

## **Implementer Group Statement: The Global Fund's Response to the Covid-19 Context**

The rapid evolution of the global Covid-19 pandemic has pushed us as Global Fund Champions to reflect, rethink and explore how we: i) protect and advance the significant gains that have been made over the last 20 years in the fight against AIDS, TB and malaria; ii) not avert our focus from our core mandate; and, iii) ensure that no one, no community, is left behind.

We appreciate the early and ongoing efforts of the Global Fund and its partners to respond to country needs and the evolving implications of the pandemic. The rapid and deepening impact of Covid-19 reinforces the importance of both realizing the resources pledged at the 6th Replenishment and mobilizing additional resources to protect progress made against the Global Fund's core mission to save lives and end the three diseases.

Given this evolving context and needs, the Implementer Group would like to urge the Board to consider the following principles and actions in its discussions around responding to the challenges posed by Covid-19.

### **1. Leverage the power of multi-stakeholder engagement and partnerships at national and global levels**

- Mitigate the impact of Covid-19 through coordination, meaningful participation and resourcing to enable the greater involvement of all CCM stakeholders, including civil society, communities, government and private sector partners; working in tandem with National Covid-19 strategic response plans and actors.
- Maximize the use of global partnership platforms (e.g., ACT-Accelerator), which should include civil society and communities at all stages to negotiate affordable prices for diagnostics tests and other tools ensuring equitable access and allocation to low- and middle-income countries while promoting harmonization with established procurement mechanisms and transparency.

### **2. Ensure that Global Fund Covid-19 mitigation and response strategies protect the populations most affected and at greatest risk of HIV, TB and malaria**

- Respond to increased human rights challenges and access to health barriers. For example, the need for long term strategies to manage the human rights impact of Covid-19 lockdowns; appropriate inclusion of these as part of its Breaking Down Barriers initiatives as well as advocacy efforts to remove human rights and access to health barriers as a key focus of its in-country response across all three diseases.
- Are grounded in the critical and urgent needs of country contexts, with particular attention to vulnerable and key populations that we serve.
- Ensure that the particular needs triggered or exacerbated by community lockdowns and quarantine (such as responses to gender based violence and nutritional support) of key and vulnerable populations (as defined by the Global Fund) are adequately addressed, resourced and remain at the center of the Global Fund's response.

### **3. Enhance guidance, monitoring and risk management:**

- The Global Fund responses need to be informed by the current rapidly evolving context in a timely manner. Regular guidance about Global Fund opportunities and flexibilities should be provided to enable countries to ensure equitable coverage of needs.
- Establishment and support for effective monitoring mechanisms, recognising the particular value of community led monitoring approaches.
- Analysis and tracking of the evolving epidemiological and economic impact of Covid-19 in affected countries is critical, and needs to be reflected in Global Fund's risk assessment and mitigation measures. This includes regularly reviewing co-financing flexibilities in light of challenges to meet ambitious domestic resource mobilization targets.

### **4. Champion Quality, Accountability and Oversight**

- Recognize the importance of enhanced board engagement to ensure appropriate governance, accountability and oversight of the Global Fund's evolving role in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic response, including more detailed regular written reporting.
- Harness the power of the Global Fund's existing partner engagement mechanisms to champion and support effective and coordinated responses during the rapidly evolving Covid-19 context – for example involving global partners (such as those represented in the partner GAC) in facilitating support of new funding requests without delaying the overall process.