

GLOBAL FUND OBSERVER (GFO), an independent newsletter about the Global Fund provided by Aidspace to nearly 10,000 subscribers.

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The Fund has posted at its web site the proposal form and support documentation for countries wishing to apply for Round 6 funding. Applications must be submitted by 3 August 2006.

[2. NEWS: "Aidspace Guide to Round 6 Applications to the Global Fund" is Released](#)

"The Aidspace Guide to Round 6 Applications to the Global Fund" has just been published, and is accessible at the Aidspace website. The Guide distils conclusions that can be drawn from a detailed analysis of the successful proposals that were submitted to the Global Fund in Rounds 3, 4 and 5; and it provides a step-by-step guide to filling out the Round 6 proposal form.

[3. ANALYSIS: The Major Strengths and Weaknesses of Previous Applications to the Fund](#)

Chapter 3 of the new Aidspace Guide provides a detailed analysis of what, in the TRP's opinion, were the strengths and weaknesses of applications submitted in Rounds 3, 4 and 5.

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An excerpt from the new Aidspace Guide discusses how the Fund is likely to prioritize proposals in the very possible situation that not enough funding is available.

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A further excerpt from the new Aidspace Guide discusses why so few applications to the Fund from NGOs have been approved.

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1. NEWS: Global Fund Issues Sixth Call for Proposals
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The Global Fund has issued its Sixth Call for Proposals, as agreed by the board late last month. The application form and support documentation is available in six languages at www.theglobalfund.org/en/apply/call6.

All proposals submitted by the closing date of 3 August 2006 will be reviewed by the Secretariat to ensure that they meet the eligibility criteria. Eligible proposals will then be forwarded to the Technical Review Panel (TRP) for consideration. The TRP will make recommendations to the Global Fund Board, which will make its decisions at its 1-3 November board meeting.

When the TRP members review the proposals, they will do so in their personal capacities – they must not share the information with or accept any instructions from their employers or their national governments.

Once the TRP has assessed each proposal, it will assign it a rating in one of the following categories:

- Recommended (Category 1): Proposal is recommended for approval.

- Recommended (Category 2): Proposal is recommended for approval, provided that the applicant responds promptly to a number of requests by the TRP for clarification or adjustment. (This might be divided into Categories 2A and 2B.)
- Not Recommended (Category 3): Proposal is not recommended in its present form, but applicant is encouraged to submit a proposal in a future round following major revision.
- Not Recommended (Category 4): Proposal is rejected

In allocating each proposal to one of the above categories, the TRP will take into consideration only technical factors, such as whether the project described in the proposal is technically sound, whether it is one that the specified organization(s) are capable of implementing, and whether it represents good use of the money. The TRP is required to ignore the question of whether it believes the Global Fund has enough money to pay for all of the proposals that it is recommending. If the TRP recommends more proposals than the Fund has money to finance, it will be for the Board to deal with the problem.

Once a proposal is approved by the board, the Secretariat will enter into a lengthy and complex process of: (a) ensuring that the applicant answers, to the satisfaction of the TRP, any questions that the TRP asked regarding the proposal; (b) assessing the ability of the proposed Principal Recipient (PR) to perform the role that the proposal assigns to it; and (c) negotiating grant agreement(s) with the PR. It is only after this multi-month process that the first cash disbursement will be sent. Thus, although proposals have to be submitted by 3 August 2006, it is unlikely that the first funding will be sent for successful proposals before the middle of 2007.

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2. NEWS: "Aidspan Guide to Round 6 Applications to the Global Fund" is Released

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"The Aidspan Guide to Round 6 Applications to the Global Fund" has just been published. It is accessible at no charge at www.aidspan.org/guides, where six previous Aidspan Guides are also available.

The Guide distills conclusions that can be drawn from a detailed analysis of the successful proposals that were submitted to the Global Fund in Rounds 3, 4 and 5; and it provides a step-by-step guide to filling out the Round 6 proposal form.

The Guide is not intended to tell readers what they "should" say in their applications to the Fund. The objective instead is to de-mystify the application process and to provide a clearer feeling of what is expected. It is based on the premise that there is no single "correct" way of completing the proposal form. It encourages applicants to clearly describe their plans to tackle HIV, TB, or malaria; and to make a convincing case that the plans are viable, capable of delivering the anticipated results, and something that the applicants are committed to and capable of implementing.

