Evolving the TRP Model in the current context
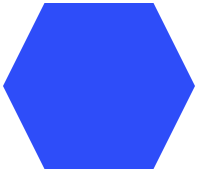
53rd Board Meeting
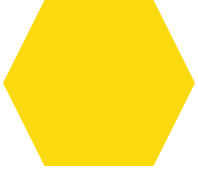
GF/B53/07 – Annex 2

7 – 9 May 2025, Geneva, Switzerland

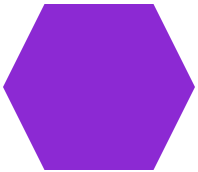# What do we want to achieve with the TRP evolution?

A fit for purpose model for independent review in the context of the broader approach to GC8 preparations

Streamlining, simplification and differentiation across the grant life cycle to realize benefits for countries and Secretariat
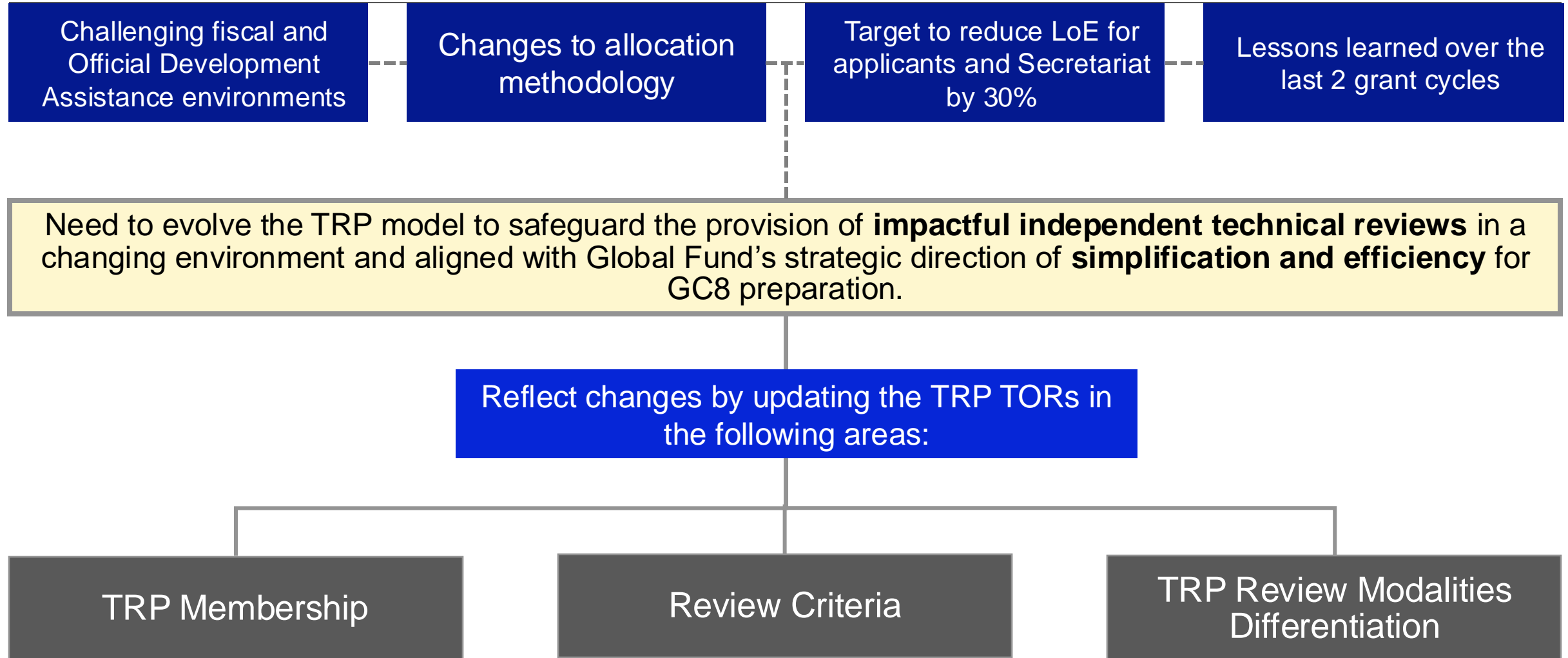
Differentiated approaches for focused portfolios

Protecting the gains in countries with highest disease burden and lowest economic capacity to optimize TRP efforts to deliver impact where it is most needed

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Objective of the proposed updates to the TRP Terms of Reference

| Challenging fiscal and Official Development Assistance environments | Changes to allocation methodology | Target to reduce LoE for applicants and Secretariat by 30% | Lessons learned over the last 2 grant cycles |

Need to evolve the TRP model to safeguard the provision of **impactful independent technical reviews** in a changing environment and aligned with Global Fund's strategic direction of **simplification and efficiency** for GC8 preparation.

