

GLOBAL FUND OBSERVER (GFO), an independent newsletter about the Global Fund provided by Aidspace to over 7,000 subscribers in 170 countries.

Issue 90: 26 June 2008. (For formatted web, Word and PDF versions of this and other issues, see www.aidspace.org/gfo)

+++++

CONTENTS

+++++

[1. NEWS: Uganda Government Revives Prosecutions Over Theft of Global Fund Money](#)

The government of Uganda has agreed, after a two-year delay, to start seeking prosecutions of numerous people, including former government ministers, who were involved in stealing Global Fund money. The decision to unblock the stalled prosecutions came as a result of pressure from donor governments.

[2. NEWS: Board Confirms that Round 9 will be in October 2008](#)

The Global Fund board has confirmed that the Round 9 Call for Proposals will be on 1 October 2008, nearly six months earlier than had originally been anticipated. Round 10 is then expected to begin in April 2009. Round 9 will represent only the second time that two calls for proposals have been launched in the course of a single year.

[3. COMMENTARY: Key Affected Populations, Marginalized Again](#)

Natalia Ciausova says "For the first time, 'key affected populations' figure prominently in the Global Fund's requirements and recommendations regarding Round 8. Yet despite this fact, they have been largely ignored in the Round 8 process."

[4. NEWS: Global Fund Announces Big Increases in People Reached](#)

The Global Fund has announced that 1.75 million people living with HIV have been reached with ARV treatment through AIDS programs it supports, a 59 per cent increase over the totals as of a year ago. In addition, 3.9 million people have been put on TB drugs treatment, and 59 million insecticide-treated bed nets have been distributed.

[5. NEWS: Communities Global Fund Board Delegation Seeks Nominations](#)

The Global Fund board delegation that represents *Communities Living with HIV, Tuberculosis and Affected by Malaria* is seeking nominations for additional members.

+++++

1. NEWS: Uganda Government Revives Prosecutions Over Theft of Global Fund Money

+++++

The government of Uganda has agreed, after a two-year delay, to start seeking prosecutions of numerous people, including former government ministers, who were involved in stealing Global Fund money. The decision to unblock the stalled prosecutions came as a result of pressure from donor governments.

Three years ago, the Fund suspended all of its Uganda grants for four months after it learned, via a Ugandan whistleblower who had approached GFO, of "serious mismanagement of the grants" by a Project Management Unit within the Ministry of Health.

Subsequently, a Ugandan Presidential commission of inquiry into the affair concluded that Uganda's then Minister of Health, Maj. Gen. Jim Muhwezi, had lied to the inquiry under oath. The commission recommended that he and two junior ministers "be investigated further with a view to prosecution" for

perjury, for causing financial loss, and for providing false documents, and that they be required to return Global Fund money that they had misused. (See GFO Issue 60, at www.aidspace.org/gfo.)

The commission of inquiry, which lasted nine months, received evidence from 150 witnesses. The inquiry's report stated that about \$1.6 million of Global Fund money had been misappropriated or could not be accounted for, and called for a total of 373 suspects, including the former ministers, to be investigated by the legal authorities.

During the following two years, however, almost nothing was done. This led to considerable distress among donor governments. Finally, in April, the Norwegian AIDS Ambassador, who represents Norway and several other European countries on the Global Fund board, wrote to the Global Fund's Inspector General. In her letter, she said "The Government of Uganda gave their commitment [in 2006] to specified courses of action, including follow-up criminal investigations, with a view to prosecuting those found culpable. However..., no such investigations have taken place... This case [is] an important test of the political will in fighting corruption in the country... This is a situation that calls for active engagement and follow up by the GFATM."

Within less than four weeks, the Global Fund's Inspector General, John Parsons, was in Uganda meeting with top government officials. "There is frustration among the donor community that there was no action taken against the culprits," he told the press. "The purpose of my visit is to send a strong signal that the Global Fund board is serious [about the issue]. It is tremendously important to us that what was due to be recovered, has been recovered."

An editorial in the Uganda *Monitor* speculated that the reason that the suspects had not been investigated and charged was "chronic laxity on the part of government in fighting corruption. This laxity also points to a ploy to cover up for the GF thieves, most of whom have strong connections to the state."

During Parsons' visit, the government provided assurances that teams from the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Criminal Investigations Department are now working on the matter, and that a number of the cases should be in the courts by August. Support is to be provided by three staff from the UK Serious Fraud Office; additional help is likely from the European Anti Fraud Office.

