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# Report of the 44<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting

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## 44<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting

GF/B44/18

11-12 November 2020 (Virtual Meeting)

### **Board Decision**

Purpose of the paper: This document presents the Report of the 44<sup>th</sup> Global Fund Board Meeting, held virtually, from 11-12 November 2020.

## **Purpose**

This document presents the Report of the 44<sup>th</sup> Global Fund Board Meeting, held 11-12 November 2020.

Agenda items. The Meeting comprised of nine (9) agenda items, two (2) pre-Board meeting sessions and two (2) executive sessions.

Decisions. The Report includes a full record of the three (3) Decision Points adopted by the Board (Annex 1).

Documents. A document list is attached to this Report (Annex 2). Documentation from the 44<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting is available [here](#).

Presentations. Presentation materials shown during the meeting are available to Board Members on the [Governance Portal](#).

Participants. The participant list for the 44<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting can be consulted [here](#).

Glossary: a glossary of acronyms can be found in Annex 3.

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# Report

## Agenda Item 1: Board Meeting Opening

1. The Board convened virtually on 11-12 November 2020 for the 44<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, following pre-meeting sessions and a closed session of the Board held on 10 November. A quorum was confirmed. The Chair of the Board, Donald Kaberuka, welcomed participants and guests, acknowledging and wishing a speedy recovery to colleagues affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Highlighting the unprecedented nature of the current times, he recognized the flexibility, commitment and speed displayed by the Global Fund management and staff in response to the crisis. The Chair also extended his appreciation to government, civil society, communities and private sector partners, who have played a key role in enabling the Global Fund to fulfill its mission.
2. The traditional candle of remembrance was lit by a representative of the Developed Countries NGOs constituency, Robin Montgomery, to honor the memory of the victims of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Ms. Montgomery emphasized that while the path to the 2030 objectives has been somehow diverted, this is the time to think critically and to harness the momentum needed to get to the target destination, adding that the time for global health solidarity and collective action was now.

### Decision:

3. The Board unanimously approved the decisions to appoint Robin Montgomery, from the Developed Countries NGOs constituency, as rapporteur for the 44<sup>th</sup> Board meeting (GF/B44/DPO1) and to adopt the agenda of the meeting (GF/B44/DPO2).

## Agenda Item 2: Report of the Executive Director

### Presentation

[GF/B44/O3 Report of the Executive Director](#)

4. The Executive Director (ED) opened the session by reflecting on the scale and depth of the impact of COVID-19, and on the threats it will continue to pose to the Global Fund's core mission unless the global response is adequately sustained and proportional to the magnitude of the crisis. He also stressed the unique capacities and added value of the Global Fund as a key contributor to address the pandemic. The ED updated the Board on three core topics as outlined in his Report: progress against 2020 priorities; the Global Fund's response to COVID-19; and priorities for 2021 and beyond. The ED emphasized the acute pressures on the Secretariat and thus the need for prioritization and requested the Board's assistance in enabling the Secretariat to focus on the most critical priorities. He also commended the Board, Secretariat and whole Global Fund partnership for its commitment and collaboration throughout the COVID-19 crisis, acknowledging in particular the courage and commitment of frontline health workers.

## Board Discussion

5. The Board commended the Global Fund's contribution to the global response to COVID-19 and its critical role in the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) while delivering on its core mission. The Board discussion focused on the following key themes:
  - i. **Core mission:** recognizing the progress made so far, constituencies echoed the Secretariat's concern regarding progress in the fight against the three diseases and encouraged the Global Fund to continue building upon its core values and strengths to protect its core mission, while contributing to achieving the SDGs. Constituencies commented on priorities as follows:
    - a. Ensuring continuity of services as we move into the next cycle of grants;
    - b. Continued prioritization of vulnerable groups and key populations, and addressing human rights and gender-related barriers holistically;
    - c. The need to strengthen focus on prevention;
    - d. The importance of a people-centered approach in grant-making; and
    - e. The need for real-time data for informed decision-making.
  - ii. **COVID-19:** constituencies expressed appreciation for the Global Fund's rapid and flexible response to COVID-19 and remarkable collaboration with partners, including through the COVID-19 Response Mechanism and ACT-A. Constituency commentary reflected on:
    - a. Recognition of the Global Fund's role in bringing civil society voices to the ACT-A initiative, and the need for continued focus on community systems and engagement;
    - b. The value of building on lessons learnt from the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in the COVID-19 response, including addressing barriers, as well as the need to draw lessons and seek opportunities from the pandemic response to inform the fight against the three diseases, including with respect to data and partnerships;
    - c. The Global Fund's leadership role, strengthening its contribution to advance on equity, inclusiveness and global solidarity, and to track investments in human rights and gender initiatives;
    - d. The continued health and economic impact of COVID-19, including on donor funding, and the associated need for the Global Fund to be catalytic and to pursue the integration of public and private systems for health;
    - e. The potential risks of over-prioritization of the COVID-19 response against the need to redouble efforts in the fight against the three diseases;
    - f. A call to remain focused on critical risks facing the mission; and
    - g. The importance of continued engagement in partnerships, including the Global Action Plan (GAP).
  - iii. **Sustainability, Transition and Co-financing:** reflecting on Sustainability, Transition and Co-financing-related considerations within the COVID-19 context, commentary noted the need to use data available regarding the impact of COVID-19 on national health and economic systems to inform the adjustment of transition plans, enabling timely preparation by countries. A call to ensure transition plans adopted a people-centered approach and were linked with discussions on Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health (RSSH) to ensure long-term impact was also made. Constituencies expressed appreciation for the establishment of the new Health Financing Department and looked forward to the Global Fund's plans to address domestic resource mobilization in a constrained fiscal space.

