



Independent observer  
of the Global Fund

## REPORT IDENTIFIES CHALLENGES IN GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

The Developing Countries NGO Delegation on the Global Fund Board has released a report on challenges in grant implementation. The report is based on input collected in March 2012 from implementers in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The report identified 14 challenges, including the following:

**Reporting requirements.** The Secretariat makes frequent changes in requirements, which means that principal recipients (PRs) are constantly having to adjust. Sometimes PRs are obliged to repeatedly revise their operating manuals. The delegation recommended that the Global Fund make strategic changes based on a long-term vision and minimise the number of day-to-day changes.

**FPM decisions.** Often, the PRs have had to act on a demand received from the fund portfolio manager (FPM) even though they believed that the demand would produce a negative outcome. The delegation recommended that the Secretariat set up a complaint mechanism for PRs to use when they disagree with instructions from the FPM.

**Communications.** Often, it takes a long time to get a response from FPMs. In one example cited in the report, an FPM took three months to respond to a proposed training plan. In addition, feedback from FPMs is usually incomplete or unclear. The delegation recommended that the Global Fund develop a communications protocol for all parties (FPM, PR, local fund agent, etc.), complete with timeframes.

**Widespread delays.** Disbursement delays are common, even when the PR submits reports on time. Signing grant agreements and amended grant agreements takes a very long time. The transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2 takes a long time, sometimes more than six months. Grant recipients are required to follow strict deadlines, but FPMs don't have the same requirement. The delegation recommended that the Global Fund establish a "performance pledge" which sets out the quality and level of service one can

expect of the Secretariat.

Administrative procedures. The volume of paper work has become a barrier to implementers. Detailed proof of all expenditures is required, even for minor items such as public transportation tickets. This is almost impossible to provide in some settings. Reporting requirements are such that, in some projects, educators spend 25% of their time filling out forms and providing support documentation. Many forms that have to be filled out are complicated, yet implementers do not receive any training to be able to perform these tasks. The delegation recommended that the Global Fund introduce electronic reporting and provide training to implementers that are required to fill out complicated forms.

The report by the Developing Countries NGO Delegation is entitled “Implementation of Global Fund Grant Programmes: Challenges Encountered by NGOs and Suggestions for Mitigation.” Readers can obtain a copy by contacting Loretta Wong, Alternate Board member representing the delegation ([email](#)).

[Read More](#)

---