

COMMUNITIES DELEGATION

of the Board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT OF COMMUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY DIALOGUE PROCESSES

Throughout the development, launch and implementation of the funding model, the Communities Delegation had repeatedly highlighted risks of the country dialogue and grant-making processes for meaningful engagement of, and adequate responses to the needs of Key Populations (KPs).

Snapshot - Study Methodology:

- ✓ 11 countries selected for in-depth study
- ✓ 211 KPs surveyed in four languages
- ✓ 15 representatives interviewed

Therefore, following the launch of the funding model at the Global Fund 31st Board Meeting, the Communities Delegation commissioned an analysis¹ among KPs in eleven countries to assess the extent and quality of KP engagement in the process; assess the support provided by various technical partners and the Global Fund Secretariat (GFS); and to document challenges, successful strategies and specific recommendations.

Key findings from the analysis include:

- The funding model and its requirements for the engagement of a range of stakeholders have improved the engagement of some KPs in most settings with the explicit requirement for the engagement of key affected communities playing an important catalytic role in some contexts setting the scene for 'engagement like it has never taken place before'.
- While PLHIV networks and organisations appeared more strongly engaged, the meaningful engagement of communities affected by TB, living with and affected by malaria, prisoners, men who have sex with men, transgender people, sex workers and people who inject drugs remained problematic.
- Political contexts in each country, as well as the existing state of the community system, inadequate financial and political support and legal frameworks that criminalise KPs impact the way in which requirements ultimately shape the process and the influence of KPs on national concept notes.
- Longer-term, systemic changes are required to address these barriers, attitudes and laws

Various challenges were identified through the analysis². These include the:

- Lack of clear communications/guidelines available on the country dialogue process; clarity of roles of all stakeholders including technical partners in country and the members of the CCM;
- Consistency of KPs involvement and engagement throughout the process;
- Limited influence by KPs on the final selection of interventions, budget allocation and implementation modalities; and
- Roles and support provided by the GFS, and consistency of roles and support provided by technical partners.

From the findings of the analysis, the Communities Delegation would like to make the following recommendations:

1. **Enforcement of Global Fund Requirements on inclusive Engagement of Key Affected Communities** through:
 - a. Clear roles and responsibilities for GFS staff and national representatives of technical partners to facilitate a political space;
 - b. A matrix that will define minimum engagements of communities during the country dialogue process so as to be able to monitor quality engagement of communities for GFS staff to support their capacity; and
 - c. The development of engagement guidelines that reflect requirements and processes accessible and comprehensible to all stakeholder, including information on resources (human and financial) available for access by KPs throughout the country dialogue process, and not only for the concept note development.

The study findings confirmed that engagement of KPs in the funding model is not effective as a one-off event that takes place in the absence of a systematic approach to community systems strengthening, which will build the

¹ Countries by disease component: HSS: Uganda, Burkina Faso, Indonesia; HIV: Jamaica, Senegal, Nepal; HIV/TB: Nigeria, Uganda, Vietnam, Ukraine; TB: Peru, Kyrgyzstan; Malaria: Nigeria (Solomon Islands: initially planned, but excluded for lack of response). 211 survey responses covered representatives of people affected by TB and/or living with HIV, men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender persons, migrants and internally displaced persons and people who use drugs.

² A full report will be distributed electronically and available at <https://www.facebook.com/globalfundcommunitiesdelegation> after the 18th November 2014

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capacity and advocacy skills among a broader range of KP representatives and their communities to engage meaningfully in national planning and review processes generally, and the concept note development more specifically. A more rigid monitoring of implementation and no-tolerance approach to tokenism requires country dialogue processes that do not only involve KPs that are relevant to country epidemics, but also include communities that are pivotal to prevention programmes.

Where representatives had received capacity building over the longer term, KPs were empowered to engage, raise concerns, challenge existing power structures and decision-making processes and influence final outcomes. Where the enabling environment had not been supported in the longer-term, KPs faced stigma during the process, were labelled as incompetent and were therefore set up to reinforce negative preconceptions. Differences were also noticeable between communities who had benefited from efforts in community mobilization and capacity building in the longer term (e.g. established national networks of PLHIV) and those who had not been recipients of this support so far (e.g. representatives from communities affected by TB, or malaria).

In addition, regional and global networks of KPs play an important role in providing support and technical support to their constituents in country dialogue engagement. This will help to ensure that the communities at country level have full (and not limited) access to knowledge and skill-building programmes. This is being accomplished to a limited degree through the special initiatives of the CRG unit, including the regional TA platforms, and therefore, there needs to be clear linkages between different community TA programmes, with in-country technical partners for effective engagement for communities in the concept note development processes.