The main sections in the Guide are as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

- Overview of the Global Fund
- What Initiatives Will the Global Fund Support?
- Are There Any Restrictions on the Amount of Funding Applicants May Apply For?
- Who is Eligible to Apply to the Global Fund?
- Description of the Applications Process
- Some Warnings

Chapter 2: Getting Ready to Apply

- Deciding Whether to Apply
- Designing a Process for the Period Before Starting to Fill Out the Proposal Form
- Determining How CCMs Can Make the Best Use of the Private Sector
- Determining How CCMs Can Make the Best Use of NGOs

- Deciding Whether to Consider Submitting a Non-CCM Proposal
- Deciding Whether to Consider Submitting a Regional Proposal
- Deciding Whether to Consider Submitting a Sub-CCM Proposal

Chapter 3: Lessons Learned from Earlier Rounds of Funding

- Strengths [See next article]
- Weaknesses [See next article]

Chapter 4: Guidance on the Proposal Form and Other Relevant Documents and Links

- Versions of the Proposal Form
- Other Relevant Documents and Links
- Process For Submitting a Proposal
- Some Key Concepts to Be Used in all Proposals
- General Guidance on Filling out the Proposal Form

Chapter 5: Step-by-Step Guide to Filling Out the Round 6 Proposal Form

- Section 1: Proposal Overview
- Section 2: Eligibility
- Section 3A: Applicant Type
- Section 3B: Proposal Endorsement
- Section 4: Component Section
- Section 5: Component Budget

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3. ANALYSIS: The Major Strengths and Weaknesses of Previous Applications to the Fund

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Chapter 3 of *"The Aidsplan Guide to Round 6 Applications to the Global Fund"* discusses the strengths and weaknesses of applications submitted in Rounds 3, 4 and 5. The list provided is based on an extensive analysis of comments made on those applications by the TRP.

The main strengths that the TRP has mentioned are as follows:

1. The proposal was clear and well-documented; the strategy was sound.
2. There was good involvement of partners (including NGOs and other sectors) in the implementation plan.
3. There was a strong political commitment to implement the programme.
4. The proposal demonstrated complementarity – i.e., it built on existing activities, including national strategic plans, and/or it built on earlier programmes financed by the Global Fund.
5. The programme targeted high-risk groups and vulnerable populations.
6. The proposal demonstrated sustainability – i.e., national budgets were identified to help sustain the activities once Global Fund support terminated.
7. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan was solid.
8. The budget was well detailed.
9. There was good collaboration among programmes addressing the three diseases.
10. The proposal contained a good situational analysis.
11. The proposal reflected comments made by the TRP during earlier rounds of funding.
12. The goals, objectives, activities, outcomes and budgets were well aligned.

13. The CCM was strong and had wide sectoral representation.
14. The programme was realistic with respect to what could be accomplished and/or had a limited and concentrated focus.
15. The proposal demonstrated good co-funding.
16. The PR is a strong organisation, with experience managing similar programmes.
17. The proposal contained innovative strategies, some of which could lead to best practices.
18. The proposal built on lessons learned and best practices.
19. The proposal included capacity building measures and identified technical support needs.
20. The proposal had a strong human rights focus.
21. The proposal contained a strong gender analysis and strategy.

The main weaknesses that the TRP has mentioned are as follows:

1. The workplan was inadequate. There was insufficient, unclear or questionable information on one or more of the following: the rationale, the strategic approach, the objectives, the activities and the expected outcomes.
2. The budget information was inaccurate, questionable and/or not sufficiently detailed.
3. The proposal did not demonstrate complementarity or additionality; it was not clear how the programme related or added to existing programmes, including programmes funded by the Global Fund.
4. The proposal did not contain a good situational (i.e., gap) analysis.
5. There were problems concerning the PR.
6. The various sections of the proposal were not well aligned.
7. The M&E plan was either missing or inadequate.
8. In HIV/AIDS and TB proposals, there were either no joint activities or insufficient joint activities involving both diseases.
9. The programme was too ambitious; some or all of the goals and objectives were not realistic.
10. The use of partners (including NGOs) in the implementation of the programme was inadequate or unclear.
11. The impact and/or outcome indicators were inappropriate or poorly defined.
12. The programme did not focus sufficiently on vulnerable groups.
13. The plan for procurement and supply chain management was inadequate.
14. There were problems with the structure or functioning of the CCM.
15. The proposal did not adequately explain the roles and responsibilities of the various players.
16. The proposal failed to adequately address issues of capacity building and technical assistance.

