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NEW TOOLKIT ADVISES ON USING ROUND 9 TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH WORKER CRISIS

Recognizing the massive health worker shortage and health systems crisis that is hindering efforts to combat AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, the Global Fund is committed to supporting health systems strengthening (HSS). This support extends to cross-cutting HSS interventions that have broad, positive impacts on the health system, as long as they are linked to improving outcomes for AIDS, tuberculosis, and/or malaria.

To assist applicants in developing ambitious, high quality HSS-related proposals, Physicians for Human Rights and the Health Workforce Advocacy Initiative have collaborated with Health Systems 20/20 to develop the Health Systems Strengthening Toolkit for Global Fund Round 9 Proposals. The Toolkit is available at www.physiciansforhumanrights.org/hiv-aids/globalfund-round9.html.

Drawing on a variety of sources, including several new documents, this Toolkit includes information on how to use the Global Fund to support health systems strengthening, as well as information about technical support providers available to assist applicants in developing proposals addressing health systems strengthening. The Toolkit also includes background information on health systems and on community systems strengthening.

The Toolkit contains material to support countries in developing approaches to their health workforce and health systems that are grounded in human rights, and highlights key opportunities to do so, such as supporting efforts to develop health workforce or health systems strategies, build management capacity for health resources, and provide for health worker safety.

In previous Global Fund rounds, applicants have successfully used the Global Fund to support many

cross-cutting health system needs, such as increasing the number of nursing tutors, paying for health worker salaries and incentives, creating safer working conditions for health workers, rehabilitating health facilities, improving health information systems, training district management teams in developing comprehensive district health plans, and more. Countries can use – and have used – the Global Fund to cover funding gaps in existing health workforce plans and other aspects of their national health strategies.

Yet to a considerable extent, the Fund's potential in this regard is untapped. The producers of this Toolkit hope that in this Round, applicants are emboldened to develop ambitious proposals that will include not only minor interventions, but efforts to overcome the major health system constraints to improved AIDS, TB, and malaria outcomes.

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