remains proportionate to priority work. Use virtual sessions where they can support timely progress, and reconsider meeting cycles that primarily generate reporting burden rather than advancing decisions or strategic discussion.	Allows effort to be directed to critical work; reduces operational cost and level of effort; enables governance timing to adapt to need, including selection processes and other time-sensitive matters.	Fewer or differently structured meetings will only support effectiveness if remaining engagements are high-value, well-prepared and focused. Otherwise, changes could increase fragmentation or reduce trust.

Focus area	What could change	Potential impact	Trade-offs and mitigation
7. Delegation arrangements for Board meetings	Consider delegation modalities that balance in-person participation with virtual access, including a smaller in-person delegations supported by remote participation for additional delegates, observers and guests.	Can reduce cost while supporting equity where reduced constituency funding and travel costs affect in-person participation.	May affect actual or perceived inclusion and engagement, particularly for multi-country implementer constituencies. Mitigation requires high-quality virtual participation and deliberate constituency engagement approaches.

IV. Future adaptations - initial reflections

28. Against a backdrop of an evolving global health ecosystem and funding landscape, the Secretariat, the Board and its committees are jointly examining what this evolving environment means for the Global Fund — including its delivery model. That examination is not confined to operations; it extends naturally into a set of forward-looking governance questions around whether current structures, composition, and ways of working remain suited to the demands and shifts now emerging.

29. Potential future areas for reflection include:

    a. **Committee structures and mandates**, including deeper analysis of where to reduce duplication to streamline the burden of a large governance model, and reflecting on delegation between the Board, committees and the Secretariat, as a simplification level to mitigate risk, as identified in the Chief Risk Officer's Annual Report.

    b. **Board composition** in the context of post-2028 strategy development and the evolving geopolitical and funding environment, with input sought on when and how to return to questions of representation on the Board in a changing funding and partnership landscape, and which early considerations should be surfaced to give this work shape and focus.[10]

    c. **Approaches to effective joint governance engagement** with partner organizations to ensure governance engagement across two governance structures remains targeted, based on objectives, well-prepared, and practical, with a view to driving impact-focused progress and avoiding additional governance burden.

30. The intent is not to address these issues now. Rather, to keep these issues visible and to invite early reflection, without seeking decisions on longer-term structural changes at this stage. These areas may require more in-depth analysis and a structured pathway for continued discussion, including through a future Governance Performance Assessment or targeted governance effectiveness workstream.

[10] Following the 2024 GPA and advisory review on Board representation in 2024, in early 2025, the previous EGC agreed to "*Reexamine the need/opportunity for structural change in Board representation following the 8th Replenishment in the context of the development of a new strategy and evolving geopolitical environment.*" GF/EGC27/02 - Governance Enhancement Plan 2025

V. Risk considerations

31. The Annual Risk Management Report identifies governance effectiveness as a rising enterprise risk and notes that "incremental adjustments will not be sufficient" and that "structural change… is required."

32. This paper responds to governance effectiveness risk, and the measures it proposes carry risks of their own. Setting these out allows the Board give its steer with both in view.

33. Key risk-related considerations in relation to the proposals in this paper include:

    a. **The risk of doing too little.** If near-term measures are not accompanied by a structured longer-term pathway, underlying governance risks may remain. This can be mitigated by linking immediate actions to future review or assessment.

    b. **The risk of doing too much, or too fast.** Rapid changes or overcorrection could affect inclusion, representation, oversight or trust. This can be mitigated by explicitly protecting voice and inclusiveness, anchoring changes in principles, and sequencing change

    c. **The risk of lack of follow-through.** Without clear ownership and monitoring, agreed measures may not change practice. This can be mitigated through implementation tracking and regular reporting through the EGC and risk register.

    d. **The risk of unclear steer.** If expectations are not sufficiently clear, implementation may be inconsistent or existing practices may continue. This can be mitigated through clear direction, assigned ownership and periodic review.

    e. **The risk of timing.** Governance changes would take place during Board Leadership and Executive Director transitions. Phasing can help maintain momentum around near-term measures, while allowing incoming leadership to shape longer-term adaptations, supported by evidence from a governance assessment or review.

    f. **The risk of adding new burden.** New governance commitments could offset streamlining efforts. New activities should therefore be assessed against the same principles of prioritization, proportionality and value.

34. Overall, the residual risk appears moderate and manageable if near-term measures and longer-term review are pursued holistically, anchored in principles, and with clear monitoring and review mechanisms.

Next steps

35. The Global Fund's governance model remains a core strength. At a time when pressures require more deliberate choices about how governance time and attention are used, the Board's steer is needed to ensure governance remains an enabler of impact, trust and timely decision-making. This should not be a one-time discussion, but an iterative conversation, with sustained attention to progress and needed adjustments.

36. Following Board inputs at the 55th Board Meeting and Retreat on principles, near-term practical measures, and initial input on future adaptations, next steps will include:

a. Feedback to the EGC and Coordinating Group with a view to translating Board steer into a clear implementation approach. Continued discussion at the October EGC meeting and into 2027.
b. Iterative updates intersessionally, and future discussion at the Board, including opportunity for continued engagement under the leadership of the incoming Board Chair and Vice-Chair.
c. Maintain longer-term governance adaptation questions for future discussion through an appropriately sequenced governance effectiveness pathway.