17. Some of the proposed approaches or activities were inappropriate.
18. The proposal development process was not sufficiently transparent or inclusive.
19. The proposal demonstrated insufficient co-funding.
20. The proposal failed to address weakness identified by the TRP for proposals submitted in earlier rounds of funding.
21. Insufficient attention was paid to human rights issues.
22. The budget (and therefore the programme) was imbalanced; too much or too little was allocated to one or more sectors or activities.
23. The treatment, care and support component of the proposal was missing or inadequate.

"The Aidsplan Guide to Round 6 Applications to the Global Fund" discusses all of these in detail, and provides links to proposals and TRP comments that provide illustrations of the strengths.

Applicants might also wish to study the TRP's detailed report to the Board on Round 5 proposals, accessible at www.theglobalfund.org/en/files/boardmeeting11/qfb116.pdf.

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4. EXCERPT: How the Fund Will Proceed if Insufficient Financing is Available

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[As reported in the previous issue of GFO, there is a very real possibility that there will not be enough money to fund all the proposals submitted in Round 6 that are worthy of approval. Estimates presented by the Secretariat at the recent board meeting showed a range of assumptions for new pledges that could lead to between \$200 million and a little less than \$600 million being available for the first two years of Round 6 grants. The cost of the first two years of earlier rounds ranged from \$576 million to just over \$1 billion.

Arising from this, we present the following excerpt from "The Aidsplan Guide to Round 6 Applications to the Global Fund", available at www.aidsplan.org/guides.]

Global Fund policy on how to proceed when insufficient financing is available

At its meeting on 18-19 March 2004, the Global Fund board adopted a policy that will be applied in situations where the money available is not sufficient to finance the first two years of all grants recommended for approval by the TRP. (Note that paying for Years 3-5 of existing grants – i.e., grant renewals – will take priority over paying for Years 1-2 of new grants. Thus, there is an increased chance of insufficient funds being available to finance new grants now that, starting in 2005, extensive grant renewals are taking place.) When insufficient financing is available, the board will proceed as follows:

- If possible, finance all proposals in TRP Category 1, then all proposals in Category 2A, then all proposals in Category 2B.
- If there is not enough money to finance all proposals in a particular category, assign all proposals in that category a score from 1-8 based on the country's disease burden and poverty level. Proposals from countries with a "very high" disease burden (defined below) get four points, and those from any other eligible country get one point. And proposals from countries defined as "low income" by the World Bank get four points, proposals from "lower middle income" countries two points, and proposals from "upper middle income" countries zero points. Thus, each proposal gets either four points or one point based on disease burden; plus four, two or zero points based on poverty level. Total possible points are 8, 6, 5, 4, 3, or 1.

- If possible, finance all those proposals that have eight points. Then, if possible, finance all those that have six points. Then, all those that have five points. And so on, until there is a score which cannot be fully financed.
- [It is possible that there will] be points awarded for repeated instances in previous rounds of proposals not having been approved, or for not having previously applied.
- The definition of "very high" disease burden is as follows: For HIV/AIDS: if the country's ratio of adult HIV seroprevalence (as reported by UNAIDS, multiplied by 1000) to Gross National Income per capita (Atlas method, as reported by the World Bank) exceeds five. For TB: if the country is included on the WHO list of 22 high burden countries, or on the WHO list of the 36 countries that account for 95% of all new TB cases attributable to HIV/AIDS. For malaria: if the country experiences more than one death due to malaria per 1000 people per year.
- Grants recommended by the TRP for which financing is not available may be handled in one of two possible ways. One option is that they are simply not approved – meaning, the only chance for these proposals is if they are resubmitted in future rounds, where they will be competing against proposals newly generated in that round. The other option is that they are held for eventual approval until [later], when additional money might be available.

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5. EXCERPT: Deciding Whether to Consider Submitting a Non-CCM Proposal

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[The following is a further excerpt from "The Aidsplan Guide to Round 6 Applications to the Global Fund".]

The Global Fund prefers that all applications come from CCMs, and strongly discourages applications from NGOs. (The Global Fund refers to applications from NGOs as "Non-CCM" proposals. Although, in theory, proposals from non-CCMs can be submitted by organisations from any sector, in practice the vast majority of such proposals have emanated from NGOs.)

