



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

GLOBAL FUND PROVISIONALLY AGREES ON EARLY LAUNCH OF ROUND 9

In an unexpected development, the Board of the Global Fund yesterday agreed in principle that Round 9 will be launched nearly six months earlier than had been anticipated. The Board also agreed that CCMs whose Round 8 proposals narrowly fail to be approved will be permitted to resubmit those proposals as part of Round 9, after they address shortcomings pointed out by the Technical Review Panel (TRP).

Prior to this board meeting, it had been assumed that the Round 9 Call for Proposals would be in March 2009, one year after the Round 8 Call. But at yesterday's meeting, the Board provisionally decided that the Round 9 Call for Proposals will be on about 1 October 2008, with the Round 10 Call presumably being in March 2009 (though the latter point was not explicitly discussed).

The Board's decision yesterday was provisional in that not all the practical details have yet been worked out. The Board agreed that it would finalize its decision by email in the second half of May, after receiving further input from the Secretariat. (GFO will inform readers of the final outcome.)

In Rounds 8 and 9, as in the past, the TRP will divide proposals into four categories, as follows:

- Category 1 and 2: TRP recommends Board to approve the proposal
- Category 3: Not worthy of approval as it stands; but worth improving and resubmitting.
- Category 4: TRP recommends Board to reject the proposal

However, the Board's provisional decision yesterday includes some important changes from past procedures, which affect not only Round 9 applicants, but also Round 8 applicants. These are:

- a. When the TRP writes its comments in September on Round 8 proposals that it assigns to Category 3, it will not just list strengths and weaknesses, it will, in the words of the Board decision, “recommend the types of changes that need to be made to strengthen the proposal for resubmission.”
- b. The Secretariat will not wait until the November Board meeting to inform applicants about the TRP’s recommendation and comments; it will instead provide each applicant with this information around the start of October, as soon as the Board has been informed. (It is theoretically possible that the Board will make a decision in November different from what the TRP recommends, although this has never happened in the past.)
- c. Around the same time, i.e. about October 1, the Round 9 Call for Proposals will be issued. And Round 9 will use the same proposal form and guidelines as Round 8.
- d. CCMs whose Round 8 proposal has been assigned to Category 3 will be able (i) to review the detailed TRP recommendations as to what changes they should make to enhance the chances of the proposal being approved upon resubmission; (ii) make appropriate improvements to the proposal; then (iii) resubmit it as part of Round 9, using the same proposal form as in Round 8, for a decision at the April 2009 board meeting. They will not, as was the case in the past, have to start from the beginning, seeking submissions for proposal ideas from in-country stakeholders, and using a newly-designed proposal form.

The precise wording of the relevant paragraphs of the Board’s decision was as follows:

1. The Board, determined to scale up the Global Fund’s response to HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria, decides in principle to announce, after the Seventeenth Board Meeting, that there will be an extra Call for Proposals for funding in 2008.
2. The Board requests the Secretariat to prepare to issue a Call for Proposals for Round 9, which shall employ the same proposal form and guidelines as Round 8, on or about 1 October 2008, and to provide for review of those proposals in time for approval at the Nineteenth Board Meeting in April 2009.
3. The Board decides that in Round 8 and 9:
 - a. Applicants whose initial proposal receives a Category 3 recommendation may resubmit a revised version of the same proposal in the next Round for consideration by the TRP in time for the Board to make a decision at its next Board Meeting.
 - b. When the TRP comments on initial Category 3 proposals, it is encouraged to recommend the types of changes that need to be made to strengthen the proposal for resubmission.
 - c. Within a week of the Board being informed of the TRP’s recommendations and comments, each applicant should be informed by the Secretariat of the TRP’s recommendation and comments regarding its proposal.
4. The Board recognizes that this decision point has implications for the Secretariat, the TRP, and applicants. The Secretariat is requested by no later than 15 May 2008 to submit to the Board, for approval by email, a final decision on announcing Round 9, together with a description of resources available and forecasted and proposed changes to existing policies necessary to implement this decision point.

[Note: The Fund holds two board meetings per year. The meeting held in Geneva on April 28-29 was the seventeenth such meeting. GFO was present, with observer status.]

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