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of the Global Fund

ETHICS AND INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK ADOPTED

The Board has approved an ethics and integrity framework for the Global Fund and has established a dedicated ethics function. The Board also approved a set of principles related to a code of ethical conduct for governance officials. The Board directed the Audit and Ethics Committee (AEC) to develop the code for presentation to the Board at its March 2015 meeting.

This is the first stage of the Fund's Ethics and Integrity Initiative. The second stage will involve integrating the principles of ethics and integrity into Global Fund operations; establishing compliance mechanisms; and providing detailed guidance for governance officials, staff and other stakeholders on their obligations under their respective codes of ethical conduct. (Some ethical codes already exist, such as the Code of Conduct for Suppliers.)

A paper prepared for the Board meeting on 20-21 November said that "as a result of the diversity of interests and perspectives represented by the Global Fund's stakeholders, it is of particular importance for the organization to operate in a balanced, ethical, collaborative, transparent and open manner."

Internal assessments determined that there is currently only limited basic awareness of ethics and of the value of ethics and integrity within the Global Fund. Additional wider consultations revealed that current ethics-related policies are not integrated in any holistic way with other policies and activities, and that there is a significant need for a code of conduct at the board and committee level. The Secretariat's Risk Management Department said a lack of commitment and adherence to integrity and ethical values increases the risk of inappropriate activities by staff and key stakeholders which, in turn, could result in poor decision-making and even misuse of funds.

The approved framework articulates the Fund's core ethical values and policies, and describes the roles of responsibilities at each level of the organization for embedding ethics into operations.

The principles adopted by the Board related to the code of ethical conduct state,

“While Governance Officials’ representation responsibilities to constituencies are to be respected, they are ultimately obligated to work with the best interests of the Global Fund in mind. Governance Officials must act with an understanding that the Global Fund’s direction is shaped through compromise between varying constituency interests.”

The ethics function will be led by an ethics officer. The core mandate of the ethics function is to provide assurance on the extent to which the Global Fund has fully and effectively implemented its ethics and integrity-related policies, codes and requirements. The resources proposed for the ethics function, along with its position within the organisation, will be decided during the second stage of the ethics and integrity framework.

To oversee the work on ethics and integrity, the Board had previously established an Ethics Steering Committee chaired by the vice-chair of the AEC and composed of AEC members, senior Secretariat staff and the Inspector General.

The ethics and integrity initiative is described in a paper prepared for the Board (GF-B32-18), which is available at www.theglobalfund.org/en/board/meetings/thirtysecond.

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