

Improving the performance
of Global Fund grants

8TH CALL FOR PROPOSALS OF THE GLOBAL FUND - 8 URGENT ACTIONS

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Prepared by the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO), CSAT Global Host¹

This CSAT Action Alert provides important information on new funding opportunities for civil society organizations in the latest call for proposals from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund). It provides practical guidance, suggesting eight urgent actions that you can take now.

On 1 March 2008 the Global Fund launched its eighth funding round. Round 8 is set to be the biggest in financial terms with around US\$2 billion available for approved proposals. The announcement, along with all of the relevant documentation for applicants, is posted at the following web address: <http://www.theglobal-fund.org/en/apply/call8/>.

THREE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The Global Fund has made it clear that in order to make universal access a reality, proposals in Round 8 and beyond will need to be more ambitious than ever. They recognise that one of the most promising ways of achieving this is to further promote the involvement of the civil society sector. The Round 8 Call for Proposals therefore places a clearer emphasis than ever on civil society involvement in three interrelated ways:

1. Increasing the focus on key affected populations
2. Dual track financing (government and non-government Principal Recipients)
3. Community Systems Strengthening

The changes made by the Global Fund to the Round 8 application process are designed to make it easier for the civil society sector to play an active, effective role in the design and implementation of Global Fund grants.

¹ CSAT operates through global and regional hosts: International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO); Association de lutte contre le sida (ALCS), Middle East and North Africa; African Council of AIDS Service Organizations (AfrICASO), West and Central Africa; Southern African Network of AIDS Service Organisations (SANASO), East and Southern Africa; Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN), Eastern Europe and Central Asia; Asia Pacific Network of People With HIV/AIDS (APN+)/7 Sisters, Asia Pacific; AID For AIDS (AFA), Latin America and the Caribbean



1. *Increasing the focus on key affected populations and sexual minorities*

The Round 8 Call for Proposals is designed to encourage a greater focus on key affected populations and sexual minorities. These are the populations most affected by the three diseases and are most often marginalized. The Global Fund adopts the UNAIDS definition of key affected populations: "Women and girls, youth, men who have sex with men, injecting and other drug users, sex workers, people living in poverty, prisoners, migrants and migrant laborers, people in conflict and post-conflict situations, refugees and displaced persons". Sexual minorities are defined by the Global Fund as "people who may experience discrimination based on their real or perceived sexual practices with consenting adults".

A. **Strengthening representation on CCMs.**² The revised Guidelines on CCM composition now include a recommendation that key affected populations should be included within the 40% of CCM members from non-governmental sectors. Although this is not a requirement, it is a clear message from the Global Fund that more efforts should be made to ensure that CCMs understand and are accountable to the needs of these groups. Importantly, in the eligibility requirements section of the Round 8 Proposal Form, applicants are specifically asked to describe the expertise of CCM members in relation to women, girls and sexual minorities.

B. **Focus on key affected populations for lower-middle income and upper-middle income countries.** Applications from countries in these two income categories are required to focus their proposals on key affected populations. The list of countries that fall within these categories is provided in the Global Fund's Round 8 Guidelines (http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/8/GuidelinesR8_single_en.pdf, from page 56 onwards).

C. **Enhanced emphasis on social and gender equality.** Applicants are required to describe how their programme will contribute to achieving equality, in particular for groups that often face barriers in accessing services such as women and girls, adolescents, sexual minorities and other key affected populations. The Global Fund has provided a factsheet describing how to ensure a gender-sensitive approach (http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/8/R8Gender_Factsheet_en.pdf) and will also provide a factsheet on sexual minorities (http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/8/R8SexualMinorities_Factsheet_es.pdf).

2. *Dual-track financing*

Dual-track financing (sometimes referred to as DTF) means that proposals are designed to be implemented by Principal Recipients³ from both the government and the non-government sector. There are a number of reasons that this approach is being promoted by the Global Fund:

- It helps ensure that multiple sectors are involved in implementing grants
- It can help ensure key affected populations are reached, especially in situations where they are not included in government programmes
- By involving more implementers it will help to accelerate efforts to build capacity and scale up responses to AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

DTF - and the use of multiple PRs for each grant - has been possible in previous funding Rounds. In Round 8, however, the Global Fund is actively promoting DTF and the involvement of non-governmental organizations as PRs, and so is recommending that applicants include DTF. Applications that opt not to use DTF are asked to provide a justification for their decision. More information is available in a factsheet provided by the Global Fund (http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/8/R8DTF_Factsheet_en.pdf).