2. **Strengthened and sustainable expertise within the GFS, and amongst technical partners to support community engagement** through the development of a specialised cadre of professionals with the capacity³ and necessary resources to work with the Fund Portfolio Managers (FPMs) to create the right matches with the required expertise in community mobilisation, consultations, and engagement to facilitate country dialogue processes. These processes should be structurally regulated and documented within the country dialogue framework and as part of the performance standards of FPMs.

The GFS's presence in country, direct engagement through regional meetings and electronically provided at times the lever for communities to secure any or more extensive or meaningful engagement – through the approval of resources or through facilitation between the CCM and community members. At the same time, it is important to note that while direct interventions by the GFS supports the political environments for community engagement, that 'directive and heavy-handed' interventions by the GFS sometimes contradicted community inputs and contributed to the exclusion of interventions identified as priorities by KPs and of questions over the reality of targets set. It is important that social and human rights interventions should not be ignored in favour of biomedical interventions.

Support from the GF Secretariat – opportunities and challenges:

- ✓ Information provided by the GF Secretariat directly to community representatives empowered communities to engage and hold other stakeholders to account
- ✓ Direct intervention by the GF Secretariat led to the introduction of community consultations, where none had been previously planned
- ✓ Requirements for broad-based consultation in the national dialogue process are welcome and have catalyzed new levels of engagement
- ✓ Supporting the identification of resources for country dialogue processes (e.g. from existing grants) has facilitated stronger engagement
- ✗ Format and languages used in resources and guidelines are not accessible to key affected communities
- ✗ Directive engagement has led to rushed processes that undermined previously positive experiences of engagement
- ✗ Directive engagement contributed to the exclusion of interventions identified as priority by key affected communities and questions over the reality of targets set
- ✗ The endorsement of clearly tokenistic engagement processes undermine the efforts of key affected communities to have their needs taken into account
- ✗ High turnover of staff has affected context-specific knowledge and partnerships with in-country stakeholders

³ The Community, Rights and Gender department within the GFS now currently has 3 full time contracted staff, with the remainder of the team on short-term contracts and short-term secondments.

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Patchy support by technical partners provided some leverage in the short-term at country-level towards facilitating the meaningful engagement of key affected communities⁴, however, this support did not create sustained enabling political spaces for marginalised and criminalised communities. Survey results indicated varying levels of support provided to facilitate the meaningful engagement of KPs. The most significant sources of support that emerged across the 11 countries were the GFS and civil society organisations. Dedicated consultants to review documents, explain requirements and convert information into accessible formats and language were highlighted as crucial, in the absence of organisations that played this role. Resources and time to inform and consult with constituencies throughout the process were consistently lacking for representatives. The speed of the process did not allow for sharing of information and consultations with the broader constituency.

- 3. Requirements to Ensure Long-Term, Strategic Investments in Costed Interventions on Human Rights, Gender and Community Systems Strengthening in Every Concept Note** as lack of strategic investments in these key issues over the longer-term compromises the potential of the funding model and value of Global Fund resources. In the TRP Report Windows 1-2, the TRP highlights that though 'concept notes included activities related to critical enablers on human rights and KPs, there was often no budget associated with these activities; while other correctly identified these issues, but did not connect them to KPs and appropriate activities.' The Communities Delegation strongly supports the recommendation that 'any human rights or gender issues relevant to programming must be presented and then addressed firmly and concretely where they impede the programmes proposed or affect the ability to successfully execute them'.

Thus, the Communities Delegation request that the GFS prepare a report to the Board of an analysis conducted on the proportion of Global Fund investments in country that goes towards community, human rights, and KPs in the grant application up to window 3 or 4 to measure the effectiveness of community engagement in the country dialogue process.

The Communities Delegation recognises that there is not a one size fits all approach towards the country dialogue process, and that the country dialogue process will work and excel in some countries that have a history of good civil society engagement. As such, it would be important to measure/document the impacts of the involvement of communities in the country dialogue process, and whether this has influenced/impacted the final interventions proposed in the concept notes.

A range of policy implications on the funding model have been proposed for review to the SIIC for decision-making before the next allocation cycle. The Communities Delegation would like to encourage the board to engage in the review and discussions holistically. These discussions should take into account country perspectives and experiences to ensure that outcomes are aligned with not only the development continuum discussion, as well as the realities of communities accessing commodities and services in countries irrespective of a country's income level as highlighted by the TRP around the continuing absence of government financial support for primary prevention among KPs.

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⁴ This was with the exception of Vietnam where they were cited as playing an important role in supporting meetings to ensure the transparent nomination of KP representatives for the CCM.