

Information Note for Multi-Country Applicants¹

Background

Applications for funding are typically submitted to the Global Fund from 'single-country applicants' through a single country coordinating body called a Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM). However, the Global Fund also accepts applications from several countries working together to achieve cross-border or regional outcomes (typically submitted by 'Regional Organizations' (RO)), or by a group of island states or countries applying as a region that come together to form a 'Regional Coordinating Mechanism' (RCM). Multi-country and Regional applications **must clearly demonstrate the added value of a cross-border or regional application**, beyond that which would be achieved on an individual country basis.

Types and Characteristics of Multi-Country Applicants

Regional Coordinating Mechanisms

Countries with existing functional national CCMs may also form an RCM to submit a coordinated regional proposal targeting several countries. Such regional proposals could, for example, be submitted to address common issues amongst countries, such as cross-border interventions. Membership of the RCM should be drawn from a broad range of actors, including, but not limited to, National CCMs and other stakeholders. RCMs must conform to the same guiding principles and meet the same requirements as national CCMs (see section 3 below). Partnerships among countries classified as 'Small Island Developing States' are not required to form their own national CCMs before they form a RCM. Endorsement by existing national mechanisms, e.g. National AIDS Commission, is sufficient for small island developing states.

Regional Organizations

Regional Organizations are typically legally registered established organizations (including, for example, intergovernmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations and international faith-based organizations). ROs are not required to form an RCM, as they usually have their own governing structures, which include representatives from the countries forming the organization. However, ROs must demonstrate how they conform to the principles of inclusiveness and multi-sector representation. Proposals presented by an RO must have individual CCM endorsement from all of the countries included in the proposal.

Eligibility Requirements for Multi-Country Applicants

¹ Applicants considering submission of a multi-country proposal should carefully review the Round 9 Guidelines for Multi-Country Applicants, which are available at: <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/rounds/9/multiple/#guidelines>.

Country Eligibility Criteria

Both, RCM and RO applicants must demonstrate that a simple majority of 51% of the countries included in the proposal would have been eligible to apply as single country applicants in the same round. Countries are eligible to apply for funding if they are classified by the World Bank as low, lower-middle or upper-middle income countries. Lower-middle and upper-middle income countries must ensure a predominant focus on key affected populations in their proposals. Upper-middle income countries must also have a current high disease burden in either the general population or identified populations groups. Annex 1 of the Round 9 Guidelines lists the countries/economies eligible to apply for funding in Round 9 (http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/9/CP_Pol_R9_Guidelines_Multi_en.pdf).

RCM applicants whose proposal seeks funding for individual country programs, but through a common Principal Recipient, are also required to comply with the cost sharing principle.²

Detailed information on country eligibility criteria may be found on the Global Fund website at: <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/eligibility/>

Minimum Requirements for RCMs

RCMs must comply with the six minimum eligibility requirements for CCMs:

1. Transparent selection process for RCM Membership of nongovernmental members;
2. Membership of persons affected by HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria;
3. Transparent and documented process to solicit and review proposal submissions;
4. Transparent and documented process for nominating the PR and to oversee program implementation;
5. Ensure the input of a broad range of stakeholders; and,
6. When the PRs and Chair or Vice Chair(s) of the RCM are the same entity, RCMs must have a conflict of interest plan.

For more information on eligibility requirements, please refer to the Revised Guidelines on the Purpose, Structure and Composition of Country Coordinating Mechanisms and Requirements for Grant Eligibility:

(http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/ccm/Guidelines_CCMPurposeStructureComposition_en.pdf)

In addition to the above requirements, and in order to ensure that the planned interventions in a RCM proposal are consistent with initiatives under national programs, the CCMs for those countries included in the RCM proposal must provide their endorsement. The CCM is not required to approve the budget, or the specific interventions, but rather, endorse the overall approach so far as the multi-country proposal relates to that country. Two documents are required to demonstrate endorsement by the national CCM members:

² In Round 9, the total maximum funding request for the diseases is:

- For **Lower-Middle income countries**, an amount that results in the Global Fund's overall contribution (all grants) to the national program reaching not more than 65% of the national disease program funding needs over the proposal term; and
- For **Upper-Middle income countries**, an amount that results in the Global Fund overall contribution (all grants) to the national program reaching not more than 35% of the national disease program funding needs over the proposal term.

