



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

Gabriel Jaramillo Says Major Changes to Governance Are Needed

The current governance structures at the Global Fund are inadequate for a big and complex financial institution, former General Manager Gabriel Jaramillo says. Mr Jaramillo, who was a member of the High-Level Panel and who served as the Global Fund's General Manager from February 2012 to January 2013, recently provided the Board with some reflections on his time working with the Fund.

"Right now, I see little discussion going on at the Board or in the Committees of the real opportunities and challenges the Global Fund faces at the macro level," Mr Jaramillo said. The Board should be tracking the implementation of the Fund's Strategic Plan, not micromanaging operations, he Mr Jaramillo said. Board meetings should not last three days, he added.

Mr Jaramillo said that he believes the Board should consider empowering a smaller, representative executive committee to make decisions on its behalf. He added that the Board should establish limits on the tenure of its members and alternates, and of the members of committees.

Mr Jaramillo said that the Global Fund lacks clear lines of delegated management authority and channels of communication between the Board and the Secretariat. "Interventions into lower levels of management by Board members without coordination through the Executive Director make the Secretariat a porous institution," he said.

Board committees

Mr Jaramillo reserved his harshest criticism for the Board's committee operations. "No accountability exists for what happens during committee meetings," Mr Jaramillo said, "and the agenda of these sessions is not that of a financial institution."

At the moment, he said, “overlap in the mandates of the committees – especially between the Finance and Operational Performance Committee (FOPC) and the Audit and Ethics Committee – inconsistent representation, differing interpretations within constituencies and political gamesmanship mean that the Global Fund actually has four Boards, not one.”

In Mr Jaramillo’s view, the Strategy and Investment Committee and the FOPC should not try to define every parameter of the Secretariat’s operations. Rather, he said, they should be talking about how to win the war against HIV, TB and malaria “faster and cheaper.”

Mr Jaramillo said that the committees should not be “an appeasement process to mollify constituencies,” but rather should be “real, working, dynamic governance bodies that track execution and implementation.”

Committees should almost never meet over multiple days, Mr Jaramillo said. “These are not committee meetings, they are conferences.”

Mr Jaramillo also said that:

- teleconferences and video conferences should be the considered for committee sessions;
- the committees would be more effective if their members had clear expertise and professional qualifications, especially at the leadership level;
- Board members themselves, not delegated representatives, should sit on the committees; and
- willingness to commit to attending committee meetings should be a key criterion for choosing who serves on the Board.

Information for this article comes from “Report and Recommendations by the Outgoing General Manager,” Board Document GF-B29-05. This document should be available shortly on the Global Fund website at www.theglobalfund.org/en/board/meetings/twenty ninth. See also the [GFO article](#) on what Mr Jaramillo said about the Consolidated Transformation Plan, the reorganisation of the Secretariat, deficiencies in financial and management information systems, and other topics.

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