

Community Update for MSM Advocates: Changes at the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

September 2012

The Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF) has been tracking the major changes taking place at the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. These changes stem from the implementation of the new Strategy for 2012-2016, approved by the Global Fund Board in November 2011. This update highlights the major developments relevant to HIV advocates dedicated to advancing the health and human rights of men who have sex with men (MSM).

1. New Mechanisms for Civil Society Engagement:

The Global Fund Secretariat has undergone significant re-structuring (see organizational chart, below). This has changed the way that civil society – including MSM advocates and grassroots NGOs working with MSM - will engage with the Global Fund. The MSMGF welcomes the intent to map out clear pathways for civil society engagement, and applauds the transparency through which these entry points have been shared with the community. We look forward to monitoring their implementation closely.

- **Specialist Position Created on Key Populations:**
 - While the role of *Senior Adviser for Sexual and Gender Diversity* (formerly held by Andy Seale) no longer exists, a new technical support position has been created to champion issues relevant to key populations, including MSM: *Senior Specialist, Gender and Key Populations*.
 - This individual will be supported by a *Specialist on Gender, Key Populations and Human Rights*, who will also work with the *Senior Specialist on Human Rights and Equity*. Recruitment is currently on-going for all three positions.
 - All three staff will operate within the Technical Partnerships and Advisory Team, located under the Strategic Investment and Impact Division (SIID).
- **Update on SOGI Strategy:**
 - According to the Global Fund's recent information note on civil society engagement (linked at the bottom of this section), the Senior Specialist on Gender and Key Populations will be the focal point for implementing two strategies:
 - *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities Strategy*
<http://tinyurl.com/cqvf4tg>
 - *Gender Equality Strategy*
<http://tinyurl.com/cvzkutb>
 - The policy directive to carry out this work falls under partnerships elements and Strategic Objective 4 of the 2012-2016 Strategy Implementation Plan.
- **Multiple Entry Points:**
 - Civil society advocates will be able to engage with the Global Fund across three major branches (see organigram below):
 - Resource Mobilization and Donor Relations (via the Policy and Civil Society Advocacy arm);
 - Strategy, Investment and Impact (via the Key Advisors named above)
 - Grant Management (CCM hub)

The Global Fund has prepared an **Information Note on Global Fund Engagement with Civil Society** that provides detailed information on the new structure and the new policies that will impact civil society, as well as the names and contact information of critical staff:

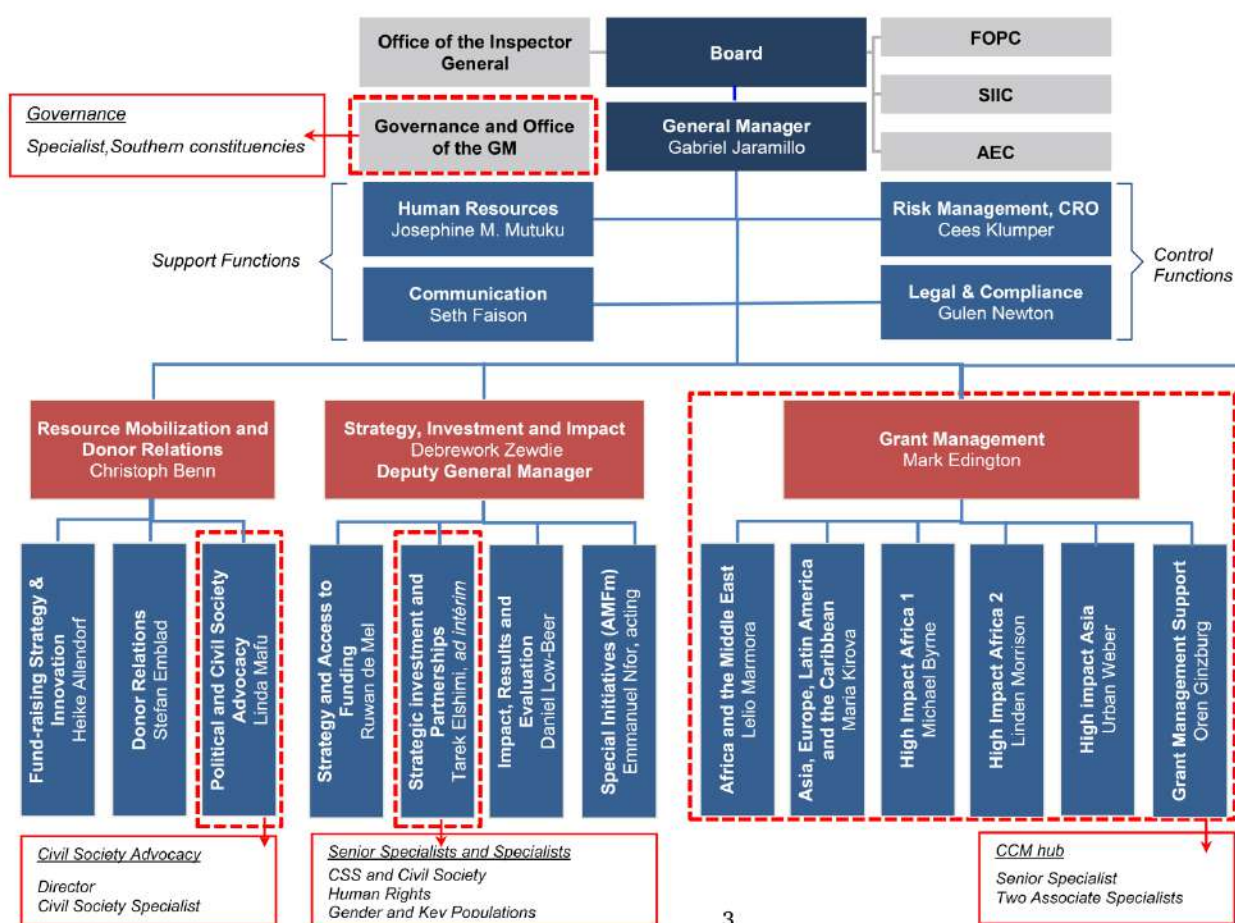
English:

http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/civil_society/MEC_2012-09-10-GlobalFundEngagementWithCivilSociety_InformationNote_en/

French:

http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/civil_society/MEC_2012-09-10-GlobalFundEngagementWithCivilSociety_InformationNote_fr/

Figure 1: New Secretariat structure with highlights of civil society and partnerships focus



Source: Information Note: Global Fund Engagement with Civil Society (links noted above)

2. The Global Fund's New Funding Model:

During the September 13-14 meeting, the Board took steps toward finalizing a new funding model for the Global Fund. While not all details have been agreed upon, the board did “adopt in principle,” several major features:

From Funding “Rounds” to an Iterative Model

The Global Fund previously engaged in funding “Rounds,” soliciting proposals from target countries in a competition for funding based on need and technical merit. The new model will move into a more flexible system, beginning with a “country dialogue” between applicant nations and Global Fund staff – ideally based on a country’s existing National Strategy and other tools, such as the Investment Framework (http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2011/JC2244_InvestmentFramework_en.pdf). The outcome of this dialogue will enable countries submit a much shorter (and less labor-intensive) concept note to the Fund for review by the Technical Review Panel (TRP). The TRP will ultimately make a recommendation for those program elements that should be funded using the available funds (to be known as “indicative range” – see below) and additional program elements that should be funded if new monies become available (known as the “incentive stream” – again, see below).

Funding “Bands”

The Fund’s emphasis on strategic investment has prompted new discussions about investing for impact. This has led to the creation of “bands”: small groups of countries with similar characteristics - in particular, disease burden and ability to pay for HIV programs via national funds. Other factors may be considered as well, though the specifics remain to be determined by the Secretariat and the Global Fund’s SIIC, which will be working to develop detailed recommendations to the Board before the next Board Meeting in November. What is known to date is that country bands will be the primary mechanism for allocating funding to Global Fund recipients.