[*Editor's note:* In 2005, when GFO received the whistle-blower's email that led to the Uganda investigations, there was no Inspector General at the Global Fund. Future whistle-blowers who wish to report misconduct or wrongdoing in any Global Fund-related context, particularly regarding the use of Global Fund money, are advised to contact the Global Fund's Inspector General directly. They can do so confidentially and/or anonymously by emailing inspector.general@bluewin.ch or by phoning +41-22-341 5258. (For further details, see www.theglobalfund.org/en/about/oig.) If for any reason they want an alternative option, they can confidentially contact the editor of GFO, who is identified at the end of this newsletter. Aidspace, publisher of GFO, is entirely independent of the Global Fund.]

++++
2. NEWS: Board Confirms that Round 9 will be in October 2008
++++

The Board of the Global Fund has confirmed that the Round 9 Call for Proposals will be on 1 October 2008, nearly six months earlier than had originally been anticipated. Round 10 is then expected to begin in April 2009.

The Board decision was made by email, and it confirmed a provisional decision made at the April Board meeting and reported in GFO at the time. Round 9 will represent only the second time that two calls for proposals have been launched in the course of a single year.

As anticipated, there will be a number of changes from the procedures followed in earlier rounds. Specifically:

- (a) When the TRP writes its comments in September on non-approved Round 8 proposals that it assigns to Category 3, it will not just list strengths and weaknesses, it will also recommend the types of change that need to be made to strengthen the proposal for resubmission.
- (b) The Secretariat will not wait until the November Board meeting to inform Round 8 applicants about the TRP's recommendation and comments; it will instead provide each applicant with this information around the start of October, as soon as the Board has been informed.
- (c) On October 1, the Round 9 Call for Proposals will be issued. And Round 9 will use the same proposal form and guidelines as Round 8. Thus, CCMs that were planning to submit a Round 8 proposal but are finding that they will not be ready by the July 1 deadline, can now further refine the proposal as necessary and then submit it in Round 9.
- (d) CCMs whose Round 8 proposal is assigned to Category 3 will be able to make appropriate improvements to the proposal, then resubmit it as part of Round 9, using the same proposal form as in Round 8, for a decision at the May 2009 board meeting.
- (e) In Round 9, CCMs will be permitted to resubmit a proposal that had been assigned to Category 3 in Round 8, and to submit a separate new proposal. Thus, those planning on submitting proposals in both Rounds 8 and 9 can start planning now for the Round 9 proposal, without waiting to find out whether they will also need to resubmit their Round 8 proposal.

+++++

3. COMMENTARY: Key Affected Populations, Marginalized Again by Natalia Ciausova

+++++

For the first time, "key affected populations" figure prominently in the Global Fund's requirements and recommendations regarding Round 8. Yet despite this fact, they have been largely ignored in the Round 8 process.

The Global Fund defines "key affected populations" as women and girls, youth, men who have sex with men (MSM), injecting and other drug users (IDUs), sex workers, people living in poverty, prisoners, migrants and migrant labourers, people in conflict and post-conflict situations, refugees and displaced persons.

The Fund recommends that each CCM have one or more members who represent key affected populations. And it would like all proposals to address, in part, the needs of at least some key affected populations. (Proposals from lower-middle and upper-middle income countries are required to have a predominant focus on one or more key affected populations.)

Civil Society Action Team (CSAT), hosted and supported by ICASO, for which I work, is closely involved in coordinating technical support to community groups representing these populations. Below are some findings from CSAT's regional coordinators for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. (Where I refer to "community groups", I mean those that represent key affected populations.)

- CCM members representing the most powerful sectors – government, UN agencies, international NGOs and, in some countries, GONGOs (Government-Organized NGOs) – frequently agree among themselves what the Global Fund proposal will say and who will become Principal Recipients (PRs). The international NGOs and GONGOs sign papers on behalf of civil society, but they don't generally represent the interests of key affected populations. Governments ignore community groups, which are small and scattered. And the UN agencies tend to work with larger, better organized and more technically advanced groups within the civil society sector.

