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GLOBAL FUND REACTED QUICKLY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT AND FLEXIBILITIES TO COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY COVID-19

As early as 4 March 2020, the Global Fund published on its website its first guidance note on responding to COVID-19, in which it acknowledged the serious threat that this epidemic poses, particularly for the most vulnerable countries. As a major player in global health, and a provider of large grants aimed at strengthening the health systems of implementing countries, the Global Fund identified the following funding priorities: protection of health workers, communication to affected populations, maintenance of essential services, supply-chain coordination, rapid stock replenishment, disinfection of equipment and waste management.

Countries were then invited to assess the availability of their unearmarked funding to quickly reallocate funds to the supply of consumables and equipment needed to respond to COVID-19. In the event of 100% grant absorption, the Global Fund will approve rapid reprogramming of up to 5% of the total grant for the following activities:

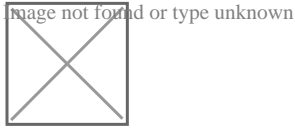
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Source: Global Fund Guidance Note on Responding to COVID-19, 4 March 2020

So far, according to the Fund's most recent COVID-19 situation report, released on 31 March, 31 countries and 2 regional grants have made use of these reallocations, amounting to a total of \$25 million in reprogrammed funds.

COUNTRIES USING GLOBAL FUND SUPPORT TO FIGHT COVID-19



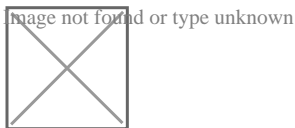
The countries so far are: Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Eritrea, Georgia, Honduras, India, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Moldova, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Tajikistan, Thailand and Ukraine.

The two regional grants are the ALCO HIV/AIDS prevention project in West Africa, which covers border screening and passenger tracing in five countries along the Abidjan-Lagos corridor, and the Middle East Response, ensuring continuity of treatment and essential services for people affected by HIV, TB and malaria in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon.

The Global Fund's COVID-19 situation report on 31 March said that most countries have requested the use of less than the 5% permitted from their existing grants, that most funds approved have come from savings from existing grants, and that at least 12 additional requests are in process.

In addition, in this year of funding renewal, many voices have been raised in warning that the country dialogue and proposal development processes would be disrupted by the COVID-19 crisis. In the African constituency's statement to the Strategy Committee, which was held virtually on 26 and 27 March, the constituency formally requested that flexibility measures be proposed to countries. These included the mobilization of the epidemic control authorities and the various cross-cutting divisions (drugs, laboratory) in the preparation of contingency plans, and the urgent repatriation of all consultants who supported Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) in the preparation of requests, to their countries of origin.

After intense discussions that included constituencies, Board members and Technical Review Panel members, the Committee's decision was finalized on Tuesday 31 March: new submission windows have been added to the three that were originally defined, to give countries additional opportunities to submit their applications as soon as they are ready. The application windows are now set as:



In addition, it is clear that all Global Fund country teams have shown understanding and flexibility in their working with implementing countries since the first applications from countries were received on 23 March, for example in giving CCMs additional days to answer questions and improve their submissions.

The 31 March COVID-19 situation report also provides information on the resources that are available to continue to provide services in the area of patient screening and treatment. A specific note, based on WHO recommendations, has been published on [malaria](#), and another on [the Impact on Health Product Supply: Assessment and Recommendations](#) is also available on the website. Finally, [a document summarizing the main messages delivered by the Global Fund](#) regarding health-systems support and continuity of care for patients affected by the three pandemics has been developed and is now also available to the public on the Global Fund's website.

Regular updates are published on the [Global Fund's COVID-19 page](#)

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