



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

GLOBAL FUND OFFERS LOOK BACK ON 2014 IN FINAL NFM PROGRESS UPDATE

In its first update on the new funding model (NFM) for 2015, and ultimately the last stand-alone update it will provide, the Global Fund offered a look back at the roll-out of the mechanism aiming to direct the greatest resources to those countries with the highest disease burden and least ability to pay.

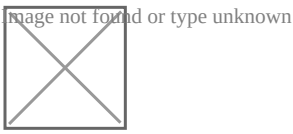
By the end of 2014, a total 111 concept notes were submitted for review by the Technical Review Panel across all three disease components. These notes represent 58% of the funds allocated under the NFM through 2017 — or some \$8.58 billion in investment in AIDS, TB and malaria responses. Incentive funding worth another \$525 million was also awarded.

Of those 111 concept notes, 33 grant agreements were approved. Since the beginning of 2015, another six agreements were signed: two for Bangladesh, and one each in the Philippines, Cameroon, Nigeria and Rwanda.

As of early February, 65 of 71 program splits that were reviewed for changes were approved.

Figure 1 captures the value of the concept notes by disease component submitted for review by the TRP and the Grants Approval Committee. It does not distinguish between those notes submitted and those that have proceeded to grantmaking.

Figure 1: Value of concept notes by component by 2014-2015 window as of early February



(source: Global Fund. GF/B32/ER08)

More learning, more training

The roll-out of the NFM was accompanied by an intensified push to improve communication about policies and procedures at the Global Fund. Some 846 days of training on core tools of the funding model were carried out by country teams, and 18 updates were made to guidelines and policies in the Operational Policy manual. The greater number of visits to implementing states would appear to be part of the strategy by the Global Fund to mitigate the impact of not having a full-time country presence.

Training and technical assistance was also carried out by Global Fund partners, on topics including concept note development, country dialogue and inclusion of key populations in both of those areas.

A costed technical partnership agreement with the World Health Organization also contributed to a higher degree of technical acumen among the country coordinating mechanisms that prepared concept notes in 2014. WHO received a \$29 million contract to carry out TA; 73 countries thus far have approached the organization for help in developing concept notes.

Specialty areas were also given a technical boost. Community, rights and gender specialists traveled to 70 countries and also worked with regional applicants, spending \$4 million of the \$15 million allocated to technical assistance in these areas by the Board during its 31st annual meeting in Jakarta in 2014. Of the technical assistance provided in this area, 40% went to Africa — further elaboration of what that meant, in terms of number of countries, visits or people reached was not available.

Technical assistance does not always lead to technical skill

However, for all of the support, there were still a number of tests that countries failed to overcome, particularly with respect to two of the minimum requirements for CCMs. (For more on CCM minimum requirements, see [this article](#).)

Countries continued to struggle with the first two minimum requirements: coordination of country dialogue and the development of concept notes, in particular integrating a variety of stakeholder voices including those of key populations; and the transparent selection of principal recipients (PR) for grants.

These challenges were the subject of an analysis by the Access to Funding department which will inform a series of recommendations and lessons learned to be shared with countries going forward into the next year of the NFM. According to the update, “this analysis specifically focused on the documentation provided in the concept notes to show compliance with the first and second eligibility requirements.” The analysis will emphasize lessons learned over the entire process, in a bid to provide those countries submitting in later windows insight into the experience of their predecessors.

New reporting, more transparency?

The update also provided a window into some of the inner workings of the Secretariat, primarily focused on reporting and improving transparency while providing a “more holistic view by providing updates on the implementation of the wider Global Fund strategy”.

This evolution in focus and quantity of information means that no more progress updates will be

published; instead, the information will be included in other reports to the Board, Board committees, partners, applicants and stakeholders.

In service to transparency, copies of concept notes and grant agreements — once they are approved and signed — will now be made available online. This is an important development, and one that Aidspace among many others has been waiting for.

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