- Community groups need help in building their capacity, but they rarely get it from their governments or from UN/WHO in-country offices. Even with the new Global Fund guidelines for Round 8 applications, community groups are not benefitting from Global Fund grants because many lack the capacity to get involved in the process, and because groups within the most powerful sectors appear not to be interested in building their capacity and sharing decision-making power with them.
- Sometimes, representatives of NGOs/CBOs on the CCMs are hand-picked by the government. When this happens, they don't represent anyone because there was no consultation or selection process. As a result, the real key affected populations have no opportunity to participate in programme development, contribute to proposal writing, or access funding from the Global Fund (other than bits and pieces from PRs after the proposal is approved).
- When CSAT has raised these issues, representatives of the most powerful sectors have sometimes said that they have tried to involve community groups but that there was no one obvious to talk to, no clear organizational structure to deal with, etc. They have used the lack of organizational capacity of key affected populations as an excuse not to include them in the process, rather than as a reason to help them build capacity and get included.
- Community groups are advised by representatives of the most powerful sectors to keep quiet; they are told that if the proposal is approved, they may still get something. So community groups don't report these problems to the Global Fund. (Of course, CSAT could report such things itself, without necessarily identifying the groups that have been excluded. But it's not clear what the Global Fund would do with such information. Nor is it clear what would be in the best interests of the community groups.)

These problems are typical within Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Fortunately, the situation is better in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the governments, international NGOs and UN agencies are more open to working with community groups, and the CCM processes are followed much better. But even there, the inclusion of certain key affected populations (particularly MSM, sex workers, and IDUs) is often hindered by their illegal status. This means they still cannot benefit from new opportunities offered by the Global Fund. More thinking is needed on how to overcome this obstacle.

Here are some recommendations on how to improve the process to make it truly inclusive of key affected populations:

For UN agencies and the Global Fund:

1. UN agencies should develop better strategies to work specifically with key affected populations, within their broader strategies for working with civil society.
2. UN agencies should help community groups access support to build their organizational capacity, and should promote their real participation in CCMs at all stages of the Global Fund grant cycle.
3. Technical support providers should be called in to build the technical capacity of community groups, and specific funds should be allocated for this.
4. The Global Fund should expand the information provided on CCMs at its website, and should publish proposed Terms of Reference and Key Performance Indicators for CCM members, including those representing community groups.

For CCMs:

5. When CCMs implement the Global Fund's requirement that they must put in place and maintain a transparent, documented process to solicit and review submissions for possible integration into the proposal, they should specifically invite input from community groups.
6. When CCMs specify Sub-Recipients within their proposals, they should ensure that a certain percentage of the Sub-Recipients are community groups.

For international and national NGOs:

7. When international and national NGOs receive Global Fund funding as PRs or Sub-Recipients, part of this funding should be used for strengthening community groups.

The involvement of community groups representing key affected populations cannot be left entirely to the discretion of other players. It should be a Global Fund requirement that CCMs build into their proposals a detailed explanation of how key affected populations will benefit from the proposal as implementers and as service recipients.

[Note: Natalia Ciausova (nataliac@icaso.org) is Acting International Coordinator of Civil Society Action Team (CSAT). CSAT, established in March 2008, is a civil society-led global initiative whose goal is to inform community groups – primarily those representing key affected populations – about their rights, and to strengthen their role, within Global Fund processes. The views expressed here are her own, based on feedback received from CSAT regional coordinators.]

+++++

4. NEWS: Global Fund Announces Big Increases in People Reached

+++++

The Global Fund announced this month that a cumulative total of 1.75 million people living with HIV have been reached with antiretroviral (ARV) treatment through AIDS programs it supports, a 59 per cent increase over the totals as of a year ago.

UN agencies earlier announced that nearly three million people were receiving ARV treatment by the end of 2007. Thus, almost 60 per cent of all people receiving ARV treatment worldwide do so through Global Fund-supported programs.

In addition, the Fund announced that TB programs it supports have so far put more than 3.9 million people on effective TB drugs treatment. (TB accounts for up to a third of AIDS deaths worldwide.)

And Fund-supported malaria programs have distributed 59 million insecticide-treated bed nets, a 98 percent increase over the total as of a year ago.

The Fund has not released a country-by-country breakdown of these totals.

[Editor's note: The Fund was not the only source of funding for the people that its grants are helping. In some cases, these specific people benefited not only from funding coming from the Fund, but also from funding coming from PEPFAR, and/or from their own government, and/or from their employer, and/or from their own personal finances.]

The Fund provides around 20 percent of international resources to fight AIDS, as well as two-thirds of international funding to fight TB and three-quarters of international funding to fight malaria.

