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Global Fund Selects Co-Chairs for Panel of Experts on Corruption Issues

The Global Fund has selected two prominent people to co-chair the panel of experts that will be conducting an independent review of the Fund's financial safeguards: Former President of Botswana Festus Mogae and former U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Michael O. Leavitt.

The panel is part of a broader set of measures that the Global Fund is implementing to strengthen the Fund's financial and risk management systems. Some of these measures, including the panel, were in response to the recent media coverage of corruption in the administration of Global Fund grants in a few sub-Saharan African countries, and to the reaction of some donors to the corruption stories.

The co-chairs will select a small group of eminent persons and experts to join the panel. The Global Fund says that the panel will assess the Fund's current practices in financial oversight, and will make recommendations to help strengthen the Global Fund's fiscal controls and anti-corruption measures.

"The Global Fund is the world's most powerful tool in the fight against AIDS, TB and malaria," said Leavitt. "It will be my job as co-chair of this independent review to make certain that the Global Fund's financial controls meet high standards of professionalism and that, if necessary, improvements are made to increase the Fund's ability to improve lives."

The Associated Press [reported](#) that the choice of an ex-president from a nation often seen as a beacon of democratic hope in Africa, together with a popular former Republican governor from Utah who was also a member of former President George W. Bush's cabinet, is a two-pronged bid to ensure cooperation from African grant recipients and gain legitimacy with those Republicans in the U.S. Congress who have questioned the Fund's programmes.

The independent review panel will report to the Board of the Global Fund. When the idea of the panel was first announced by the Fund in February, the plan had been that the panel would report to the Board in time for the May board meeting. But the Fund now says that the panel's work will last "several months." As with all Global Fund reports, the panel's report will be made public.

Festus Mogae was President of Botswana from 1998 to 2008. He won the 2008 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African leadership in recognition of his record of good governance as President. Michael O. Leavitt served under President George W. Bush as Secretary of Health and Human Services from 2005 to 2009. During his three terms as Governor of Utah, the state was recognized six times as one of the U.S.'s best-managed.

Some of the information for this article was taken from a Global Fund [press release](#), 16 March 2011.

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