Annexes

The following items can be found in Annex:

- Annex 1: Committee input
- Annex 2: Governance Effectiveness – Roles and Responsibilities
- Annex 2: Relevant Past Documents and Reference Materials

Annex 1 – Committee Input

- Since 2025, the EGC has engaged in multiple discussions on governance effectiveness and streamlining matters, in recognition of, and preparation for, the high burden on the governance agenda in 2026 and beyond. In October 2025, the EGC endorsed a set of phase 1 governance streamlining measures, identifying workstreams on the EGC work plan to pause or postpone, in support of strategic focus and enabling attention to be focused on high-priority/high risk governance workstreams including selection processes. Streamlining initiatives endorsed were identified based on assessment of level of effort, financial implications, need, previous EGC steer, risk, and avoiding duplication of effort.[11]

30th Ethics and Governance Committee Meeting, May 2026, extract from Meeting Report

- **Near-term governance effectiveness focus areas**.
    - The Secretariat sought EGC input on the proposals and asked for further suggestions for near term adaptations for greater effectiveness.
    - EGC members expressed ideas about how to make Board and Committee work more streamlined, create more meaningful time for deliberation and decision making whilst also recognizing and honoring the hours Secretariat, committee members and Board members spend in preparing for each agenda item. The importance of simplification for better governance was noted.
    - Many noted that the current rhythm—heavy paper loads, limited time between Committee and Board meetings, and repeated discussions across three Committees—creates unnecessary burden without necessarily meaning better outcomes.
    - Suggestions included concentrating Board agendas on decisional items, shifting information only items to virtual formats and streamlining or limiting papers to reduce volume. Learning platforms may support information sharing, while an inventory of governance reporting may support prioritization and filtering out of legacy reporting. Another view was shared that Global Fund governance papers are of particularly high quality, and noted the responsibility of Board and Committee members to effectively engage with the issues presented. Fewer meetings, and leveraging virtual formats, combined with spreading workload across shorter sessions, may support focus and manage burden and cost. The format of meetings themselves may usefully evolve, reducing presentation time to maximize interactive engagement. Support was expressed for the important role of the CG. Several emphasized that trust, clarity, and timely communication are essential, and that virtual engagement can work well when relationships are already strong, though constituencies with many countries face challenges in maintaining rotation, voice, and experience.

[11] GF/EGC29A/02 – Streamlining Governance Phase 1

- EGC members also expressed that governance adaptations must balance efficiency with inclusiveness, recognizing the constraints faced by constituencies. The question of reducing delegation size at Board meetings received mixed feedback, with several members noting concern regarding trade-offs, particularly for multi-country constituencies, alongside some expression of acceptance of the need to explore alternative approaches given real financial constraints, and reflections on how a hybrid delegation approach could be leveraged to support constituency engagement through increasing numbers of virtual participants.
- Overall, the committee discussed that ensuring governance effectiveness will require disciplined prioritization, clearer roles, and a willingness to streamline processes so the Board can focus on decisions that matter.

- **Future adaptations.**
  - The EGC finally briefly looked to the future and recognized approaches to joint engagement with other organizations, Board composition and committee structure and mandates are all discussions that will likely need further consideration in the coming months.

Annex 2 - Governance Effectiveness - Roles and responsibilities at a glance

Governance body	Role in governance effectiveness	Current focus
Board	Establishes the direction and principles for Global Fund governance in line with its core functions (Bylaws).	Provide steer at B55 on principles, near-term measures and the handling of longer-term adaptation questions.
Coordinating Group	Supports coherence across Board and committee agendas, reduces fragmentation and helps ensure that committee work supports Board priorities. Plays a specific role on effectiveness of information flow including prioritizing reporting to ensure optimal use of resources in support of governance structures. (Terms of Reference of the Coordinating Group)	Translate risk and governance-effectiveness themes into focused agendas and pathways for Board consideration.
Ethics and Governance Committee	Oversight of governance strengthening initiatives, constituency engagement and learning; advisory role on governance performance and governance-related policy and procedures. Oversees governance risk, to inform AFC and Board holistic oversight of risk landscape. (EGC Charter)..	Provide input on governance risks, near-term effectiveness measures and issues requiring further governance discussion.
Secretariat	Supports and assists governance bodies (Bylaws) including with analysis, effective documentation, implementation and monitoring of agreed approaches.	Support implementation of changes while managing burden, cost, quality of information and continuity of governance support.

Governance Officials. Including Board, CG and EGC members, serve in line with the values and responsibilities defined in the Code of Conduct for Governance Officials.

Annex 3 – Relevant Past Documents & Reference Materials

- GF/B55/03A – 2025 Annual Risk Management Report
- GF/B55/03B – 2026 ORR Update
- GF/B55/15 – Report of the Coordinating Group and Board Leadership
- 30th EGC Meeting Report and Summary Report (Internal)
- GF/EGC30/08 – Governance Effectiveness (Internal)
- GF/EGC29A/02 – Streamlining Governance Phase 1 (Internal)
- GF/B51/13 - Governance Performance Assessment 2024
- GF/EGC27/02 - Governance Enhancement Plan 2025 (Internal)