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Advocates Meet in Amsterdam to Strategise on Global Fund Resource Mobilisation

Seventy members of the Global Fund Advocate's Network (GFAN) gathered in Amsterdam on 28–30 January to strategise on ways to advocate for more resources for the Global Fund. The meeting was organised and hosted by International Civil Society Support (ICSS).

The three-day session included presentations from Global Fund Secretariat staff on the 2013 replenishment drive, and from UNAIDS, Stop TB Partnership, Malaria No More and Healthgap about some of the opportunities and challenges in HIV, TB and malaria advocacy. Participants also heard from Mark Dybul, just one week into his job as Executive Director of the Global Fund.

Previous meetings of the type have focused on resource mobilisation in donor countries. What distinguished this meeting was that it brought together advocates from the North and the South to jointly strategise about resource mobilisation in both settings. Almost 40% of the participants were from the South.

Advocates identified a number of events already scheduled for 2013 that provide opportunities to advocate for a fully-funded and effective Global Fund. These include not only events that most people are already familiar with – such as the G8 and G20 meetings, World AIDS Day (and TB Day and Malaria Day) – but also events such as the BRICS Summit on 26–27 March (“BRICS” stands for the emerging nations of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa); the African Union meetings in March and May; and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development on 1–3 June.

Noting that progress has been made on the implementation of a financial transactions tax (FTT) in Europe, advocates pledged to redouble efforts to ensure that some of the proceeds from the FTT are

used to support the Global Fund and health and community systems strengthening.

Advocates concluded that messages from the Here I Am campaign need to be heard not only in the donor capitals but also in implementing countries. The campaign uses the voices of people affected and infected by the three diseases to explain why the work of the Global Fund is so important. Often people in implementing countries are not aware that their community health centres or their medicines (for example) are supported by the Global Fund.

In addition, advocates decided that greater use of social media and other modern communication techniques (such as bulk texting) will be a critical part of GFAN's advocacy work for the 2013 replenishment.

The meeting participants also spent some time discussing the Global Fund's new funding model (NFM) and how the NFM will affect key populations.

"The GFAN meeting was a very important one because of where we are in the global fight against the three diseases," Peter van Rooijen, Executive Director of ICSS, said. "The activists and advocates in Amsterdam know that in the Global Fund the world has a unique tool that has had tremendous impact not only for saving lives but also for developing and strengthening communities and health systems."

However, Mr van Rooijen said, serious concerns remain regarding some of the changes at the Global Fund, including the impact and process of implementing the NFM. "Advocates believe the success of resource mobilisation and of the NFM go hand in hand," he said. "Despite the daunting to-do lists that all 70 participants left the meeting with, the overwhelming sense was one of hope that we can persuade world leaders to see the value and urgency of being bold now and fully fund the Global Fund."

Copies of many of the slide presentations used during the meeting are available on the ICSS website at <http://icssupport.org/documents>.

ICSS also organised a session on 27 January on the Post-2015 agenda discussions, debates and negotiations. (This refers to what will happen to the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] after 2015.) This meeting was attended by most of the GFAN meeting participants plus some of the participants from a consultation on the NFM that had been organised by the Communities Delegation on the Global Fund Board a few days before (see [GFO article](#)). The 27 January meeting was preliminary in nature; nevertheless, it was agreed that further collaboration and engagement are needed to promote the need for the "Post-MDG" to include health goals that are specifically related to HIV, TB and malaria.

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