

Community Engagement and the Global Fund

A briefing for the incoming
Executive Director of the
Global Fund to fight AIDS,
Tuberculosis and Malaria

From the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO)

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until we end aids

Community engagement is both central and vital in any response to HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria



HIV, tuberculosis (TB), and malaria disproportionately affects certain populations as a result of biological, behavioural and environmental factors, as well as social and economic inequities. In nearly all countries, HIV prevalence is significantly higher among men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender people and people who use drugs.

In East and Southern Africa, women and adolescent girls are also highly vulnerable to HIV. Prisoners, miners, displaced people and people living with HIV are among the many groups vulnerable to or at risk of TB and malaria.

In many countries, key and vulnerable populations such as these are underserved and/or experience barriers to accessing health services, including high levels of stigma, discrimination, criminalization and human rights violations.

Meaningful engagement of communities directly affected by these diseases is essential to ensuring that programs and services supported by the Global Fund reach those most in need, are based on human rights approaches, support community-led responses, promote gender equality and ultimately have the greatest impact.

Strong engagement of communities and key affected populations is also critical to achieving the key SDG goals of ending the AIDS and TB epidemics by 2030, universal health coverage, and ensuring that no one is left behind in responses to major health and development challenges facing many nations of the world.

The Global Fund must retain its leadership as an advocate and ally for meaningful community engagement

The Global Fund's strategic commitments underpin the necessary work to support local community engagement and responses, human rights and gender equality programs.

Engagement of communities and key affected populations has long been central to the Global Fund's mission and governance model. Community organizations such as ICASO also play key roles for the Global Fund in advocacy, demand creation and resource mobilization. The current Global Fund strategy for 2017-2020 *Investing to End Epidemics* contains a range of commitments that depend on strong engagement with affected communities.

Global Fund Strategic Objective	Key sub-objectives requiring strong community engagement
1. Invest to maximize impact	1a. Focus on the highest-burden countries... and on key and vulnerable populations 1e. Support...sustainable transitions (away from Global Fund financing)
2. Build resilient and sustainable systems for health	2a. Strengthen community responses and systems 2b. Support reproductive, women's and children's health 2e. Strengthen data systems for health and countries' capacity for analysis and use
3. Promote and protect human rights and gender equality	SO 3a: Scale-up programs to support women and girls, including programs to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights SO 3b: Invest to reduce health inequities including gender- and age-related disparities SO 3c: Introduce and scale-up programs that remove human rights barriers to accessing HIV, TB and malaria services SO 3d: Integrate human rights considerations throughout the grant cycle and in policies and policymaking processes SO 3e: Support meaningful engagement of key and vulnerable populations and networks in Global Fund-related processes
4. Mobilize increased resources	Communities and civil society organizations play a key role in advocacy for resource mobilization and demand creation.

Community engagement adds value at all stages of the global fund grant cycle

Civil society and community organizations have key roles to play within the Global Fund governance model and at all stages of the Global Fund grant cycle, including in:

- **Governance**
 - o As members of the three Board delegations with representation from the community sector (Communities, Developed Country NGOs, Developing Country NGOs).
 - o As members of Country Coordinating Mechanisms in all Global Fund-supported countries.
 - o The Global Fund requires that all CCMs must include representatives of communities and key populations. Sustained efforts are required from the Global Fund and partners to support their participation and ensure compliance in all countries.
- **Proposal development and grant-making**
 - o Communities and key populations are a key constituency in country dialogue processes leading to proposal development, and often serve as members of proposal writing groups.
 - o All countries must include human rights and gender analyses in funding proposals, and proposals should aim to scale up programming to advance gender equality and human rights and ensure that necessary services are provided to key and vulnerable populations.
- **Implementation**
 - o Communities and their organizations play a vital role as implementers and providers of programming and services in many Global Fund grants. Wherever possible, grants should specifically aim to strengthen community systems and responses to complement health services and help ensure their resilience and sustainability.
- **Monitoring and evaluation**
 - o Communities can play an important role as watchdogs of grant implementation, including through processes of community-based monitoring and feedback.