² CCM stands for "country coordinating mechanism". The CCM is a crucial component of the Global Fund system, as it is responsible for overseeing Global Fund projects at country level. A CCM is a committee made up of representatives of different organizations from the government, the non-governmental sector and the private sector. The majority of funding proposals submitted to the Global Fund should be submitted by a CCM. If the CCM does not meet the Global Fund's requirements - for instance in terms of how it is composed - it is highly unlikely that the proposal will be funded. More information on CCMs and their composition can be found here: <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/apply/mechanisms/>.

³ "Principal Recipient" (PR) is the term used by the Global Fund to describe the main implementing agency for each grant - i.e. the agency that signs a contract with the Global Fund and receives the funding to implement the grant. Principal Recipients often work through Sub-Recipients (SRs) - by subcontracting sections of each grant. More information on PRs and SRs is available in the CCM guidelines: http://www.theglobalfund.org/pdf/5_pp_guidelines_ccm_4_en.pdf

3. *Community systems strengthening*

As the Global Fund increasingly emphasizes the role of non-governmental organizations in helping to scale up responses to AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria it also recognizes the need to strengthen the capacity of community based organizations and systems.

In the Round 8 Proposal Form, the Global Fund asks applicants to incorporate community systems strengthening (also referred to as CSS) into proposals, and indeed it states that CSS should be a routine component of proposals.

The factsheet on community systems strengthening (available at http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/8/R8CSS_Factsheet_en.pdf) outlines a range of types of non-governmental organizations that might require support, such as home-based care organizations; support organizations for people living with and/or affected by the diseases; faith-based organizations; women's organizations; youth organizations; community centres; and private sector organizations. It also outlines different areas where support can be provided: building the capacity of these community based organizations to participate in implementation; building partnerships between different actors and service providers at local level; and supporting long-term plans to fight the diseases.

8 URGENT ACTIONS FOR ROUND 8

Round 8 represents a major opportunity for ensuring that new Global Fund grants incorporate an enhanced role for civil society; CSOs are encouraged to seize this opportunity. As noted above, Round 8 was launched on 1 March 2008. **The deadline for proposal submission is 1 July 2008.** This is not long given the complexity of the proposal development process. In order to make the most of the opportunities offered by Round 8, civil society organizations need to get involved now.

Here are eight key actions that CSOs should consider undertaking immediately:

1. **Find out more about the Global Fund and Round 8.** All of the documents related to Round 8 are available on the Global Fund website: <http://www.theglobalfund.org/>. They are available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. It is not necessary to read all the documents from cover to cover.

The key documents are:

- Guidelines on CCMs (http://www.theglobalfund.org/pdf/5_pp_guidelines_ccm_4_en.pdf) and clarifications of these Guidelines (http://www.theglobalfund.org/pdf/Clarifications_CCM_Requirements.pdf)
- Guidelines for Proposals, Sections A1, A2 and A3 (http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/8/GuidelinesR8_single_en.pdf)
- Factsheets on community systems strengthening, dual-track financing, gender, and sexual minorities (all available at <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/apply/call8/other/>)
- Some independent websites also provide useful information for those new to the Global Fund, and to those who are already familiar with the Fund but would like more up-to-date information or guidance on how to apply. Aidspace (<http://www.aidspace.org/index.php>) is a particularly good example.

2. Find out more about Global Fund projects in your country or region. Key questions are:

- What proportion of the CCM is made up of NGOs? Do these members include people representing key affected populations?
- What is the contact information of non-governmental members of the CCM?
- What programmes, if any, are Global Fund grants currently supporting?
- Are any NGOs currently acting as Principal Recipients for Global Fund grants in your country or region?

It should be fairly straightforward to identify the CCM and to obtain all of this information - the Global Fund asks all CCMs to be transparent. You can also find much of this information on the Global Fund website; from the home page choose the button labelled "search centre". Select your country from the list, and you will be redirected to a page providing all of the relevant information on that country, in particular in relation to CCMs and existing Global Fund grants.

3. Find out what the CCM is planning for Round 8 proposals. Contact the CCM Secretariat, Chair or Civil Society representative. There are a number of key questions:

- Is the CCM planning to develop and submit a proposal for AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria for Round 8? Has the proposal development process begun?
- What opportunities are there for CSOs to get involved, both in proposal development and grant implementation? Do these opportunities fit with the expectations of CSOs and of the Global Fund?
- Has the CCM given consideration to how the following issues will be addressed in the proposal?
 - i. Participation of key affected populations and sexual minorities
 - ii. Dual-track financing
 - iii. Community systems strengthening

4. Consult within the civil society sector. Those individuals or organizations who have found out more about the CCM's plans should share this information with the civil society sector, and discuss what the next steps should be. The following questions may provide a good way to frame discussions:

- Does the composition of the CCM reflect the Global Fund requirements and recommendations?
- Do the CCM plans for Round 8 reflect the potential role of civil society - in particular, have the needs of key affected populations, and recommendations around DTF and CSS been taken on board? If not, why not?
- In general, do the CCM plans reflect the Global Fund's efforts to enhance the role of CSOs in Round 8?

