



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

THREE EXCERPTS FROM AIDSPAN'S GUIDE ON THE CCM'S ROLE IN GRANT OVERSIGHT

This article contains three excerpts from “The Aidspan Guide on the Roles and Responsibilities of CCMs in Grant Oversight” (see separate article, above).

Excerpt # 1: Determining the Best Structure

The CCM needs to decide how it will structure itself to carry out its oversight responsibilities. Grant oversight is one of the core responsibilities of the CCM, so all members share in this responsibility. Each time the CCM discusses a grant, it is, in effect, doing oversight. Here are five options the CCM can consider:

1. Oversight is done by the full CCM during CCM meetings.
2. The CCM assigns responsibility for oversight to the CCM Secretariat.
4. The CCM creates an oversight committee.
5. The CCM creates an oversight committee, and a sub-committee (or technical working group) for each disease.
6. The CCM creates an oversight committee and two sub-committees, one to do programmatic oversight, and the other to do financial oversight.

We believe that most CCMs will probably find it too unwieldy to have the all of the detailed oversight work done by the entire CCM, especially in the case of very large CCMs or CCMs with numerous grants. Not only is the work very time-consuming, but this approach does not allow for the investigation of problems before the full CCM meeting...

We believe that most CCMs will decide to create an oversight committee, with or without sub-committees. The advantage of this approach is that it provides time to analyse reports, identify and investigate problems, and summarise issues for the full CCM. For this approach to work, however, it requires timely reporting by the PR (well before CCM meetings), significant work for the committee members, and (almost certainly) additional resources...

It would be useful to have a range of different sectors represented on the oversight committee and sub-committees. It may be helpful to include some non-CCM members – for two reasons: (1) this would provide an opportunity to add people with relevant technical expertise; and (2) this would increase the participation of stakeholders not directly represented on the CCM.

Excerpt #2: Deciding What the Oversight Committee Will Monitor

[With respect to tracking where the money is], the oversight committee may want to collect information on some or all of the following: (a) the cumulative budget to date as per the Grant Agreement, compared to cumulative disbursements to date to the PR from the Global Fund; (b) the cumulative budget to date for each objective, compared to how much has been spent by the PR for that objective; and (c) cumulative disbursements to date by the Global Fund to the PR, compared to funds spent by the PR and disbursed to SRs. These are just examples of financial indicators the oversight committee could decide to track.

With respect to [tracking where the drugs or other products are], the oversight committee may want to collect information on the following: (a) product inventories (e.g., how many months' worth of Drug X are on hand?); (b) whether the products are being ordered and delivered on time; (c) whether the products are being distributed on time; and (d) whether the products are reaching the end users.

[T]he main measures of whether the grant is being implemented on schedule is probably whether disbursements from the Global Fund are arriving according to the schedule spelled out in the Grant Agreement; and whether disbursements from the PR to the SRs are being made in a timely manner... Another way ... is to look at whether the major activities are being implemented according to the timelines outlined in the workplan.

Excerpt #3: Identifying and Investigating Problems

In the course of reviewing information on the progress of a grant, the oversight committee may identify something that it considers to be cause for concern. It could be something as simple as a PU/DR that has been filed late. Or, it could be something more serious, such as failure to make any progress towards one of the key targets. Whatever the problem, the oversight committee will usually have to probe the PR to obtain more information.

Precisely defining the problem is very important. For example, the oversight committee may discover that the procurement of certain medicines is significantly behind schedule. But the committee needs to dig deeper to find out why the medicines are being delivered late. Is it because the orders are being placed late? Is it because the manufacturers are not delivering according to schedule? Is there another reason? Only when the source of the problem is known, can the oversight committee or the full CCM recommend or take remedial action.

In more serious cases, the oversight committee may need to investigate more thoroughly. Perhaps a site visit would be in order. Or, the committee may decide that some external assistance is required (such as an audit or a review by experts). When these more serious cases arise, the CCM should inform the FPM, if the FPM is not already aware of the problem.

The problems may be limited to one part of the grant, or they may be systemic to the whole grant.

Examples of systemic problems include:

- The PR does not have the capacity to manage the grant effectively.
- One or more SRs don't have the capacity to implement their portions of the grant.
- There is poor communications between the PR and the SRs.

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