



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

How many times do we have to raise the issue of good governance?

Dear subscribers

This issue is our semi-annual Pre-Board Edition in which we bring you issues of topical interest but especially related to Board discussions or the interests of Board constituencies and stakeholders. The Board, of course, meets next week and as usual we will bring you the latest on the Board discussions in the evening of Thursday 11 May after the meeting itself closes.

This week, we start with our shortest but perhaps most important article which is an [open letter](#) from the Aidspan and GFO founder Bernard Rivers in which he again takes the Global Fund to task for failing to be more open regarding program data and other issues. Regular readers will know that over the past couple of years we have written quite a bit about this, not just through articles but also in our editorials. Bernard then wrote the Board a letter, which is harder to ignore. But he has still received no answer to date!

In some regards (not all, to be fair), transparency and governance appear to be going backwards in the Global Fund. How, we ask, can leadership fail to respond to an open letter requesting clarity? Why will it take the best part of nine months to get program data up and accessible on the data explorer? Indeed, why were they removed in the first place? If you think this unwillingness to share information is disturbing, please join us by adding your voice to those asking for such issues to be addressed.

Articles 3 and 4, on [Global Fund 2022 Performance](#) and [Global Fund Resource Mobilization Update](#) are based on committee papers and stakeholder discussions and bring you a flavour of what will be discussed at next week's Board meeting.

Another issue of keen interest to stakeholders is that of “set-asides”, those additional earmarked donor fund which increased under the Seventh Replenishment. Our article on [The increase in set-aside pledges](#) describes exactly what these are for those who don't know, and also how the Global Fund will work collaboratively with donors to ensure their best use.

Article 6 is one of our OIG report articles, this one on [Fraudulent and abusive practices in the Guinea malaria nets mass campaign](#).

We follow this with a summary of the desperate state of affairs in the region with the fastest-growing HIV epidemic, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, but receiving the least support as most countries in this region have transitioned from Global Fund support or are due to do so. Despite the comparative wealth of the countries in this region when weighed against those of other less prosperous regions, HIV programs see little of this wealth and discriminatory governments do less for key populations and drug users. Our article, [The worsening HIV crisis in Eastern Europe and Central Asia](#), points out that the situation is exacerbated due to the impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, that the region is now seeing much greater population movements as Ukrainians flee to neighbouring countries, and the instability this brings for service delivery to those most affected.

Our final article, reproduced from our sister publication Observateur du Fonds Mondial, is a topic of interest and even concern to many of you – that of the Challenging Operating Environments policy and the Additional Safeguards Policy. We ask [What do these really mean?](#) and look at how they are applied and the possibilities for countries under such measures to maneuver out of them.

As ever, Aidspan and our editorial team, under the leadership of Ida Hakizinka, does its best to ensure the accuracy of data and statements in our published articles ? and hence our inclusion of hyperlinks ? but if you, the reader, identify an error or important omission, please notify us and provide us with your data source; and we shall be happy to publish a correction or amendment.

If you enjoy the GFO and find it relevant to your work, please encourage your colleagues to colleagues to subscribe!

Don't forget: if you are aware of an interesting development relevant to disease programmes or health systems and that you feel is worthy of global discussion, do let me know together with the name of a person prepared to write about this. Suggestions and comments can be sent to us, Ida Hakizinka or Arlette Campbell White in English, French or Spanish at ida.hakizinka@aidspan.org or acampbell.white@aidspan.org.

The Aidspan Editorial Team

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