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of the Global Fund

Board Chair and Vice-Chair to Have Ex-Officio Status

In future, the Global Fund Board chair and vice-chair will serve in an ex-officio capacity with no voting rights, and they will not represent any particular constituency while they hold office. In addition, any individual (not just existing Board members, as at present) may be nominated for chair or vice-chair.

These are the two key parts of a package of changes to the Board Operating Procedures (BOPs) made at the Board meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria. The Board believes that the changes will reinforce the independence of the chair and vice-chair.

The changes were prompted by problems which arose in 2009 when the election process for the chair and vice-chair had to be delayed, and the terms of the sitting chair and vice-chair extended. The following changes were made to the process for electing the chair and vice-chair:

- The incumbent Board chair and vice-chair will have lead responsibility for the election process. (Previously, the Global Fund Secretariat was responsible for the process. It was felt that it would make more sense to assign the responsibility to Board leadership.)
- The nominations process will be launched three months prior to the election date. (Previously, the process was launched 40 days prior.)
- Any suitably competent individual nominated by a voting constituency of the Global Fund Board may stand for office as chair or vice-chair. (Previously, nominees had to be a voting Board member at the time of nominations.)

Previously, the BOPs were not entirely clear about whether the chair and vice-chair represented themselves or the constituencies they belonged to as Board members. The BOPs only said that the chair and vice-chair retain the single vote of the constituency they represent, and that the alternate Board members for the two constituencies represented by the chair and vice-chair may participate in discussions

at the Board. A survey of other institutions comparable to the Global Fund, conducted by the Global Fund Secretariat, revealed that, often, the voting powers of the chair and vice-chair are removed while they are in office.

The previous practice of requiring that a nominee for chair or vice-chair be a voting Board member at the time of nomination limited the pool of candidates to twenty individuals. This was considered too restrictive, particularly considering that many multi-country and multi-stakeholder constituencies have internal rules about the rotation of the Board membership. Under the new procedures, should the incoming chair or vice-chair be a sitting Board member representing a constituency, the constituency would need to nominate a new individual to that position.

The next elections for Board chair and vice-chair are expected in May 2011.

Information for this article was taken from the Report of the Policy and Strategy Committee, Document GF/B22/4, and from Decision Point 6 in the Board decision points paper. The decision points have been posted at www.theglobalfund.org/en/board/meetings/twentysecond. The committee report should be available shortly at the same site.

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