



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

Global Fund gets high marks in study of efforts of global health organizations to promote gender equality

The Global Fund ranks among the top nine global health organizations with respect to its efforts to promote gender equality, according to a [study](#) conducted by Global Health 50/50, an independent initiative housed by the University College London Centre for Gender and Global Health. A [report](#) on the study was released on 8 March.

The study found that only a select group of the world's top global health organizations have placed gender equality at the center of their operations, both programmatically and institutionally.

The study covered 140 organizations from the U.N. system, bilateral and multilateral development institutions, philanthropic organizations and funders, civil society, public-private partnerships and the private sector.

The study provided an in-depth look at the extent to which the organizations understand, define, program, resource and monitor gender as a determinant of health, and as an indicator of equality within their own organizations. The organizations were assessed against the following criteria:

1. public statement of commitment to gender equality;
2. gender defined in institutional policies and consistent with global norms;
3. programmatic policies in place to guide gender-responsive action;

4. sex-disaggregated data collected and reported;
5. workplace policies and practices with specific measures to promote gender equality in place; and
6. gender parity in governance bodies and senior management.

The Global Fund rated highly in all areas except for gender parity in senior management. The Global Fund was one of only six organizations in the study that stated they were addressing the specific needs of transgender people.

“The Global Fund has made protecting and promoting human rights and gender equality a strategic pillar of our work, and we are acutely aware that gender inequality fuels the spread of epidemics,” said Executive Director Peter Sands in a [news release](#). “There is still a long way to go to achieving gender equality, and this report identifies significant challenges.”

The other organizations that scored in the top echelon included GAVI, UNAIDS, Save the Children International and BRAC, a development NGO working in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Overall, the study found that decision-making power remains in the hands of men, although women constitute the vast majority of people working in global health (67%). Other findings include the following:

- fewer than one-third of organizations define gender in a manner that is consistent with global norms, a prerequisite for effective and equitable programming;
- only 40% of organizations mention gender in their program and strategy documents;
- two-thirds of organizations do not disaggregate their program data by sex; and
- only 20% of organizations have achieved gender parity on their boards.

In its report, Global Health 50/50 made several recommendations, including that organizations should make a more concerted effort to address issues such as early forced marriage, gender-based violence and sexual exploitation.

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