Reflect changes by updating the TRP TORs in the following areas:

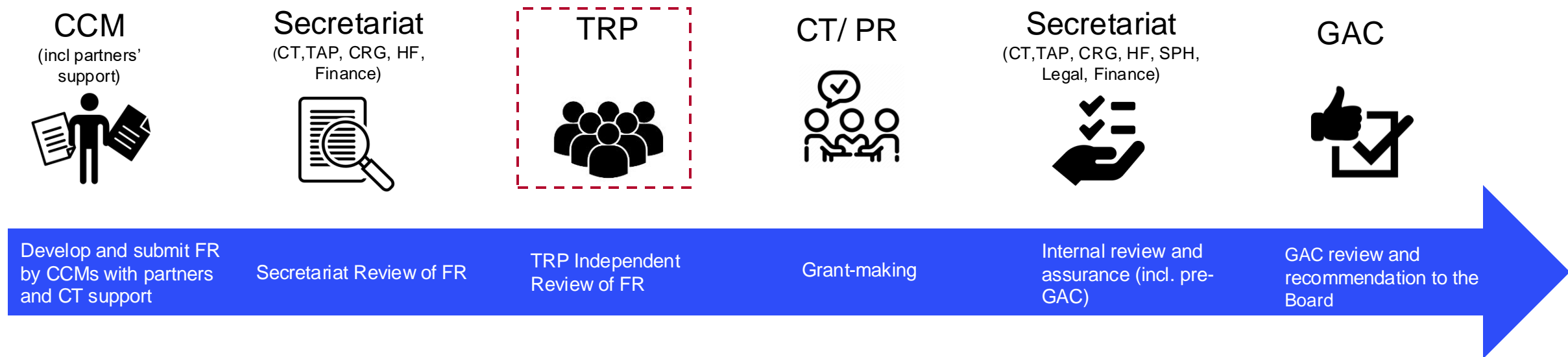| TRP Membership | Review Criteria | TRP Review Modalities Differentiation |

TRP Review Modalities

FOR APPROVAL

Note: This presentation focuses on the "TRP Review Modalities" proposal. The "TRP Membership Term Extension" and "TRP Review Criteria" proposals received broad agreement at the Strategy Committee and are further detailed in GF-B53-07.

TRP Review Differentiated model
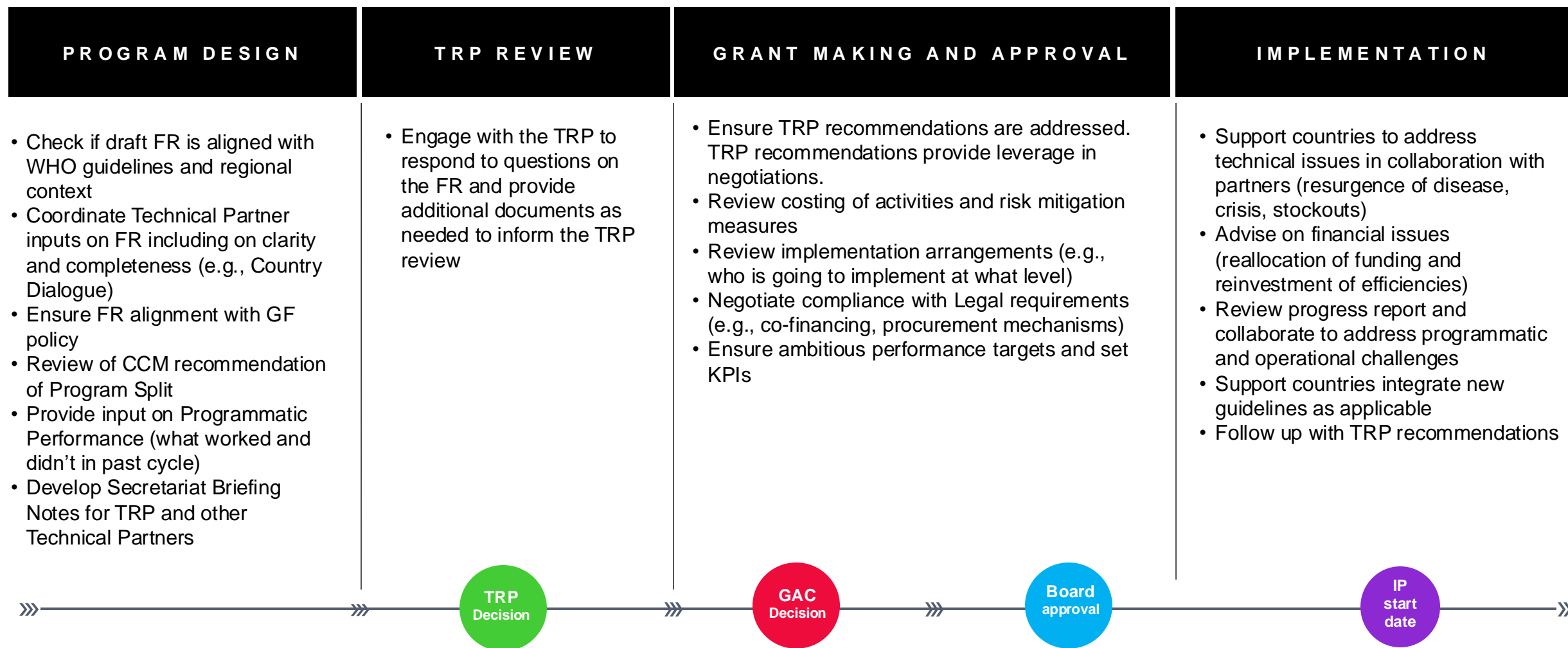## Baseline considerations

1. The **value of an independent TRP review** is indisputable but need to reconcile value of independent TRP Review with the urgent **need to simplify and differentiate.**

2. **Attempts to simplify applications so far have not been successful**, because simplified forms did not cover all TRP information needs and led to many questions for additional information and/or iteration.