- iv. **Strategy development:** constituencies noted the need to embed lessons learnt from the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, and now from COVID-19, in the next Strategy, and to leverage the Global Fund's strengths and capacities, and address areas of relative weakness. Ahead of a dedicated session on day two, constituencies commented on the following:
    - a. The continued central importance of key populations, human rights, gender and community systems as priority areas for the next Strategy.
    - b. The need for focus on monitoring and evaluation, effective Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), use of data, domestic resource mobilization and sustainability issues.
    - c. The need for support to catalytic investments, innovation and accountable partnerships to strengthen systems for health.
    - d. Acknowledgment of the need to explore and balance potential tensions between investments in the fight against the three diseases and the Global Fund role in RSSH and global health security.
  - v. **Staff well-being:** sharing the ED's concern regarding staff workload and levels of fatigue, constituencies noted the importance of attention to staff health, alongside robust contingency measures and prioritization.
  - vi. **Diversity and Inclusion:** welcoming the priority placed on Diversity and Inclusion, constituencies echoed the ED's concern regarding Pulse Survey results on Diversity and Inclusion, urged the Secretariat to reinforce organizational culture, and requested regular feedback on this and gender issues. One constituency offered assistance to share institutional lessons learnt.
6. In addition to the discussions during the Board meeting, in their written statements, some constituencies emphasized the need to review the quality and timeliness of Technical Review Panel (TRP) submissions, noting the lack of focus on community systems, as well as on human rights and gender-related matters. Statements also called for more reflection on the impact of COVID-19 on strategic performance, reiterating the need to strengthen KPIs. Referring to the discussions on RSSH, a call to better explain the Secretariat's vision on enhancing impact on RSSH investments was made.

### Secretariat Response

7. The ED thanked the Board for the rich and insightful comments. Due to time constraints, he offered to address some of the key issues raised (including on RSSH, sustainability and transition, domestic resource mobilization, the role of communities, the need for better data an innovation, among other topics) during the following sessions.
8. The ED recalled that the worst-case scenarios on the COVID-19 impact on core programs had been averted thanks to the Global Fund partnership's commitment, efforts and capacity to innovate. He acknowledged, nonetheless, the setbacks especially in the areas of HIV prevention, TB case-finding and malaria diagnosis and case management, and the calls for ensuring these are addressed as soon as possible.

## Agenda Item 3: Office of the Inspector General Progress Report

### Presentation

#### [GF/B44/04 Office of the Inspector General, Progress Report](#)

9. The Vice-Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee (AFC), Edward Ouko, provided introductory remarks, focusing on the discussions that took place at the 14<sup>th</sup> AFC meeting in October 2020. The Vice-Chair noted the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) efforts to address the needs raised by the COVID-19 epidemic and commended them on re-organizing their priorities and resources to ensure continuous service. He informed the Board that the OIG budget was approved at the last AFC meeting unanimously and recommended for inclusion in the overall OPEX budget.
10. Thanking the Vice-Chair for his remarks, the acting Inspector General stressed that assurance provision, given the disruption caused by COVID, continued to be extremely challenging. She stated that after re-planning and reprioritizing its assurance plans, and by improving its ability to conduct audit and investigations remotely, the OIG remained on track on providing assurance on key issues. She added the OIG would however need to continually adapt its assurance response to the external risk environment and further adaptations – major and minor – would be inevitable. The acting IG informed the Board that in 2021, OIG will focus its attention on the key portfolios, stressing that overdue Agreed Management Actions (AMAs) on Sexual Exploitation & Abuse, Supply Chain, and Program Quality represented open risks that could hamper the Global Fund's impact and reputation.

