



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

Lessons for Round 7 Applicants from the TRP Comments on Round 6 Proposals

CCMs and other organizations that are considering applying for Global Fund Round 7 grants will definitely benefit if they take account of the major issues identified by the Technical Review Panel (TRP) in its comments on Round 6 Proposals. In this article, we summarize those issues. Most of them were “new” to Round 6, meaning that were not present, or at least were not very prominent, in previous rounds.

Linkages with activities funded through previous Global Fund grants. The TRP indicated that in Round 6 many applicants failed to draw adequate connections between their Round 6 proposals and their approved grants from previous rounds. This issue has several aspects to it.

First, the TRP was impressed with applications that provided clear evidence that previous Global Fund grants were proceeding well.

Second, when previous Global Fund grants were not proceeding well, the TRP was less likely to recommend Round 6 proposals for approval. However, in such situations, the chances of being recommended for approval were improved if applicants candidly acknowledged the difficulties faced in previous grants, provided clear evidence that steps had been taken to address the problems, and explicitly described these steps.

Third, when an applicant country had previous grants for the same component as in their Round 6 application, the TRP paid particular attention to whether there existed sufficient absorptive capacity to handle a Round 6 grant.

Finally, the TRP identified some problems concerning the timing of the Round 6 application for countries

with a previous grant for similar activities. In some instances, applicants indicated that funding from a previous grant would still last for another two years or more, and proposed a delayed start date for their (potential) Round 6 grant that would enable it to take over when the previous grant ended. In the opinion of the TRP, in most cases it would have been inappropriate to tie up scarce Global Fund resources in this fashion. In other instances, when countries applied for funding for activities that were also supported by a previous grant which was at a very early stage of implementation, the TRP sometimes took the view that there was already sufficient funding in the country for the proposed activities, and so recommended against funding the Round 6 proposal.

Information on Sub-Recipients (SRs). In Round 6, the TRP began to praise proposals that provided a good description of the process that would be (or had been) used for selecting SRs, and that identified the SRs that had been chosen or that might be chosen. The TRP found that it was much easier to evaluate the implementation plans in the proposal when the potential SRs are known.

Addressing TRP comments from prior rounds. The TRP indicated that while many Round 6 applicants took the TRP's comments on previous unsuccessful submissions into account when they re-submitted their proposals, many other applicants had repeatedly ignored such comments. The TRP noted that where applicants do take the TRP comments into account, they are more likely to be recommended for funding.

Technical support. The TRP noted that a small group of countries have had their proposals "rejected" (i.e., not recommended for funding) for several rounds in a row, including Round 6. Other countries had all three components of their proposals – HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria – rejected in Round 6. The TRP said that these countries would be well advised to take advantage of the technical support that is available from various parties to assist them in preparing their Round 7 proposals.

Managing the programme. In Round 6, more than in previous rounds, the TRP praised those proposals that contained a good description of how the programme would be managed or coordinated.

Importance of getting the indicators and targets right. In Round 6, more than in previous rounds, the TRP praised proposals that contained solid information on indicators and targets (including proposals with indicators and targets that were simple, achievable and realistic), and proposals that contained a good mix of impact and service-related indicators.

Regional proposals: working with CCMs. Only one proposal from a Regional Organisation or a Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) was recommended for funding in Round 6 (out of ten such proposals that were considered). The TRP observed that these proposals tended to be developed by external organizations, often outside of the framework of the needs and priorities of recipient countries, and then presented to the relevant national CCMs for endorsement. The TRP suggested that a better approach would be for Regional Organizations and RCMs to work much more closely with CCMs, and to involve them in all stages of the development of the proposal.

Note: This analysis is based primarily on the very detailed "Report of the TRP on Round 6 Proposals" (accessible at www.theglobalfund.org/en/about/board/fourteenth/boardmeetingdocs), which potential Round 7 applicants are strongly encouraged to read. An additional resource is the new Aidsplan report mentioned below.

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