3. The TRP review model has not changed significantly over the past cycles. **Evolving the model is needed within the overall context of GC8 preparations,** including simplification and streamlining, focus on countries with highest disease burden and allocations and Board guidance on sustainability

TRP Review of Funding Request is one step in the funding request and grant making cycle

CCM	Secretariat	TRP	CT/ PR	Secretariat	GAC
(incl partners' support)	(CT,TAP, CRG, HF, Finance)			(CT,TAP, CRG, HF, SPH, Legal, Finance)	

| Develop and submit FR by CCMs with partners and CT support | Secretariat Review of FR | TRP Independent Review of FR | Grant-making | Internal review and assurance (incl. pre-GAC) | GAC review and recommendation to the Board |

- The Technical Review Panel (TRP) is an impartial team of experts appointed by the Strategy Committee with the responsibility of providing **rigorous, independent technical assessment** of funding requests (*TRP TORs*).
- The TRP has historically requested FRs with a high level of detail, allowing their assurance to be based on a robust assessment of the technical and strategic elements of each funding request.
- The TRP review is preceded and followed by other steps involving CTs, technical teams, MEC members and partners.

Secretariat role & support to countries in the funding cycle

PROGRAM DESIGN	TRP REVIEW	GRANT MAKING AND APPROVAL	IMPLEMENTATION

PROGRAM DESIGN
- Check if draft FR is aligned with WHO guidelines and regional context
- Coordinate Technical Partner inputs on FR including on clarity and completeness (e.g., Country Dialogue)
- Ensure FR alignment with GF policy
- Review of CCM recommendation of Program Split
- Provide input on Programmatic Performance (what worked and didn't in past cycle)
- Develop Secretariat Briefing Notes for TRP and other Technical Partners

TRP REVIEW
- Engage with the TRP to respond to questions on the FR and provide additional documents as needed to inform the TRP review

GRANT MAKING AND APPROVAL
- Ensure TRP recommendations are addressed. TRP recommendations provide leverage in negotiations.
- Review costing of activities and risk mitigation measures
- Review implementation arrangements (e.g., who is going to implement at what level)
- Negotiate compliance with Legal requirements (e.g., co-financing, procurement mechanisms)
- Ensure ambitious performance targets and set KPIs

IMPLEMENTATION
- Support countries to address technical issues in collaboration with partners (resurgence of disease, crisis, stockouts)
- Advise on financial issues (reallocation of funding and reinvestment of efficiencies)
- Review progress report and collaborate to address programmatic and operational challenges
- Support countries integrate new guidelines as applicable
- Follow up with TRP recommendations

TRP Decision · GAC Decision · Board approval · IP start date

Secretariat and Technical Partner support to countries complements the independent advice from TRP

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GC8 Preparations: Ongoing Secretariat efforts to streamline FR/GM processes

The TRP is one of the key actors under review. This discussion centers on the role and future of the TRP in light of the broader operational and policy changes, specifically revisiting its TORs.

Funding request and application process

A dedicated workstream focuses on streamlining the application process by reducing the number of requirements, annexes, and associated processes to optimize the information needed and minimize the effort required at each stage.

Review and approval Process

This workstream focuses on sub-processes related to the review and approval of funding requests and grants, including internal (Secretariat technical teams, GMD, GAC) and external stakeholders such as partners and the **TRP.**

Optimization and streamlining

This workstream focuses on strengthening organizational effectiveness and adaptability through enhanced use of technology, process improvements, organizational adjustments, and cost management.
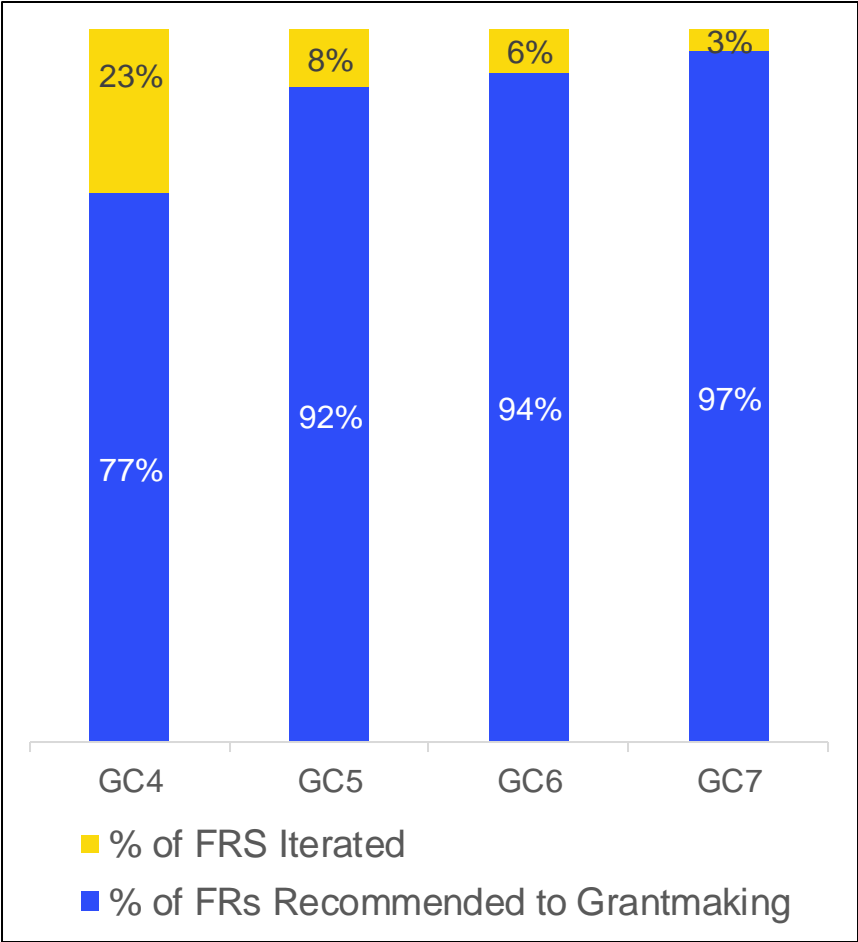
Risk and Assurance

Efforts to streamline risk management and assurance processes aim to make these mechanisms more efficient while maintaining the effectiveness of oversight and accepting higher risk in lower risk contexts.

