



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

On leadership...

Dear subscribers

Welcome to this first issue of the Global Fund Observer after the well-deserved holidays. For those who missed it, we did publish a special issue on the International AIDS Society conference, [#416](#).

We launch this issue by reflections from our Board member Alan Whiteside on leadership ([It's tough at the top !](#)). This was prompted by his participation in the recent International AIDS Conference in Montreal where he was able to see leaders or examples of leadership in person (or not), ranging from the International AIDS Society President's response to the problems encountered by would-be participants to the total failure of the Canadian Government to own the responsibility for the visa issues that overshadowed the meeting, even hastily withdrawing its representative to the meeting. The IAS came out of the debacle looking a lot better than the Canadians (and must've been quite grateful for the no-show!). It remains to be seen whether or not IAS honours its promise to look into more 'friendly' venues for future conferences and actually organise a meeting in a global south country with hopefully better visa arrangements. Meanwhile, this conference was also a good opportunity to see some actual leaders of global health initiatives in person for the first time since the pandemic and to be reminded of what makes a good leader.

Our final article relating to AIDS 2022 is a paper delivered at the conference, [New research on COVID-19's impact on young people and HIV in Uganda](#), provides a snapshot of how the pandemic has impacted young people's sexual and reproductive health. The first in a series of six country case studies, it's an important piece of work because it provides the first hard data available to show how young people have been affected.

Article 3, [A key Global Fund manual that poses as many questions as it provides answers](#), is our third

critical assessment of the Operational Policy Manual. We have had some success with our previous critiques since both times changes have been made to take some of our comments on board. However, there is still a long way to go...

Article 4, [Ghana's success in the Global Fund's Differentiated Service Delivery Strategic Initiative](#), is our third article on the Differentiated HIV Service Delivery Strategic Initiative in the past 18 months. This has to date been a very successful SI that has resulted in its expansion through the allocation of more funding. The pandemic has meant that existing DSD initiatives have assumed even more importance in service delivery and Ghana's example is heartening to read, a mixture of well-prepared groundwork and strong partnerships resulting in a success story that can be replicated in other countries.

[The Technical Review Panel notes some improvements in Global Fund funding requests](#) covers the key findings and recommendations from the recently released Technical Review Panel observations on the 2020-2022 funding cycle. As countries gear up for the new round of Global Fund applications, there are some important lessons to be learnt from these highlights.

We catch up with the Office of the Inspector General with two reports, one on Liberia and the other on risk management. The title of the Liberia review says it all: [Weaknesses in oversight mechanisms persist in Liberia's Global Fund Grants](#). We have to ask why, if the same problems continue to abound, the Global Fund is still unable to take meaningful action. The [Audit of Global Fund Fraud Risk Management](#) is based on a very hard -to-read report but we have tried to do it justice; however, the Global Fund's response to our commentary on this report left us none the wiser! These reports vary so much and sometimes do not appear to have been written for outsiders as they can be very hard to digest and are heavy on the unexplained acronyms.

Finally, we publish a correction to an earlier GFO article on the Eastern Europe and Central Asia multicountry grant and its Principal Recipient, the Ukrainian Alliance for Public Health, brings us up to date on its progress which is all the more commendable given the nigh impossible working conditions due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine ([Thriving in the face of adversity?](#)).

As ever, Aidspan and our editorial team, under the leadership of Ida Hakizinka, does its best to ensure the accuracy of data and statements in our published articles ? and hence our inclusion of hyperlinks ? but if you, the reader, identify an error or important omission, please notify us and provide us with your data source; and we shall be happy to publish a correction or amendment.

If you enjoy the GFO and find it relevant to your work, please encourage your colleagues to colleagues to [subscribe!](#)

Don't forget: if you are aware of an interesting development relevant to disease programmes or health systems and that you feel is worthy of global discussion, do let me know together with the name of a person prepared to write about this. Suggestions and comments can be sent to us, Ida Hakizinka or Arlette Campbell White in English, French or Spanish at ida.hakizinka@aidspan.org or acampbell.white@aidspan.org.

The Aidspan Editorial Team

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