One of the reasons the Global Fund discourages proposals from NGOs is that the Global Fund wants to promote partnerships among the stakeholders. Another reason is that the Fund does not want to be swamped with multiple applications from one country, with objectives pointing in different directions. But some proposals from NGOs have been funded in the first five rounds, and there may be circumstances where NGOs should consider submitting a proposal in Round 6.

The Fund's *Round 6 Guidelines for Proposals* state that organisations from countries in which a CCM does not exist may apply directly, but must provide evidence that the proposal is consistent with and complements national policies and strategies.

For countries where there is a CCM, the *Guidelines* state that proposals from organisations other than CCMs are not eligible unless they satisfactorily explain that they originate from one of the following:

- countries without legitimate governments (such as governments not recognized by the United Nations);
- countries in conflict, facing natural disasters, or in complex emergency situations; or
- countries that suppress or have not established partnerships with civil society and NGOs (including a CCM's failure or refusal to consider a proposal for inclusion in the CCM's consolidated proposal).

The *Guidelines* state that a non-CCM proposal must demonstrate clearly why it could not be considered under the CCM process, and provide documentation of these reasons. The *Guidelines* further state that if a non-CCM proposal was provided to a CCM for its consideration, but the CCM either did not review it in a timely fashion or refused to endorse it, the steps taken to obtain CCM approval should be described; and arguments in support of the CCM endorsement, as well as documentary evidence of the attempts to obtain CCM approval, should be provided.

For the most part, in the first five rounds of funding, proposals from NGOs have been funded only in very limited circumstances – i.e., either there was no CCM in existence in the country; and/or the country or the region was torn apart by war. (A large number of NGOs submit proposals each round, but the vast majority are deemed ineligible and are screened out by the Secretariat.)

In Round 1, when many CCMs were still being formed, the Global Fund approved four proposals from NGOs.

In Round 2, two proposals were approved from NGOs in Madagascar where, at the time, there was no CCM in existence. However, because a CCM was being formed in Madagascar when the proposals were being submitted, the Global Fund stipulated in its grant agreements for these programmes that once the CCM was formed, the CCM must oversee the implementation of the programmes.

In Round 3, the Fund approved a proposal from an NGO in Russia, where, at the time, there was no CCM in existence.

In Rounds 3 and 4, the Global Fund approved proposals from NGOs in Somalia and Côte d'Ivoire, two war-torn countries. (The NGO for the Somalia proposal was an International NGO.) In Round 5, the Global Fund approved another proposal from an NGO in Côte d'Ivoire.

There have only been two instances of proposals from an NGO being funded outside the circumstances described above. One was a proposal to provide prevention services to injection drug users in Thailand, and it was funded in Round 3. Several factors made this situation unique:

- The government was not funding prevention activities targeting injection drug users.
- A military and police crackdown on drug traffickers and individual drug users was underway.
- The NGO submitting the proposal said that it had been informed that some members of the CCM would not support any proposal that included prevention programmes for injection drug users.

The second instance was a Round 5 proposal from a group of NGOs in the Russian Federation. Again the target audience was injection drug users. Previous proposals from the CCM in that country had not targeted injection drugs users, and the CCM was not planning on submitting a proposal for Round 5. The TRP agreed that the proposal from the NGOs addressed clear service gaps and met “a clear and compelling need.”

For Round 6, therefore, we suggest that NGOs consider submitting a proposal only:

- if there is no CCM in the country (which now is very rarely the case);
- if they are working in a country or region severely affected by war or natural disasters; or
- where services are not being provided to a particular vulnerable group, and the existing CCM has indicated that it is not prepared to submit a proposal that addresses this population.

In all other cases, NGOs are best advised to work through the CCM. As indicated in the previous section, exactly how NGOs become involved in the applications process will depend on the process that the CCM uses to prepare proposals. It may also depend on the degree of satisfaction that NGOs have with this process. If NGOs are unhappy with the process, one option they might consider is to prepare a proposal and then attempt to get the CCM to adopt it as its own proposal.

The Round 6 Guidelines for Proposals leave open the possibility that proposals will also be accepted from NGOs working in countries that either suppress or have not established partnerships with civil society. To the best of our knowledge, to date no proposals have been accepted based on this criterion.

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END OF NEWSLETTER
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This is an issue of the GLOBAL FUND OBSERVER (GFO) Newsletter.

GFO is an independent source of news, analysis and commentary about the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (www.theglobalfund.org). GFO is emailed to nearly 10,000 subscribers in 170 countries at least twelve times per year.

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