Since 2015, the Global Fund has significantly intensified its attention to community, rights and gender (CRG) issues and to increasing Global Fund investments in CRG programming. This has included the creation of the CRG Department in the Secretariat, human rights and gender training for staff in the Grant Management Division. Additionally the Board has approved \$15 million as the CRG Strategic Initiative to support community engagement in Global Fund processes, and a range of initiatives to further scale-up human rights and gender-transformative programming in countries.

ICASO strongly supports these efforts and expects to see them sustained.

How the Global Fund Executive Director can support and enable community engagement



LISTEN

Ensure that community voices and lived experience are present and heard at Global Fund events and in the Executive Director's meetings including any country visits. It is especially important that the Executive Director use the Global Fund's leverage to engage with community and civil society groups in countries where democratic freedoms are being eroded and where space for civil society is shrinking and key population groups are criminalized or stigmatized.



BUILD

Strongly support the work of the CRG Department in the Secretariat and build capacities among all Global Fund staff, including in the Grant Management Division, to meaningfully engage communities and effectively address human rights and gender equality issues in countries.



BE SEEN

Attend and actively participate in key community events, including at the International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam in July 2018. ICASO stands ready to support this engagement through its membership of the Conference Coordinating Committee.



RECOGNIZE

Recognize the Global Fund's leading role as a funder of programming for key populations, including as the world's largest funder of harm reduction for people who use drugs. The Global Fund and partners must support effective transition planning and monitor transitions to ensure that vital programming for key populations is preserved. The persistent lack of adequate data on key populations in many countries remains a barrier to the scale-up of effective programming.



PROMOTE

When promoting the Global Fund, emphasize its innovative approaches to community engagement, human rights and gender equality. Communities see the Global Fund as more than a leading health financing mechanism; it is also a model for advancing rights and equality in global health and development.



MEASURE

Ensure that lessons are drawn from the Global Fund's current, pioneering efforts to scale up programming for adolescent girls and young women, and to reduce human rights barriers to accessing services, and importantly report on the outcomes of these efforts.



FUND

Sustained investments are needed to ensure that communities have the skills and financial resources to meaningfully engage with the Global Fund, including through the Board-endorsed Community, Rights and Gender Strategic Initiative.

ICASO

ICASO is the world's oldest network representing the voice of the community sector in the global HIV response. Since its founding in the early 1990s, ICASO has been a leading advocate for rights-based approaches, gender equality and the involvement of communities living with and affected by HIV in the response to HIV and related health and development challenges.

ICASO's **mission** is to mobilize and support diverse community organizations and networks to create and sustain effective responses to HIV. The **three strategic objectives** in the ICASO strategic plan for 2017-2020 are listed below and complement the strategic and operational endeavours of the Global Fund.

1

Evidence for advocacy and action:

ICASO supports efforts to strengthen capacities and skills in the community sector to access, generate, interpret and use scientific and other forms of evidence to inform advocacy, policy and programming.

2

Alliances for exchange, dialogue and learning:

ICASO creates opportunities for strategic, action-oriented dialogue, exchange and learning within the community sector and with allies in other fields of health, justice, human rights and development.

3

Advocacy for accountability, sustainability and impact:

ICASO supports evidence-based advocacy to promote sustainability, accountability and impact in the HIV response in the context of the SDGs, Fast Track targets and universal health coverage.

ICASO and the Global Fund: a partnership into the future

ICASO has been a longstanding partner of the Global Fund. Our work with the Global Fund has included:

- ICASO served on the technical working group which developed the **governance structure** for the Global Fund in 2001/2 and acts as the communications focal point on the Developed Country NGO Delegation.
- **Advocacy** for resource mobilization through the Global Fund Advocates Network, Free Space Process and in other fora, as well as on emerging issues, such as the health system crisis and risks to Global Fund-supported HIV programming in Venezuela.
- **Publication of analyses and tools** to support civil society engagement in Global Fund processes at the country level (see Further Reading below).
- Serving as a **prequalified provider of technical assistance** to civil society and community organizations under the Global Fund Community Rights and Gender Technical Assistance Program.
- Providing support for and documenting **sustainability and transition planning** for selected countries.
- Providing support and publishing guidance for community and key population participation in Global Fund **Country Coordinating Mechanisms**.
- Working with Global Fund-supported **civil society platforms** at regional level to simplify, translate and disseminate materials about the Global Fund into formats that are accessible for civil society.
- Feeding its experiences back to the Global Fund to **inform policy-making and implementation**.