The MSMGF is concerned that certain country contexts – especially middle-income countries with low general HIV prevalence but highly concentrated epidemics occurring among MSM – could stand to lose out in a funding bands approach. While these countries may theoretically have a higher ability to pay for their own programs and fewer citizens overall who are infected and affected by HIV, it is clear that gay men and other MSM continue to be neglected in the government response. In many cases, international donors such as the Global Fund are the only resources available to support HIV programs for MSM and other key populations, especially in countries where it is not politically expedient to utilize national funds for highly stigmatized or criminalized populations. We encourage the Global Fund to consider these nuances carefully as they work to delineate country band groupings, and to generate a formula for determining overall funding allocations to each band.

Country Caps or Funding Limits?

Prior to the September Board meeting, several proposed funding models were under consideration, including a “country envelope” model that would pre-determine the amount of funding available to a given country. The intention was designed to enhance funding predictability, and thereby facilitate national-level planning processes. However, many civil society groups feared that envelopes would serve as “caps” or limitations on the amount of funding per country, which they felt would fundamentally change the Global Fund from a demand-driven model to a “top-down” approach.

At the September meeting, the Board reached a compromise: within each band of countries, (A) a portion of the total available funding will be allocated to country-specific envelopes, called “indicative ranges” of what countries can expect to receive, and (B) the remaining portion will be up for open competition between countries in the same band, called the “incentive stream.” It has not yet been determined what proportion of overall funds will go into (A) vs. (B).

The MSMGF feels strongly that a major proportion of overall Global Fund monies should be allocated to (B) the “incentive” stream, in order to maintain the demand-driven ethos of the Fund. In addition, discussions about creating a “queue” for technically-sound, but as-yet unfunded programs are vitally important. The MSMGF feels that such a queue is absolutely essential, as this will be a vital channel for

moving forward with urgently needed programs as soon as new funds become available. Also, the “un-funded programs queue” will serve as a major advocacy tool for continued replenishment of the Fund, as it will be an immediate and concrete demonstration of need to funders and donors, who may ask “what would additional funding pledges be used for?”

It is expected that these details will be voted on during the November Board meeting. In the meantime, the Global Fund’s SIIC will work with the Secretariat to come up with recommendations to the Board.

MARPs Reserve Fund

By all indications, there is strong support for maintaining the Most-At-Risk Populations (MARPs) Reserve Fund, i.e. the dedicated pool of funding for MSM and other key populations. The Annex to the Decision Points document outlining the Overarching Principles of the new Funding Model states that “The new model...will support continued funding for most-at-risk populations.” (Please refer to page 8: http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/board/27/BM27_DecisionPoints_Report_en/) However, no details are available at this time about the size of the fund, the proportion of overall Global Fund monies that would be channeled into this fund, nor any adjustments to eligible populations or application criteria/processes.

The MSMGF maintains its strong support for protecting and expanding the MARP’s Reserve, which has been one of the most concrete mechanisms to date for financially prioritizing HIV programs for MSM and other key populations, who all too often are prioritized in official policies and national AIDS strategies but not actually funded for program implementation or scale-up.

More details about the new Funding Model are available via the official Decision Points from the Board meeting, (beginning on page 7), available here:

http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/board/27/BM27_DecisionPoints_Report_en/

3. Next Steps:

The Global Fund Secretariat and SIIC have pledged to conduct several rounds of community consultations to gather more detailed input about the new funding proposal. To date, no official consultation dates, times or focal point people have been publicly shared.

However, the MSMGF encourages all of its members and allies concerned with advancing the health and human rights of gay men and other MSM to reach out to their local Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) to inquire about possible consultation opportunities.

Contact

Should you have any questions about this document or recent developments at the Global Fund, please contact the MSMGF’s Director of Policy, Noah Metheny, at Nmetheny@msmsgf.org.