Funding Requests: improved quality and stability

TRP FR Quality Survey Ratings on Overall FR Quality

GC4: 79% Good and Very Good, 21% Poor & Very Poor
GC5: 87% Good and Very Good, 13% Poor & Very Poor
GC6: 89% Good and Very Good, 11% Poor & Very Poor
GC7: 94% Good and Very Good, 6% Poor & Very Poor

■ Good and Very Good ■ Poor & Very Poor
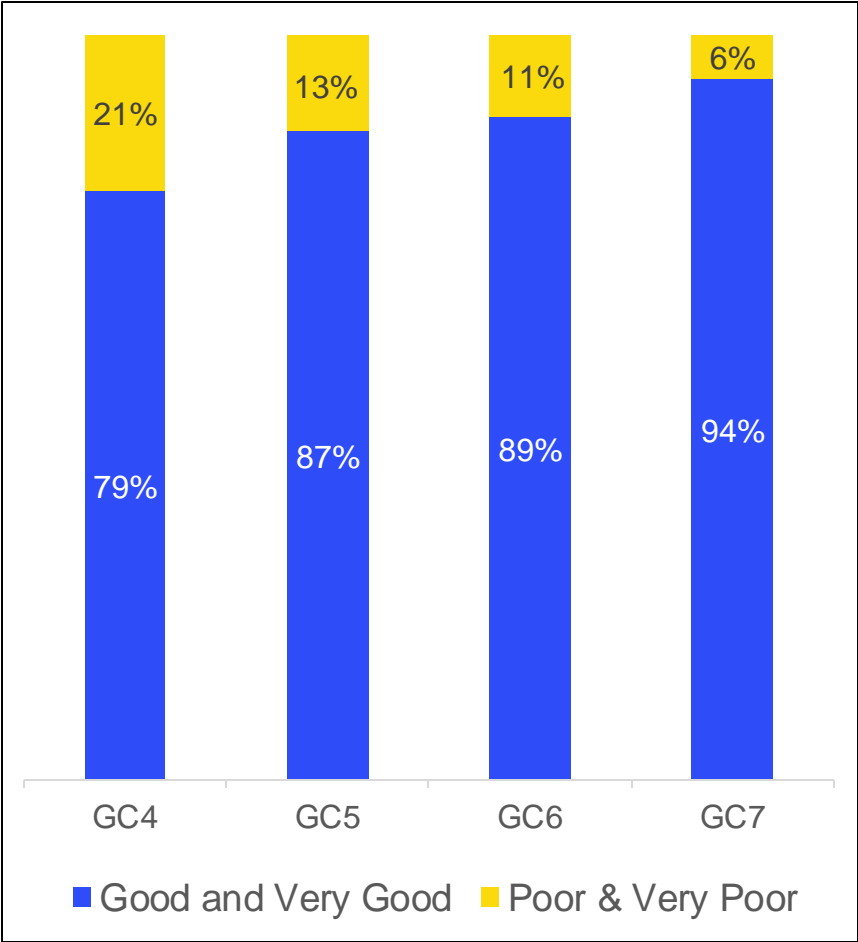
FRs recommended to Grantmaking vs Iteration, total number of New Submissions

GC4: 77% Recommended to Grantmaking, 23% Iterated
GC5: 92% Recommended to Grantmaking, 8% Iterated
GC6: 94% Recommended to Grantmaking, 6% Iterated
GC7: 97% Recommended to Grantmaking, 3% Iterated

■ % of FRS Iterated
■ % of FRs Recommended to Grantmaking

85% of GF grants are now continuing grants with the same PR

GC4-GC6 All FRs, GC7 FRs W1-W6

GC8 Preparations: Examples of streamlining efforts across the FR/GM processes

Funding Request Streamlining

- **Retiring many standalone annexes, streamlining others**
- **Highly differentiated submission requirements:**
  - Focused (Focused Narrative + 7 annexes)
  - High Impact/Core countries (Full Narrative + 12 annexes)
- **Reduction in Global Fund guidance by ~1000 pages**
- **Funding Request submission via online portal with automated data validation for the Performance Framework**

Grant-making and Grant Review streamlining

- **Differentiation of documentation requirements** according to portfolio types to enhance efficiency of the GM process.
- **Enhancement of GAC efficiency** by separating compliance functions from strategic deliberations to expedite the review process.
- **Streamlining of GAC approval process** through expanding electronic GAC approvals for low-risk grants below a specified financial threshold to simplify the approval process.

