



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

Window 2 findings echo those of Window 1

Dear subscribers,

Welcome back and hope you had a good break over the summer/winter.

We start with a discussion of the UN's High-Level Meeting on TB scheduled to be held on 22 September in New York. In our article [What do we want and expect from the HLM on TB?](#) we bring you a flavour of the draft Political Declaration and the "key asks" from the TB community. The targets of the post-2015 TB Strategy were not met, in part due to the impact of COVID but were off-track to start with, so what can be done to ensure that the right building blocks are in place to turn rhetorical commitment into political will and adequate planning and financing of the response?

On 17 July the Technical Review Panel held a meeting to provide a debrief on the status of the Window 2 funding cycle applications which closed at the end of May. We first reported on this in our last issue but it is too much information for one article. Hence, Article 3 ([Technical Review Panel's observations and recommendations on Window 2 funding applications: Part II](#)) provides you with a summary of the technical observations and recommendations for the three diseases, health systems and Equity, Human Rights and Gender.

This was a different TRP membership to that of Window 1 – but disappointingly the lessons learnt were very similar and many of the same problems reared their heads. But is this so surprising given that countries start late and have to jump through even more hoops than ever before? Not to mention wading through more than 2,000 pages (yes, we've counted!) of Global Fund guidance materials, briefing notes and advice, and contradictory templates depending on the portfolio approach. And not to mention the growing number of obligatory annexes....there has to come a time when somebody will put their foot down and have the power to insist on a more simplified approach...but we have all been saying that for more than a decade and it's not getting easier.

Our fourth article covers the recent Office of the Inspector General audit of grants in Sudan and it is not a happy story ([Sudan has no hope of achieving the 2030 targets](#)). This audit report provides an insight into the difficulties of implementing disease programmes in a country classified as a Challenging Operating Environment (COE) and also demonstrates how the Secretariat itself has difficulties in applying the COE policy flexibilities: raised many times both by the OIG and the countries themselves, and covered by us in several recent articles.

Our final two articles were previously published in our French-language sister newsletter, Observateur du fonds Mondial. [The safety of programmes and implementers: a major challenge for optimizing Global Fund investments](#) makes the case for security measures to be included in funding requests; and the [development of a new TB vaccine](#) is very topical, given the impending HLM on TB.

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 Aidspace Editorial Team

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