

**OBJECTIVE 4:**

**Leverage the Global Fund’s diplomatic voice to advance gender equality, human rights and equity, and challenge laws, policies and practices that limit impact on HIV, TB and malaria**

**1. Outcome**

- 1 Strengthened advocacy for human rights, gender equality and health equity.
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**2. Rationale**

Organizations have been targets of restrictions in many countries, including in countries where the Global Fund supports programs. These organizations include those working for the rights of women, LGBTQI+ people, sex workers, and people who use drugs, and those that are dedicated to other politically and socially sensitive issues, such as human rights, harm reduction, and youth.

In some countries, it is other non-state actors, including civil society organizations and religious leaders and institutions, who are working in cooperation with governments to target organizations working on gender equality or the rights of LGBTQI+ people, sex workers and people who use drugs, while increasing protections for “religious freedom,” traditional families, and biologically determined sex roles.

These “anti-gender” or “anti-rights” movements mobilize against reproductive rights, including, but not limited to, comprehensive sexuality education, laws and policies to address gender-based violence, the use of the term “gender” in laws and policies, as well as sex work and drug use. In an increasing number of countries, they have worked with parliamentarians to introduce legislation that further entrenches the criminalization of homosexuality, sex work and/or drug use and restricts advocacy on behalf of those communities, resulting in increasingly hostile environments for advocacy organizations and individuals who identify as LGBTQI+, sex workers or people who use drugs.

While they have been particularly successful in rolling back rights in Eastern Europe, these movements are also prominent in Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa, particularly where populist leaders have seen an opportunity in anti-rights rhetoric to accelerate democratic backsliding.

Consequently, in many places, community-led organizations have been forcibly closed, subject to harassment, denied registration, or otherwise been significantly curtailed in their ability to operate. Individuals and activists have been arrested, subjected to violence, and in some cases killed. Online abuse and harassment towards these communities is also increasing, forcing advocates into the shadows. Marginalized groups of women, such as sex workers, women who use drugs or transgender women have been impacted by dangerous alliances between some feminist organizations that oppose both sex work and the recognition of, and protections for, the rights of transgender women. Gay and bisexual men are increasingly being targeted for violence and harassment.

### **3. Key Actions**

Key actions include:

- Clearly and consistently communicating the Global Fund's values and support for human rights, gender equality and health equity.
- Highlighting best practices on human rights, gender equality and health equity in Global Fund-supported programs in communications materials.
- In collaboration with community-led and civil society organizations, developing and consistently using messaging on the impacts of harmful laws, policies and practices in media campaigns, in a manner consistent with the "do no harm" principle.
- Reporting publicly on actions taken to advance human rights, gender equality and equity and oppose harmful laws, policies and practices, while safeguarding confidentiality and in a manner consistent with the "do no harm" principle.
- Supporting community-led organizations, particularly those led by criminalized and marginalized communities, and civil society organizations to document the impacts of harmful laws and policies on HIV, TB and malaria responses.
- In global and regional political forums, advocating in partnership with communities and civil society for strong commitments to gender equality, human rights and health equity, and for the elimination of harmful laws, policies and practices, in a manner consistent with the "do no harm" principle.