Consistent with its mission and strategic plan, ICASO is committed to strengthening its partnership with the Global Fund in advocacy, leveraging broader civil society alliances and partnerships, and disseminating evidence, tools and information to support closer civil society engagement with the Global Fund.

“Community networks and key population networks are uniquely situated to lead by accurately identifying needs and reacting to them quickly, engaging with affected groups, and interacting with communities to sustain programs in the long term.

Their contributions toward leading the fight against AIDS, TB and malaria and toward saving lives cannot be understated. Strong community systems are needed to advocate for the specific needs of communities and different population groups, as well as to engage in the design, management, implementation and monitoring of effective and strategic programs.”

(Global Fund Technical Review Panel: Report of the TRP on Concept Notes Submitted in the Third and Fourth Windows of the Funding Model)

Further reading: Selected ICASO publications on the Global Fund

Strategy and policy

- ICASO strategic plan 2017-2020: Evidence, Alliances & Advocacy (ICASO, 2017) <http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ICASO-Strategic-Plan-2017-2020.pdf>
- Q&A on the Global Fund's New Eligibility Policy and Sustainability, Transition and Co-Financing Policy (ICASO, 2016) <http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/QA-on-Eligibility-and-STC-final.pdf>
- Advocacy alert: Global Fund strategy: Opportunities for engagement (ICASO, 2015) <http://www.harm-reduction.org/sites/default/files/pdf/23999-strategydevelopmentalertenr1.pdf>
- Discussion paper - Regional concept note development in the Global Fund's (new) funding model: observations from the first round of regional concept notes (ICASO 2015) <http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/RCNDiscussionPaperENr4.pdf>
- Regional concept note development in the Global Fund's (new) funding model: Observations from the second window (ICASO, HIV/AIDS Alliance 2016) http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/RCN-LAYOUT_Final-SPS_2017-Update.pdf
- Key populations and the Global Fund: Delivering key results (ICASO, FSP, GFAN 2016) <http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/GFAN-Key-Populations-the-Global-Fund-Brief-ENG-JUN2016-update.pdf>

Guidance on civil society engagement with the Global Fund

- Community update for key population and civil society advocates: The 2017-2019 Global Fund funding cycle: Highlights of the differentiated funding application process: What you should know and how to engage! (ICASO and MSMGF, 2017, available in English, French, Russian and Spanish) http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Update-GF-Application-for-funding-procedures-2017-2019-ICASO_MSMGF.pdf
- Key recommendations from ICASO for civil society engagement in Global Fund country dialogues http://www.aidspace.org/gfo_article/five-key-recommendations-icaso-civil-society-global-fund-country-dialogue
- After the concept note: Opportunities for civil society communities to engage in the Global Fund grant making process (ICASO 2015) <http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/24024-GrantMaking.pdf>
- More than a seat at the table: A toolkit on how to meaningfully engage as civil society CCM representatives (ICASO, JULY 2016, available in English, Spanish, French and Russian) http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Toolkit-_English.pdf
- Effective CCMs and the meaningful involvement of civil society and key affected populations: Lessons learned in ICASO's extensive work supporting CCMs (ICASO, October 2013) <http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CCMLessonsOct2013FINAL-EN.pdf>

Sustainability and transition planning

- Handing over health: Experiences with Global Fund Transitions and Sustainability Planning in Serbia, Thailand and South Africa (ICASO, 2016) <http://icaso.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Handing-Over-Health-Experiences-with-Global-Fund-Transitions-Final-Draft-FINAL.pdf>

This briefing paper was developed based upon interviews with ICASO staff, stakeholders, board members and key community members. The paper expresses the perspectives and opinions of these players and their considerable and continuing participation with the Global Fund over a number of years.

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