



Independent observer  
of the Global Fund

## DECISION TO CANCEL ROUND 11 CREATED A HEALTH AND A HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS, GROUP SAYS

The decision by the Global Fund to cancel Round 11 presents the international community with both a health and a human rights crisis, according to the UNAIDS Reference Group on HIV and Human Rights.

In a statement issued on 30 January, the Reference Group said that since its first round of funding in 2002, the Global Fund has played an indispensable role in advancing the health and human rights goals of the global HIV response. The Reference Group said that the Global Fund's financial difficulties are part of a broader global HIV funding crisis, and that this funding crisis is currently "the most important human rights issue in the HIV response."

The Reference Group was established by UNAIDS in 2002 to advise UNAIDS on all matters relating to HIV and human rights. The Reference Group has an independent voice; thus, its views do not necessarily reflect the views of the UNAIDS Secretariat or any of the UNAIDS co-sponsors.

The Reference Group said that the reduction by donor governments of pledges to the Global Fund, or the failure of governments to honour their pledges, "must be understood for what it is – an abrogation of legally grounded human rights obligations." The Reference Group said that while the Global Fund and other multi- and bi-lateral efforts are necessary to ensure that sufficient resources are available to fulfil the right to health, the governments of many low- and middle-income countries, by failing to budget adequately for health, are not meeting their human rights obligations to their people. "The Global Fund and other forms of international assistance are indispensable," the Reference Group said, "but are not an excuse for developing countries to underfund health generally and HIV specifically."

The Reference Group was critical of the Global Fund's decision not to include services related to what the

Fund calls “critical enablers” in its definition of essential services eligible for funding under the Transitional Funding Mechanism (TFM). Examples of critical enablers are stigma reduction, gender equality and community mobilisation. The Global Fund has said that initiatives related to critical enablers will only be considered where they are deemed by the Global Fund as being critical for the continuation of delivery of essential treatment, prevention and care services. The Reference Group said that “it is difficult to imagine a situation in which ‘critical enablers’ are not indeed critical to establishing and sustaining services.”

The Reference Group recommended that donor governments live up to their pledges and also increase their commitments to the Global Fund; and that recipient governments increase their own domestic spending for HIV programmes.

The full text of the Reference Group statement and recommendations can be accessed on the website of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board NGO Delegation in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [Russian](#).

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