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## A FLURRY OF INTEREST GREET'S CLOSURE OF FIRST WINDOW FOR REGIONAL PROPOSALS UNDER NFM

A first window for potential applicants for regional grants closed in May with some 43 entities signalling interest in a share of the \$200 million being set aside for regional proposals during the 2014-2016 allocation period.

The total portfolio of the regional Expressions of Interest exceeds \$689 million — more than three times the size of the total envelope that the Global Fund Board approved in March for regional proposals during the allocation period. A second window for regional EoI will be opened in April 2015.

Screening of eligible applicants has begun, Aidspan understands from an NFM progress report released by the Secretariat in May. Those that meet the eligibility criteria established by the Secretariat will then be reviewed by the Grant Approval Committee, which will establish a funding ceiling that should not exceed the \$200 million established by the Board.

A Technical Review Panel will convene to further triage the applicants, and provide early feedback to the relevant country coordination mechanisms (CCMs) in order to improve concept notes under discussion.

A diagram released by the Secretariat of the geographic spread of the regional EoI shows that the majority of the applicants are based in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the 43 EoI received, 20 of them hail from the African continent, for a total of \$431 million.

In terms of the disease spread, the majority of the proposals — 29 of the 43 — are related to the HIV response, carrying a price tag of \$347 million.



Figure 1: Funds requested through regional expressions of interest, by region and by disease

The outpouring of interest in regional proposals was not unexpected, Aidsplan understands from the Global Fund Secretariat, and was within the range expected. A deadline for end March was extended into May in order to facilitate the maximum number of applications.

The Board unanimously approved a decision point at its 31st meeting in Jakarta in March to allocate \$200 million to regional proposals from the funds raised during the Fourth Replenishment (see article [here](#)).

Board delegations at the time expressed concerns that the regional program set-asides would become slush funds to enhance country-level programs or pay for workshops, meetings or conferences that produce meagre programmatic impact.

It is premature, however, to assess whether the majority of the regional EoI signalled during the first application window fit within the context envisioned by the Secretariat: programs that are less about service delivery and more in line with the cross-border promotion of behavior change and integration.

This article has been corrected to change the date of the next window for regional proposals to April 2015.

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