Proposal to adapt the TRP through a differentiated review model

There is no situation under which the TRP cannot be called upon to review and provide insights

High Impact/Core
(>95% of allocations)

- Standard → **TRP Full Review** (NSP based)
- COE → **TRP Full Review** (with flexible and tailored review as per COE policy)
- Highly commoditized
- High performance, broadly on track → **Program Continuation** (TRP review exempted or targeted TRP review, if certain criteria are met)

Focused
(<5% of allocations)

- Transition portfolios → TRP Tailored review of **Transition Portfolios**
- Other portfolios *(regional, RBF, KP focused, etc.)* → TRP review of **Focused Portfolios** following agreed general guidelines

The [failed] experience with Program Continuation

▶ **Differentiated funding requests didn't lead to simplification. PC Funding requests have become heavier in content (number of pages per component has increased 5-fold since GC5)**

- **Program Continuation (PC) approach**, launched in 2017, was designed for the well preforming (A, B1 ratings) with effective implementation, no significant changes in epidemiological context or scope of the program.

- Although **initially envisioned as simplified**, in a vast majority of cases **evolved into a comprehensive funding request** with PF and budget and multiple annexes
  - Nature of an independent review: Requires a comprehensive level of detail for a thorough technical assessment, (more in-depth than what would be needed for the stakeholders already involved in the program).
  - Applicants fear the number of question the TRP will ask and so continually add more to their FR submission. The length of Program Continuation application increased with each cycle.

- **Partners provide ongoing support throughout the FR development process** (including conducting mock TRP reviews to assist applicants in improving their submissions) and CT increased capacity and hands-on engagement to identify issues at early stage.

- **Continuing Principal Recipients** (85% of GF grants in GC7 are continuing from GC6. 93% of GC7 PRs are continuing PRs from GC6 - i.e., an experienced PR that takes on more components).

The [failed] experience with Program Continuation

	GC5		GC6		GC7
Average # of FR Pages per Component by Cycle	11	➡	30	➡	54

Program Continuation funding requests were intended to be a **streamlined validation** of well-performing programs, however, there was little difference in the amount of information presented.

	Full Review		Program Continuation
Average # of FR Pages per Component, GC7	62	➡	54

Despite good program performance being a criteria for the approach, Program Continuation FRs were only perceived as **slightly higher-quality** by the TRP. The number of recommendations was similar to full review funding requests

	Full Review		Program Continuation
Average # of TRP Issues/Actions per Component	3 / 5	➡	2 / 4

	Full Review		Program Continuation
Average # of TRP Questions to CTs per Component	10	➡	13

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Source: GC7 Desk Review

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# For Board Approval: TRP Review Modalities

Program Continuation

- **All High-Impact and Core portfolios will be reviewed by the TRP unless they meet a set of principle-level criteria (pre-agreed with the TRP), in which case they would qualify for Program Continuation, and would follow either:**

  i)   a targeted TRP review on specific areas or interventions in the funding request where TRP review is needed; or

  i)   a costed extension in accordance with relevant policies, which does not require a TRP review.

- **General principle-level criteria that would determine no or targeted TRP review include:**
  - Good portfolio performance and being on-track to achieve global targets.
  - Positive change over time and highly commoditized – over 75% of the grant.

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The experience with Focused Portfolios

Focused portfolios FRs are resource intensive with disproportionate Level of Effort against investments

▶ **Focused portfolios** represent a significantly low share of key strategic targets (45% of countries with less than 5% of total funding in GC7) (limited risk). 1/3 of TRP Review LoE is on focused countries.

▶ While many FRs are now submitted as joint/integrated (e.g. H/T), **the total n. of FRs proportion is still much higher than the total value.**

▶ **Trend towards even smaller allocations**: according to the new Board-approved Allocation Model, allocations for MICs will be even smaller in GC8.

▶ **Results-based financing used more in Focused Countries**: TRP review more challenging with this streamlined model as less information is available on the use of funds.
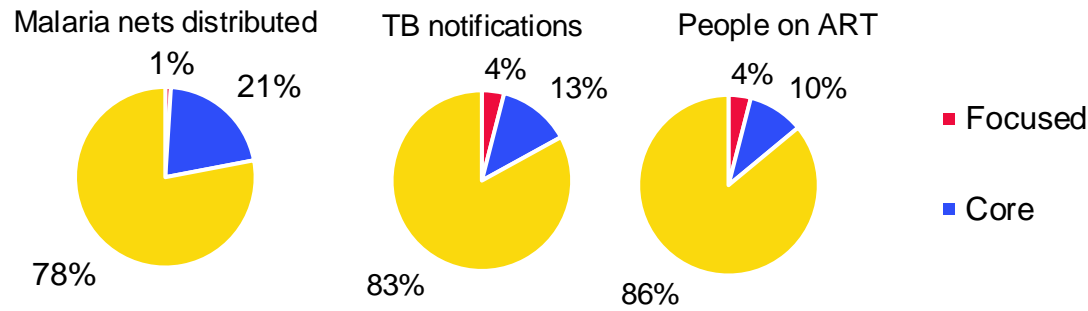
Example:	Belarus - Focused	Mozambique - HI
TB/HIV Allocation	22 Million	515 Million
FR Narrative	119 pages	124 pages
GF Annexes	656 pages	1052 pages
Other Annexes	780 pages	1195 pages
Total	**1555 pages**	**2371 pages**

GC7 Requirements	Full Review	Focused Portfolios
Sections required in FR	14	7
FR Stage Annexes Required/Requested	17/21	16/20
# of Required Grant-making Outputs	46	29-33

GC7 Experience	Full Review	Focused Portfolios
Average FR Narrative Pages per Component	62	46
Average # of TRP Questions for CTs per Component	10	13
Average # Months from FR Submission to 1st Board Approval	7.0	6.7

Malaria nets distributed
1% 21%
78%

TB notifications
4% 13%
83%

People on ART
4% 10%
86%

- Focused
- Core

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For Board Approval: TRP Review Modalities

Tailored for Focused Portfolios (1/2)

▶ **Focused countries will not be reviewed by the TRP and will go directly into grant-making, by default.** However, **this approach <u>maintains opportunity for independent TRP review</u>** to get technical steer in the Focused Portfolios priority areas such as key populations and sustainability and transition. TRP review can be requested by the CCMs and the Secretariat, in consultation with relevant technical partners, during grant design.

