



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

FULL DISCLOSURE WORKS

Anyone who imagines that the Global Fund could disburse billions of dollars without some of it being misused is naive. The question is not whether some of the money will be diverted, but rather how much, and whether the diversion is detected, and what is done once it is detected.

Most funding institutions keep very quiet about any abuses they find regarding how their grants have been used. Some even refrain from investigating in the first place, perhaps for fear of what they will find. The Global Fund has always taken a different approach, seeking both to know the truth and to be open about it, even if the truth is distasteful.

For a long time the Global Fund had no Inspector General to unearth possible corruption by grant recipients or within the Fund itself. Then it appointed an Inspector General who ended up having few successes and many fights with the Secretariat. Eventually it appointed the current Inspector General, but gave him insufficient funding to recruit a strong staff. Moreover, the relevant web pages at www.theglobalfund.org/en/oig made it very hard to understand what the role of the Inspector General was or how a whistle-blower should contact him. Fortunately, these problems have now been largely resolved, and nearly seven years after the Fund opened its doors, the Inspector General and his team are getting up to speed.

The fact that the Inspector General is vigorously pursuing actual and possible cases of corruption will send shivers through those contemplating or engaging in corrupt practices. And although one or two short-sighted donors may cite the Philippines and Mauritania cases as reasons to criticise the Fund, most donors are likely to be pleased that the Fund seeks to uncover rather than to conceal the inevitable attempts to divert the money from its intended purpose.

One final note: Given the Global Fund's commitment to openness and transparency, why is it that the

Fund's press releases about the suspension of grants to the Philippines and Mauritania were placed on the Fund's website but not emailed to the Fund's media contacts? These contacts have been emailed vastly less important press releases (such as "Global Fund Executive Director addresses UN Secretary General's Global Health Forum"); they deserve to be told this latest news as well.

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