FOUR EXCERPTS FROM "THE AIDSPAN GUIDE TO ROUND 8 APPLICATIONS TO THE GLOBAL FUND – VOLUME 1: GETTING A HEAD START"

Following are four sample excerpts from the revised version of "The Aidspan Guide to Round 8 Applications to the Global Fund – Volume 1: Getting a Head Start," whose publication was announced in GFO #83 (available at www.aidspan.org/gfo) and whose update was announced above. The guide itself is accessible at www.aidspan.org/guides.

Excerpt 1: The Importance of Getting a Head Start

Work on an application for a Global Fund grant should start well in advance of the Fund's call for proposals for any given round of funding.

Judging by the experience of recent rounds of funding, once the call for proposals is issued, applicants have about four months to submit their proposals. Applicants will need the majority of this time to fill out what has always been a rather complicated proposal form, and to obtain the necessary approvals and signatures. For this reason, and because the Global Fund requires that applicants engage in a process of soliciting and reviewing in-country submissions for possible inclusion in the country coordinated proposal, Aidspan recommends that applicants begin working on their proposals at least a few months ahead of the [March 1] call for proposals.

Excerpt 2: Designing the Proposal Development Process

Each proposal to the Global Fund is different, so CCMs need to design a process that fits with their specific requirements. The following is a list of actions that CCMs may want to include in their process:

- Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of previously submitted proposals.
- Define the overall project focus.
- Assign responsibilities for proposal development.
- Identify, assign and manage the resources needed for the proposal development process.
- Implement a process for soliciting and reviewing submissions for possible integration into the proposal.
- ·Draft the proposal components.
- Identify the PRs and SRs.
- Compile and submit the final proposal.
- Maintain regular communications.

Although there is some logic to the order in which the actions have been presented, this sequence is by no means the only way to organise the process. Indeed, some of the actions (like drafting the proposal components and maintaining regular communications) are likely to take place in a continuous way during the whole process.

CCMs need to decide which actions to include and in what order they should be done. CCMs should also ensure that their process meets all of the Global Fund requirements and is properly documented. Once the main actions have been decided on, the CCM should also develop a feasible timeline, ensuring that adequate time is left at the end of the process to secure the approval of all members of the CCM and to make any final changes.

(In the next section of this chapter, each action is presented and discussed in detail.)

<u>Excerpt 3: Managing the Proposal Development Process</u>

CCMs are multi-entity committees, not executive bodies. Although CCMs are responsible for proposal development, trying to have the entire CCM manage the development process can be quite a challenge. During past funding rounds, many CCMs have established smaller proposal development teams (or committees) to do most of the work involved. The roles of these teams can vary and will depend on what is needed in each context. Some suggestions are provided below.

Component-Specific Teams

It is common practice for CCMs to set up a different team to work on each disease component (if they are planning to apply for more than one component). These teams can take on all or several of the following tasks:

- Ensure that a general situation analysis related to the response to the disease is conducted.
- Based on the situational analysis, define the overall focus of the proposal.
- Define the proposal development process that will be followed, complete with timelines.
- Coordinate the process of soliciting and reviewing submissions from a broad range of stakeholders for possible integration into the proposal.
- Write, or oversee the writing of, the final proposal for the component.
- Ensure that the process followed is well documented.
- Present the content of the component-specific proposal to the CCM, and provide clarifications and revisions as required.

The proposal development process may be different for each component.

Proposal Coordination Team

If your CCM does establish a proposal development teams for each component, we suggest that you also consider setting up an additional team to bring the different components together and to coordinate the entire proposal. In order to do this effectively, it may make sense for at least one member of each component-specific team to participate in meetings of the proposal coordination team.

Excerpt 4: Lessons Learned from Earlier Rounds of Funding

The strengths identified most often in the TRP comments on approved proposals submitted during Rounds 3-7 were as follows:

1. The proposal was clear, well organised and well-documented; the strategy was sound.
2. The proposal demonstrated complementarity – i.e., it built on existing activities, including national strategic plans, and/or it built on earlier programmes financed by the Global Fund.
3. There was good involvement of partners (including NGOs and other sectors) in the implementation plan.
4. The proposal contained a good situational analysis.
5. The proposal reflected comments made by the TRP during earlier rounds of funding.

Other strengths identified fairly frequently were as follows:

6. The programme targeted high-risk groups and vulnerable populations.
7. The proposal demonstrated sustainability – i.e., national budgets were identified to help sustain the activities once Global Fund support terminates.
8. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan was solid.
9. The budget was well detailed, well presented and reasonable.
10. There was a strong political commitment to implement the programme.
11. There was good collaboration between HIV and TB.
12. The programme was realistic with respect to what could be accomplished, and/or had a limited and concentrated focus.
13. The proposal demonstrated good co-funding.
14. The PR is a strong organisation, with experience managing similar programmes.
15. The proposal included capacity building measures and identified technical support needs.
16. The proposal contained innovative strategies, some of which could lead to best practices.
17. The proposal built on lessons learned and best practices.
18. The proposal had a strong human rights focus.
19. The proposal contained solid strategies for procurement and supply management (PSM).
20. The CCM was strong and had wide sectoral representation.
21. The proposal was developed through a transparent, participatory process.
22. The proposal acknowledged issues of absorptive capacity.

23. The proposal described solid strategies for managing the programme.
24. The proposal contained solid indicators and targets.
25. The proposal identified the SRs, and/or provided a good description of the process for identifying the SRs.
26. The proposal contained a strong section on health systems strengthening (HSS).

The following strength began to emerge during Round 7:

27. Operational research was built into the proposal.

(The observations of the TRP concerning each of these strengths are described in the balance of this chapter. Many extracts of TRP comments on individual proposals are included. For each extract, the country involved has been identified, and links have been provided to both the full TRP comments from which the extract was taken and to the proposal that the TRP was commenting on.)

Read More