• Secretariat and CCMs will use, but are not limited by, the following **principle-level criteria to request a TRP review:**
  • Proposed strategy/approaches/technologies not (yet) part of WHO guidelines
  • Unfavorable context for impactful interventions (e.g. KPs, HR, etc.)
  • Difficult trade-offs need to be decided with limited funding
  • Insufficient technical advice received during Funding Request development

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For Board Approval: TRP Review Modalities

Tailored for Focused Portfolios (2/2)

▶ To ensure continued independent oversight and access to technical inputs, while aligning with the principles of simplification and differentiation, the proposal includes the following measures:

    i.   the TRP will be engaged upfront to provide input on priority investment areas for Focused Portfolios (through regional/sub-regional pre-shaping meetings) that will inform grant design;

    ii.   TRP review can be requested by the CCMs and the Secretariat, in consultation with relevant technical partners, during grant design; and

    iii. the Secretariat will consult the TRP in defining the principle-level criteria that will guide CCMs and Secretariat to determine when to request a TRP review.

- **When TRP review is required**, TRP recommendations will focus on GF funded interventions and will be delegated to the Secretariat for clearance.

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For Board Approval: TRP Review Modalities

Tailored for Transition

▶ **All Transition Portfolios reviewed by TRP.** This approach provides for the following:

- o Ensures all countries in transition are independently reviewed by TRP, giving **additional assurance to strengthen transition plans**.

- o Should there be a need, **CTs can leverage TRP when negotiations with the country have stalled**. If the CT has a concern about the **pace or quality of the transition,** a TRP review would be particularly helpful to get the program back on course.

Annexes
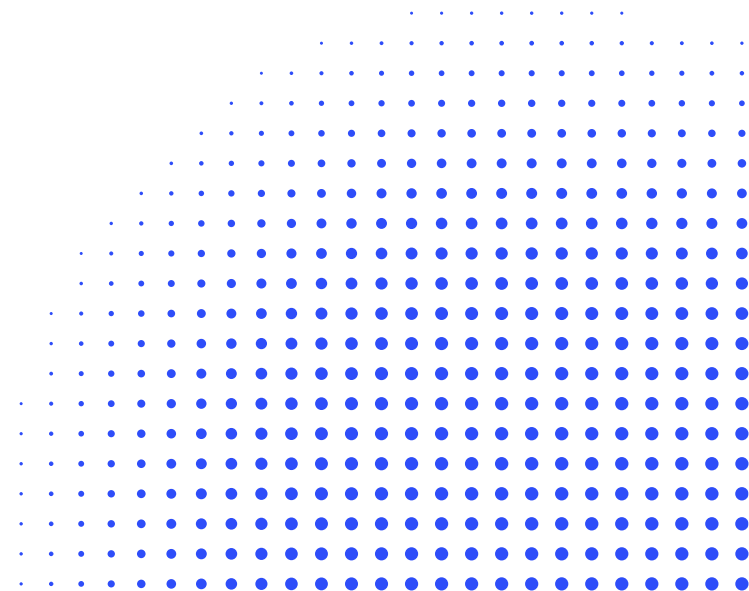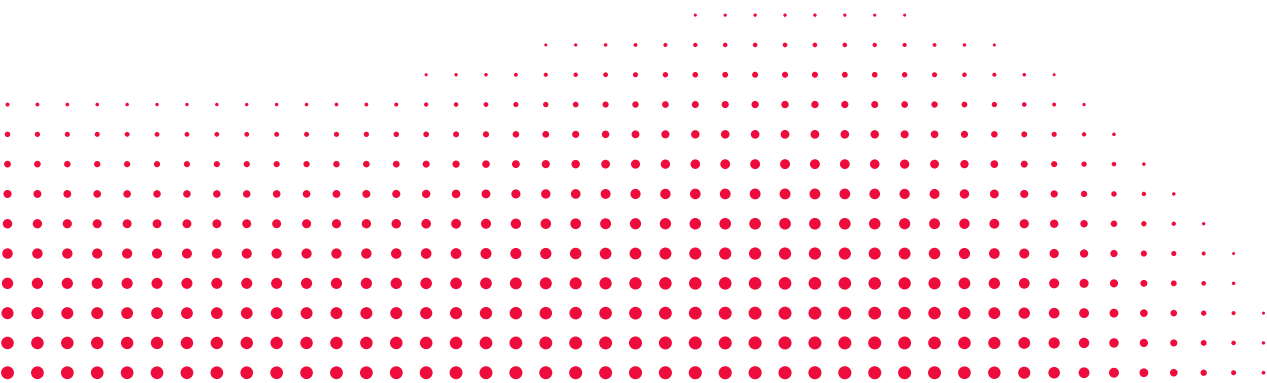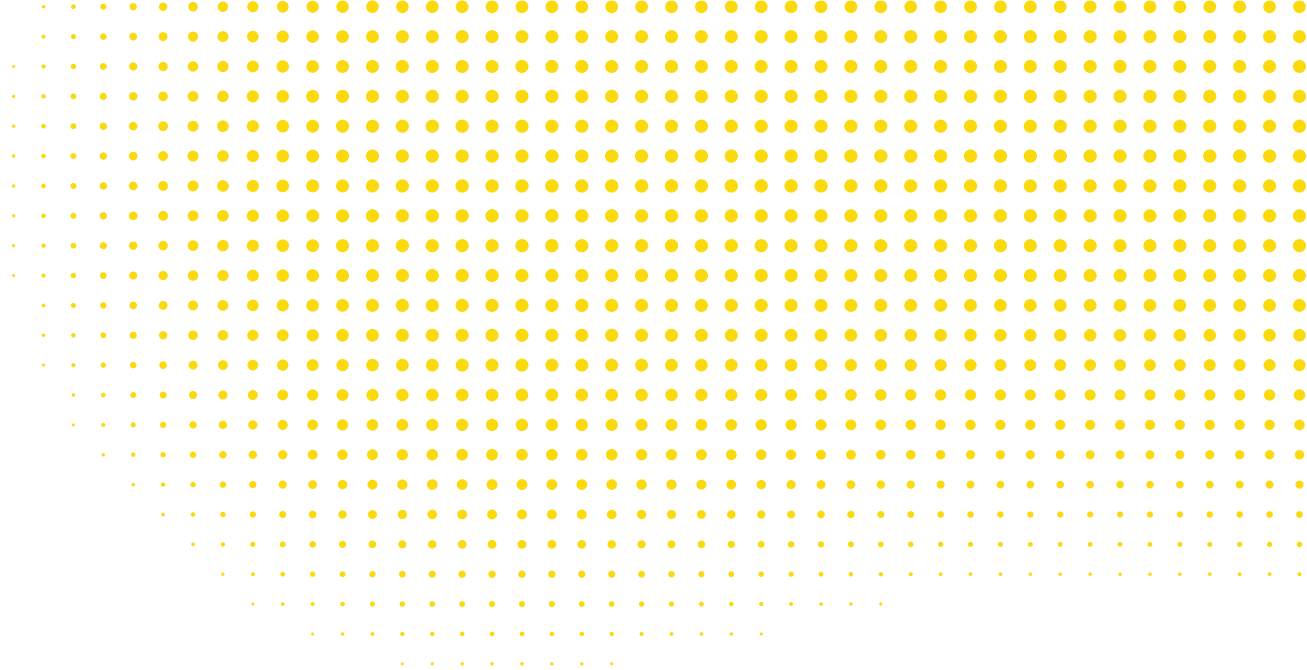
Examples where TRP recommendations brought value to Countries & Country Teams in GC7
Similar examples could be potential opt-ins in the future

