



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

Second Wave of National Strategy Applications Launched

Open call for expressions of interest, but number of applications will be limited

First deadline in the process is 23 February 2011

The Global Fund has launched the Second Wave of national strategy applications (NSAs). The deadline for filing expressions of interest is 23 February 2011. This is just the first stage of the process; the number of countries that will eventually be invited to submit applications in the Second Wave will be limited to 12. Lessons learned from this wave will be used to guide a broader roll-out of NSAs in the future.

NSAs involve country coordinating mechanisms (CCMs) submitting a national disease strategy as the primary basis of the application for Global Fund financing, together with a proposal form that is lighter than the one used in the rounds-based channel.

The First Wave of NSAs was launched in 2009. In the First Wave (unlike the Second Wave), the Global Fund issued selective invitations to countries to participate. Twenty-two countries were invited to express interest, of which eight were then invited to submit applications. Six CCMs did so, submitting seven applications (one CCM submitted for two diseases). Five proposals were approved for funding at a total two-year cost of \$434 million (prior to “efficiency cuts”).

For the Second Wave, the Global Fund has issued an open call for expressions of interest. The Fund has sent an email to all CCM members in countries that were eligible to apply to the Global Fund for Round 10, drawing their attention to information on the call on the newly created NSA section of the Fund's website at www.theglobalfund.org/en/nsa. To express interest in the Second Wave, CCMs have to meet the following four conditions:

- the national disease strategy does not end before June 2015;
- the national disease strategy documentation is complete or nearly complete;
- country stakeholders are confident the national disease strategy documentation is able to meet the attributes defined in the joint assessment of national strategies (JANS) tool developed by the International Health Partnership (IHP+); and
- the country is willing and able to plan and coordinate an independent in-country joint assessment of the national disease strategy.

Countries that have an approved Round 10 proposal for a given disease are not allowed to express interest in the Second Wave for the same disease. In addition, countries cannot submit both a Second Wave NSA funding request and a Round 11 application for the same disease.

The following table summarises the process and the key dates for the Second Wave:

Table: NSA Second Wave process and dates

Steps	Timing
Countries submit expressions of interest and national disease strategy documentation	by 23 February 2011
Global Fund announces list of participating countries	by 31 March 2011
Application materials are made available	on 15 August 2011
Participating countries organise joint assessments of their national disease strategy	by 16 September 2011
CCMs develop and submit applications	by 15 December 2011
TRP reviews applications	March/April 2012
Global Fund Board makes funding decisions	2 nd quarter of 2012

The Global Fund says that the decision to participate must be made jointly by CCM members and officials in the national disease authority or relevant ministry (or ministries).

The national strategy documentation submitted with the expression of interest will be reviewed by a team of independent experts to determine whether it is “ready” for a joint assessment. The Global Fund refers to this as a “technical screening.” The screening is based on nine criteria related to the completeness and the consistency of the documentation.

If, after the screening, there are more than 12 countries still “in the running,” the Global Fund will apply what it calls “additional considerations” to reduce the number and to ensure that the pool of applicants will be diverse (so as to yield useful information for future NSA planning). The Fund says that these considerations could include geographic mix; disease mix; including a few countries that are supported by multiple donors; including one country that has conducted or plans to conduct a joint assessment of their national health sector strategy supported by the IHP+; and, if necessary, limiting participation in the Second Wave to one disease per country.

The Global Fund says that the joint assessments will include an examination of the extent to which civil society, people living with or affected by the three diseases, the private sector and other constituencies central to an effective response have participated (and are participating) in disease strategy development and implementation. In addition, the Global Fund will apply to NSAs the same standards for multi-stakeholder involvement as it applies to rounds-based proposals, including the “dual track financing”

recommendation which stipulates that proposals for funding should routinely include both government and non-government principal recipients.

To submit an NSA, the CCM must meet the same eligibility requirements that apply to applicants in the rounds-based channel. The Global Fund Board will be reviewing the existing eligibility requirements in May 2011. If the criteria are revised, the new criteria will apply to NSAs submitted in the Second Wave, even though the process for the Second Wave started well before the May 2011 date. The Global Fund encourages countries to consider eligibility before expressing interest, using the eligibility list established for Round 10 (available in the Fund's Round 10 Guidelines for Proposals).

There is a lot of information on the NSA Second Wave at www.theglobalfund.org/en/nsa, including a detailed description of the process, a suggested list of documents to be submitted with the expression of interest, a form to be used to express interest, and a list of the criteria that will be used to assess the national strategy documentation.

Deciding whether or not to express interest

In addition to determining whether they meet the conditions listed above, CCMs and their countries should consider a number of factors when deciding whether or not to express interest. Participating in the NSA process will require a significant amount of time and effort. This is particularly true for the joint assessment of the national strategy, which has to be organised by the country. The Global Fund says that countries should carefully consider the desirability, feasibility and resourcing implications of conducting this assessment. In addition, the Fund encourages countries to assess whether or not the joint assessment timing would fit within existing national timeframes.

Finally, if the joint assessment reveals that there are limitations to the extent to which multiple stakeholders are involved in the development of the national strategy and operational plans emanating from the strategy, countries will be asked to lay out measures to address these weaknesses.

[Read More](#)