“These new results are a testament to the hard work of our partners and the millions of health workers on the ground who work tirelessly day in day out to make sure that Global Fund resources are put to best use,” said Dr Michel Kazatchkine, Executive Director of the Fund. “We are halfway to 2015, which is the year the United Nations has set to reach the Millennium Development Goals. So far, we are far behind the targets in reducing the mortality from AIDS, TB and malaria, but the results coming in over the past years give hope that we can still catch up and reach the targets if we continue to scale up investments.”

Results at a glance:

Intervention	Mid 2007	Dec 2007	Mid 2008	Percent increase, mid 2007 to mid 2008
HIV <i>People on ARV treatment</i>	1.1 million	1.4 million	1.75 million	59%
TB <i>Cases treated under DOTS</i>	2.8 million	3.3 million	3.9 million	39%
Malaria <i>ITNs distributed</i>	30 million	46 million	59 million	97%

The Fund said that in addition, 46 million people have been reached with HIV counselling and testing; 2.8 million AIDS orphans have been provided with basic care and support; 60 million malaria drug treatments have been delivered; 65 million people have been reached with community outreach services for one or several of the three diseases; and 7.6 million health or community workers have been trained to deliver services since the Global Fund started financing grants in 2003.

“These figures are the living proof that Global Fund resources are a major driving force in the global fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria,” said Rajat Gupta, the Chair of the Global Fund Board. “Our donors, our technical partners and the people implementing our programs in the countries are all an integral part of the lifesaving mission of the Global Fund. We thank each and every one of them.”

+++++

5. NEWS: Communities Global Fund Board Delegation Seeks Nominations

+++++

The Global Fund board delegation that represents *Communities Living with HIV, Tuberculosis and Affected by Malaria* (the "Communities" Delegation) is seeking nominations for additional members.

The Global Fund board has three members who represent civil society. One of these represents "Communities". At Global Fund board meetings, each board member is accompanied by up to nine delegation members, who help him/her with work at and between board meetings, and might eventually become the board member. Board delegation members are unpaid, though sometimes their expenses are covered.

People interested in being considered for membership of the Communities delegation are invited to contact Leila Tavakoli (ltavakoli@aidsalliance.org) or Shaun Mellors (smellors@aidsalliance.org), first to seek additional information about the position, and then, if interested, to submit applications.

Delegation members should:

- Be living with HIV and/or living with or had TB and/or living in a community affected by malaria.
- Understand the work of the Global Fund.
- Have email and phone access.
- Have good written and spoken English.
- Be able to devote 10 - 15% of their working time to this role.
- Be willing to serve for three years, from August 2008.
- Submit completed applications by Friday 18 July 2008

The delegation is looking for nominations from all regions of the world, especially West/Central Africa, South East Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. Women living with and affected by the diseases are strongly encouraged to apply.

++++++
END OF NEWSLETTER
++++++

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 over 7,000 subscribers in 170 countries at least twelve times per year.

GFO is a free service of Aidspan (www.aidspan.org), a Kenya-based NGO that serves as an independent watchdog of the Global Fund, and that provides services that can benefit all countries wishing to obtain and make effective use of Global Fund financing. Aidspan finances its work primarily through grants from foundations.

Aidspan does not accept Global Fund money, perform paid consulting work, or charge for any of its products. The Board and staff of the Fund have no influence on and bear no responsibility for the content of GFO or of any other Aidspan publication.

GFO is currently provided in English only. It is hoped later to provide it in additional languages.

GFO Editor and Aidspan Executive Director: Bernard Rivers (rivers@aidspan.org, +254-20-445-4321)

Reproduction of articles in the Newsletter is permitted if the following is stated: "Reproduced from the Global Fund Observer Newsletter (www.aidspan.org/gfo), a service of Aidspan."

To stop receiving GFO, send an email to stop-gfo-newsletter@aidspan.org
Subject line and text can be left blank.

To receive GFO (if you haven't already subscribed), send an email to receive-gfo-newsletter@aidspan.org
Subject line and text can be left blank. (You will receive one to two issues per month.)

For GFO background information and previous issues, see www.aidspan.org/gfo

For information on all approved proposals submitted to the Global Fund, see www.aidspan.org/globalfund/grants

People interested in writing articles for GFO are invited to email the editor, above.
Copyright (c) 2008 Aidspan. All rights reserved.