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Global Fund to Develop Guidance on Strengthening MNCH Content of Funded Programmes

The Global Fund will develop guidance for countries on how to strengthen the maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) content of their HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and health systems strengthening programmes. The guidance will include indicators specific to MNCH. These decisions were adopted by the Global Fund Board at its meeting in December 2010. Exactly when this guidance will be available is not known. It may or may not be available in time to inform the preparation of Round 11 proposals.

The Board also decided that a discussion around possible additional, longer-term measures to increase the Global Fund's engagement in MNCH will take place during the development of the Global Fund's new strategic plan, which is underway now and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2011. Prior to the December Board meeting, the Board's Policy and Strategy Committee (PSC) had discussed possible long-term measures, but had failed to reach a consensus.

The PSC explored three options for channelling new funding to MNCH. Option 1 involved the Global Fund hosting a dedicated initiative to fund MNCH, separate from the rounds-based system. Option 2 entailed using the Health Systems Funding Platform to invest in MNCH. Option 3 involved accelerating funding for MNCH from within existing systems. No agreement was reached concerning which option would be preferable. In addition, some PSC members wanted to see expanding the Global Fund's mandate included as a possible option.

The discussion concerning the various options will likely continue during the consultations that will be undertaken related to the development of the Global Fund's new strategic plan.

Information for this article was taken from Decision Point 4 in the Board decision points paper for its 22nd meeting, Document GF/B22/DP1, at www.theglobalfund.org/en/board/meetings/twentysecond; and “Enhancing Global Fund Support to Maternal, Newborn and Child Health,” October 2010, submitted by the Secretariat to the Policy and Strategy Committee. The latter is not available on the Fund’s website.

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