1. A signed letter from the CCM chair and Vice-Chair for each country included in the RCM proposal, confirming their endorsement of the proposal.
2. Signed and dated minutes of the CCM meetings, for each country included in the RCM proposal, at which the CCM agreed to endorse the RCM proposal.

Minimum requirements for ROs

RO applicants must:

1. Be legally registered entities; and
2. Demonstrate broad regional stakeholder consultation and involvement by describing:
 - a. Experience working in the region on the issues targeted in the proposal;
 - b. How the RO works with other regionally focused initiatives, programs and/or organizations.
 - c. How the RO will work with the respective CCMs for each of the countries targeted in the multi-country proposal on an ongoing basis; and
 - d. How people living with and/or affected by the diseases have been engaged in a meaningful and substantive way during proposal design and development.

In addition, to ensure that the planned interventions in a RO proposal are understood and consistent with national programs, those CCMs for the countries included in the proposal must provide their endorsement. The CCM is not approving the budget, or the specific interventions, but rather is endorsing the overall approach so far as the RO proposal relates to that country. For this purpose, two documents are required to demonstrate endorsement by the national CCM members:

1. A signed letter from the CCM chair and Vice-Chair for each country included in the RO proposal, confirming their endorsement of this proposal.
2. Signed and dated minutes of the CCM meetings, for each country included in the RO proposal, at which the CCM agreed to endorse the RO proposal.

Further Guidance

There are several key areas that must be clearly addressed in multi-country applications.

With regards to the selection of Principal Recipients (PRs), the Global Fund recommends the routine inclusion of proposals with both government and nongovernment implementers as part of its commitment to strengthening the role of civil society and the private sector in the processes of the Global Fund. For more information on Dual Track Financing, please see: http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/9/CP_Pol_R9_FactSheet_3_DualTrackFinancing_en.pdf.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully read the Round 9 Guidelines for Multi-Country Applicants before applying for funding and should consult with technical partners on appropriate regional approaches.

Multi-country applications must clearly explain:

- The added value of a regional or cross-border approach, beyond that which would be achieved on a national basis;

- How the applicant will ensure that there is no duplication of resources in countries that are also recipients of other Global Fund grants;
- How planned work complements the national disease control and prevention plans of each country targeted in the proposal;
- How the proposal has been coordinated with the current/planned work of the respective national CCMs, including how joint planning has ensured that the planned work avoids duplication or parallel structures or systems;
- For RCMs, measures taken to maximize operational efficiencies in administrative processes and functions and the work under the proposal;
- If the proposal focuses on mobile or remote populations in the region, how these population groups will be reached and will benefit from the proposal;

Both RCMs and ROs must ensure that national CCMs have adequate time to read the proposal for endorsement of the approach, as it relates to populations targeted in the proposal.

Strengths and Weaknesses of previously submitted Multi-Country Applications

Below is a summary of previously identified strengths and weaknesses identified during the past three Rounds, which are specific to multi-country applicants. These are not exhaustive and are aimed to provide Applicants with a general idea of the types of strengths and weaknesses that have been in past proposals.

Strengths:

- Builds capacity at the national level
- Aligns with previous grants and considers lessons learned
- Detailed budgets and work plans available for each country included in the proposal
- Proposal focuses on aspects/groups (i.e. vulnerable groups) which may be left out of national proposals
- The rationale for a regional approach is convincing

Weaknesses:

- The rationale for a regional approach is not convincing
- The link between national proposal(s) and grants is missing
- The description of the selection criteria for the countries that are included in the proposal is weak
- The proposed activities could be better planned and implemented at the national level
- Too ambitious or unrealistic program outcomes

General Weaknesses:

The following sample of weaknesses is not specific to multi-country applicants, however, exemplifies common pitfalls that also may lead to an unfavorable outcome in the TRP review.

- Inadequate/inaccurate budgetary information

- Missing financial and programmatic gap analysis
- Inappropriate indicators
- Insufficient detail on proposed activities

Other Sources of Information:

- Round 9 Guidelines for Multi-Country Applicants:
(http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/rounds/9/CP_Pol_R9_Guidelines_Multi_en.pdf)
- Round 9 Frequently Asked Questions:
(<http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/rounds/9/faq/#1>)
- Send your questions to the *My Global Fund* website: <http://myglobalfund.org/>
- Email: Proposals@theglobalfund.org