Once these questions have been discussed, the civil society sector should come to agreement on what to do next. If the CCM is broadly favourable to enhancing the civil society role through the new opportunities in Round 8, it will be important to agree how civil society can effectively participate in the proposal development process and in ensuring that CSOs with adequate capacity are selected as potential PRs. If, on the other hand, the current plans will not adequately allow for an enhanced civil society role, the sector should plan to influence the CCMs decision.

5. Mobilize your civil society colleagues and partner organizations to advocate for greater attention to the civil society contribution and participation. How you do this will largely depend on the outcomes of the consultations and discussions described above. In some countries, the decision may be to focus on demanding and ensuring meaningful civil society participation (including participation of key affected populations) on CCMs. In others, the emphasis may be on ensuring that the opportunities provided by DTF and CSS are taken advantage of. It may also be necessary to advocate for a more open and transparent proposal development process, as this is a Global Fund requirement.

6. Get involved in the process to develop the Round 8 proposal. Non-government sector representatives on CCMs should ensure that the broader civil society sector is meaningfully involved in the proposal development process. This means that the CCM should arrange consultations with the broader civil society sector in order to get input into the proposal. Particular attention needs to be paid to ensuring that marginalized groups (such as key affected populations and sexual minorities) are able to participate in this process. The process for proposal development is different in every country, but you may want to advocate for the inclusion of these key areas:

- Defining the overall priorities of the proposal. The proposal should prioritize actions and population groups that are currently neglected in the response. CSOs working at the community level are often very well placed to identify such gaps.
- Obtaining submissions from CSOs to be included in the proposal. The CCM should review and include these submissions in the overall proposal in a transparent way.
- Making the most of "community systems strengthening" (CSS). CSS, introduced in Round 8, is essentially about ensuring that CSOs have the capacity and support to effectively implement their component of the proposal. It should therefore be seen as an element of every "sub-proposal" submitted by a CSO.
- Identifying civil society organizations (CSOs) to act as Principal Recipients (PRs). Dual-track financing provides real opportunities for CSOs to act as PRs. CSOs should identify and promote suitable organizations.

7. Get support. The Civil Society Action Team - CSAT - was created to help improve the contribution of civil society to Global Fund programmes. We are happy to talk to you about what the Round 8 opportunities mean in your country, and about ways to deal with the different barriers you come across. We may be able to put you in touch with organizations in your country. We are also connected to organizations that provide technical and financial support, and may be able to help you access support for the Round 8 process. You will find our contact details at the end of this Alert.

Contact your national AIDS programme, national tuberculosis programme, and national malaria programme. You should also contact international organizations and initiatives such as UNAIDS, Technical Support Facilities (<http://www.unaids.org/en/CountryResponses/TechnicalSupport/TSF/default.asp>) and WHO, as they will be well-informed and able to provide support.

8. Keep track of the process for Round 8. The Global Fund is constantly evolving, in response to what happens in countries. Consider keeping track of your experiences, whether they are positive or negative, as they will provide valuable lessons on how countries made use of the Round 8 opportunities. Please share your experiences with CSAT as it will strengthen our efforts to advocate for changes at global level. Send them to csat@icaso.org or to the CSAT regional coordinators (see contacts below).

Civil Society Action Team (CSAT)



www.csactionteam.org
www.icaso.org/csatsat.html

CSAT is a new civil society-led global initiative that coordinates, brokers, and advocates for technical support to civil society organizations implementing or seeking grants from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (Global Fund). CSAT's key priorities are:

- Mobilize a civil society response to under-performing grants;
- Improve availability of quality technical support for civil society organizations involved in implementation of the Global Fund grants;
- Improve the quality of Global Fund-related proposals prepared by civil society organizations.

CSAT Host	Contacts
Global	Natalia Ciausova, nataliac@icaso.org ICASO, Canada
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Gennady Roshchupkin, Gennady@harm-reduction.org CEEHRN, Lithuania
Asia Pacific	Vince Crisostomo, coordinator@7sisters.org APN+/7 Sisters, Thailand
Middle East and Northern Africa	Nadia Raffi, alcsmarrakech@menara.ma ALCS Morocco
Western and Central Africa	Kibibi Maia Thomas, tmkibibi@africaso.net AfriCASO, Senegal
Eastern and Southern Africa	Tongayi Mangisi, tongayi@sanaso.na SANASO, Namibia
Latin America and the Caribbean	Javier Pablo Anamaria Cardenas, Pablo.Anamaria@aidforaids.org AidForAIDS - Peru

