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Global Fund makes changes to its methodology for measuring impact and results

The Global Fund is making some changes to its methodology for measuring impact and reporting results at national and global levels. The results report for 2017, which will be issued on 12 September 2018, will be based on the revised methodology.

The Global Fund informed partner organizations of the changes in an email sent on 19 July by Seth Faison, the Fund's head of communications.

In this article, we provide a summary of the changes described in the 19 July email. The information in the email is sketchy; we anticipate that the Fund will provide a more complete description of the changes when it releases its results report for 2017. We plan to publish an article in the next issue of GFO, scheduled for 19 September, on the 2017 results. We expect that in that article we will be able to include a detailed description of the revised methodology.

Changes to the Global Fund's methodology for reporting results — the highlights:

- Increased focus on compiling national results
- Reporting annual increases instead of cumulative numbers (for most indicators)
- Results reported just once a year
- New indicators being added

Some changes are being made to the data being compiled for each indicator. Under the revised methodology, there will be an increased focus on national results. In the past, the Fund generally compiled data on the results achieved by individual programs supported by the Global Fund, although some national data was included.

As Faison explained in his email,

“During preparatory work for implementing the Global Fund 2017-2022 Strategy, the Global Fund conducted extensive consultations with partners about how to best report results and measure impact of Global Fund investments in national programs. A broad group of partners, including representatives from donor nations, implementing nations and technical partners, eventually came to a consensus that results achieved by country-led programs with additional contributions from bilateral and multi-lateral funders should be estimated and classified with a more contributive model. Partners agreed that, due to the catalytic role of international funders, it is no longer practical nor desirable to disaggregate programmatic results and impact of country-led programs by trying to attribute specific results to singular source of financing. Instead, it makes more sense to recognize the reality that many partners contribute to the success of any specific health program, that national results should be used to measure and evaluate global health performance, and that each partner must be accountable for their specific contributions.”

Faison said that “with more national results included, the Global Fund results include numbers that in some cases [are] significantly higher than in years past.”

Because the results methodology has changed, for the majority of indicators the Global Fund will no longer report cumulative results. “Instead,” Faison said, “we will now report a more accurate and appropriate indicator of annual increases.”

As we understand it, this means, for example, that going forward, the Fund will provide the number of mosquito nets distributed in a given year and it will indicate how much of an increase this represents compared with the number of mosquito nets distributed in the previous year. But the Fund will not provide a figure for the cumulative number of mosquito nets distributed since the inception of the Fund.

Annual increases will be reported for all indicators — except the number of lives saved, where the Global Fund will continue to provide a cumulative estimate.

(Please note that, exceptionally, when the 2017 results are announced on 12 September, the results will not be compared to the prior year [2016]. The Global Fund expects that the practice of comparing results with the prior year will start with the 2018 results.)

Currently, in addition to providing an estimate of the number of lives saved, the Global Fund regularly reports on results such as the number of people on antiretroviral treatment for HIV and TB; the number of mosquito nets distributed; the number of people treated for TB (and multi-drug-resistant TB); the number of condoms distributed; the number of structures covered by indoor residual spraying for malaria; the number of malaria cases treated; and the number of people receiving care and support. A subset of these numbers is included on the country pages on the Fund’s website.

In the past, the numbers were updated twice a year. From now on, the results will be reported only once each year (each September, for the prior year).

Another important change in the revised methodology is that the number of indicators will be expanded. The 19 July email to partner organizations provided two examples — key populations reached with HIV prevention programs, and number of suspected malaria cases that receive a parasitological test — but there will be others.

As indicated above, the first results report to be based on the new methodology will be issued on 12 September covering the year 2017. That is the first year of the Global Fund’s Strategy 2017–2022. The key performance indicators for the Strategy include targets for impact, for reductions in incidence and for service delivery, based on expected nationally reported results. Faison told Aidspace that “the Strategy target setting approach and the results reporting approach have therefore been closely and logically aligned during this process and are based on similar assumptions and methods.”

A [copy of the 19 July email to partner organizations](#) is available [on the Aidspace website](#). The text of the email is not available on the Global Fund website.

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