<table>
<tr><td>Egypt</td><td>MER (Middle East Response)</td></tr>
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Egypt

- The previously submitted gender assessment report will be reworked thanks to the TRP's recommendation to include national data on rates of gender-based violence against female sex workers and women who inject drugs. (Issue 1)
- An assessment on the size and needs of transgender people and women who inject / use drug will be prioritized for the first time. These KPs have been systematically excluded from Egypt's response to HIV. (Issues 1 and 2.03)
- CLM will be piloted and prioritized in Egypt (in collaboration with UNAIDS) thanks to the TRP's recommendation to empower communities, invest in community systems, and to improve service quality at government-run facilities. (Issue 1.05)
- Inspired by Issue 4 on the limited scope and capacity to ensure readiness for MoH to become the PR, CRG and Egypt CT were able to work with the PR to add depth and complexity to the implementation arrangements and for the first time, introduce sub-sub-recipients under Civil Society sub-recipients.

MER (Middle East Response)

- New Civil Society Organization (CSO) subrecipients were added in 3 additional countries (Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria) where previously there was only 1 (Jordan) thanks to Issue 1 flagged by the TRP on *Insufficient civil society engagement in key population service delivery.* This has resulted in a concrete workplan tracking measure for the PR. This has also inspired one fulltime staff at IOM (Lebanon) to be dedicated to CSO coordination — bringing them together from across the 7-country grant to exchange knowledge and best practices.
- Similar to Egypt, CLM will be introduced for MER among the newly incoming and existing CSOs with a particular focus on removing stigma and other human rights related barriers with the aim of improving services. This was directly because of TRP Issue 5 on the *Lack of strategic focus on human rights and gender.*

Examples where TRP recommendations created challenges for Countries & Country Teams*

Costa Rica

Government decided the engagement with the GF not worth it and declined GC8 funds after received TRP recommendations outside focus areas and challenges of State laws. Grant is closing.

Dominican Republic

Impossibility for country to comply with TRP issues (outside focus areas) because politically sensitive and implementation timeline.

Iran

TRP's recommendations were challenged considering the limited scope and resources of this Focused Portfolios with a specific country context. TRP insisted on unrealistic recommendations on KP programming in this specific context

Botswana

Cross-cutting TRP experts have a good understanding of balance and priority in a focused portfolios in a high burden country with very small #s of KPs (e.g., proposing that CCM should include representatives from all KPs and arguing for increased investments in every single KP, in a generalized, high prevalence epidemic with 95/95/95 reached. Also poor recognition of the significant progress made on HR issues in a country that has been part of Breaking-Down-Barriers from the onset.

