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of the Global Fund

OIG Reports Evidence of Fraud by a PR in Mali

In a separate development from that in Mauritania, three senior government officials in Mali have been arrested in connection with alleged fraud with Global Fund grants.

In November 2009, in the course of an audit and subsequent investigation, the Fund's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) uncovered evidence of fraudulent and unjustified use of grant funds by senior staff at the Department of Administration and Finance (DAF) of the Mali Ministry of Health.

The evidence collected led the OIG to make contact with the authorities in Mali and, ultimately, to the arrest of the accountant responsible for the administration of grants at the DAF, along with the Secretary General and the Registrar for the Ministry.

This information is contained in "The Office of the Inspector General Progress Report for October 2009 – February 2010." The Ministry of Health was the PR for a Round 1 Malaria grant; and is the PR for a Round 6 malaria grant and for two TB grants, in Rounds 4 and 7.

According to the OIG, the original audit raised a number of questions which required further investigation concerning the specific nature and extent of the fraud, the amount attributed to falsified or fabricated documentation, and the possible involvement of other staff from the Ministry. The OIG has deployed a team of investigators and auditors to Mali to investigate. The investigation continues, but according to the OIG, preliminary indications are that the fraud is systematic rather than isolated, and involves a large portion of the documentation that has been studied.

The OIG said that it met with the Investigating Judge to discuss how best to refer further and more specific evidence. At the conclusion of the OIG's investigation, comprehensive evidence will be provided to the authorities.

In a separate report, "Secretariat Follow-Up on Inspector General Findings and Recommendations," the Global Fund Secretariat said that it has "put in place immediate and comprehensive measures to safeguard its assets and protect patients' access to treatment" in Mali. No details were provided.

The OIG report is available at www.theglobalfund.org/en/oig/reports. The Secretariat follow-up report is available at www.theglobalfund.org/en/board/meetings/twentyfirst/documents.

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