Djibouti

- Redundancy. Some programmatic issues were useful but were picked up by disease specialists
- 1 issue was pertinent but immaterial given the limited programmatic impact and allocation size
- 1 issue already addressed by the CT.
- 1 programmatic issue (malaria) was completely inadequate and really had nothing to do with the GF investments or activities that GF would have any leverage on (MOH collaboration with WHO on TES…)
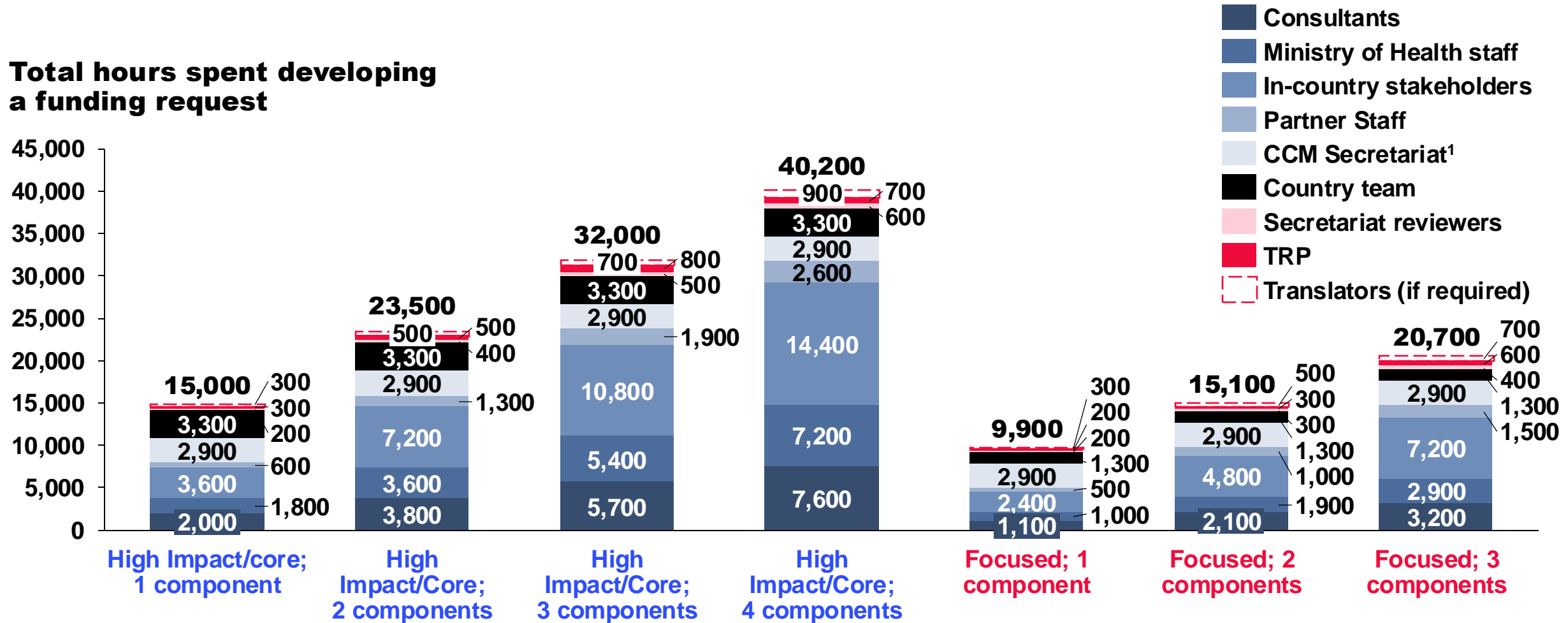
*Not in line with agreement reached by the CCM with the government, for example.
Cross-cutting comments:
- TRP recommendations to produce legislative changes (especially when our investment levels are comparatively small) seems to be challenging across regions.

Level of effort estimates to develop a funding request range between 9,900 to 40,200 hours

Total hours spent developing a funding request

Legend:
- Consultants
- Ministry of Health staff
- In-country stakeholders
- Partner Staff
- CCM Secretariat[1]
- Country team
- Secretariat reviewers
- TRP
- Translators (if required)

High Impact/core; 1 component — 15,000
- 2,000
- 3,600
- 2,900
- 3,300
- 300
- 300
- 200
- 600
- 1,800

High Impact/Core; 2 components — 23,500
- 3,800
- 3,600
- 7,200
- 2,900
- 3,300
- 500
- 500
- 400
- 1,300

High Impact/Core; 3 components — 32,000
- 5,700
- 5,400
- 10,800
- 2,900
- 3,300
- 700
- 800
- 500
- 1,900

High Impact/Core; 4 components — 40,200
- 7,600
- 7,200
- 14,400
- 2,600
- 2,900
- 3,300
- 900
- 700
- 600

Focused; 1 component — 9,900
- 1,100
- 2,400
- 2,900
- 300
- 200
- 200
- 1,300
- 500
- 1,000

Focused; 2 components — 15,100
- 2,100
- 4,800
- 2,900
- 500
- 300
- 300
- 1,300
- 1,000
- 1,900

Focused; 3 components — 20,700
- 3,200
- 2,900
- 7,200
- 2,900
- 700
- 600
- 400
- 1,300
- 1,500

Portfolio type; number of components

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