### Board discussion

11. Board members expressed their appreciation for OIG's report, and for its work in such challenging times. Members commented, or asked for clarification, on the following points:
  - i. **Leveraging in-country resources:** Emphasizing that for audits, building local expertise on financial assurance should be a key priority, the Board asked whether the consultants engaged to work on country audits would be local or international, and if the former whether that represented a long-term, sustainable, structural choice. With regards to investigations, the Board encouraged the OIG to use in-country resources and to work closely with the investigation units of donor governments and civil society to monitor potential wrongdoing.
  - ii. **Agreed Management Actions:** The Secretariat was asked to produce a clear timeline for the closing of long-overdue AMAs. Concerns over the long-overdue AMA on RSSH was expressed and it was suggested that Program Quality and Supply Chain AMAs should be prioritized.
  - iii. **COVID-19:** The Board requested the OIG to update its risk assessment and assurance model, to prioritize an audit on Global Fund COVID-19 expenditure (including personnel on the ground and supply chain issues) and to provide information on measures taken to prevent price surges or the circulation of poor quality products.
  - iv. **Domestic financing:** The Board commended the OIG's planned advisory review on Global Fund mechanisms to manage domestic financing, stating that it was a critical issue requiring systematic assessment, given the economic impact of COVID-19 on countries' fiscal space, and the stagnation of health financing particularly in Africa.

- v. **Human Rights and Gender:** The Board emphasized the need to mainstream these into the Global Fund's work and requested the OIG to help embed related activities across the organization.
  - vi. **Wambo.org internal review:** The Board asked the OIG to use the opportunity of the wambo.org audit to have a clear discussion with Stop TB and the Global Drug Facility.
12. In addition to the themes highlighted above, in their statements, constituencies commended OIG's adoption of a remote audit and investigation methodology and were supportive of the enhanced technology being employed, encouraging OIG to further develop these resources to streamline processes and reduce costs. For audits, close collaboration with partners and supreme audit institutions in country was encouraged given the benefits to the Global Fund of building local expertise on financial assurance.

#### OIG response

13. **Leveraging in-country resources:** The OIG informed that the choice between local or international providers would depend on the country. Adding that the OIG would need to navigate challenges around quality and independence of local providers, travel bans etc., it emphasized that its response would be tailored and flexible. With regards to investigations, the OIG said it will leverage strong existing relationships and collaborate with donor and implementing countries' investigative units. The OIG remarked on its graduated approach, assessing the partners' investigative capacity on each occasion, adding that for civil society organizations, who are important partners for OIG, the focus is on getting them to speak out and raise concerns.
14. **Maturity of Secretariat processes:** Responding to a question regarding organizational maturity rating, the OIG said it will produce an annual assurance opinion, as required by its Charter, providing as much assurance as it can and detailing the limitations in scope of its opinion. The opinion is unlikely to follow the same maturity scale used in the previous five years, as the Secretariat reached its desired maturity level at end of 2019.
15. **Risk assessment:** Even before COVID, OIG was moving to a more dynamic risk assessment model; COVID has further encouraged this.
16. **Human Rights and Gender:** The OIG reassured the Board that it will implement numerous 'I Speak Out Now' and other prevention activities in 2021, as well as on other issues.

#### Secretariat response

17. **Agreed Management Actions:** The Secretariat reported that delays were partly due to challenges in-country including resources being focused on grant-making for the new cycle, but also to constraints exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis, adding that the closure of overdue AMAs may be staggered (some are projected to close by the end of the year, while others will carry over 2021 as they require a tailored response). The Head of Grant Management emphasized, however, that progress was continuing on open AMAs, stressing that most were between 50 and 70 percent complete.

18. **Domestic financing:** The Secretariat said the planned advisory review will be a good opportunity to take stock of the situation and that it will inform future strategy.

## Agenda Item 4: 2021 Corporate Workplan and Operating Expenses Budget

### Presentation

[GF/B44/02A 2021 OPEX Budget and Corporate Work Plan](#)

[GF/B44/02B 2021 Operating Expenses Budget](#)

19. The Chair of the AFC provided introductory remarks recalling that the proposed OPEX budget for 2021 had been unanimously recommended by the AFC in its last meeting, and therefore been proposed for Board approval. Emphasizing on the need to adapt the OPEX cap to fit the current circumstances and the requirements of the new strategy, the Chair noted a sub-committee working group will be created to look at specific questions and to ensure appropriate coordination with other committees.
20. The operating expenses budget and corporate workplan for 2021 were presented to the Board for approval. The Secretariat proposed a budget of US\$ 315M and illustrated the high-level principles agreed under the 'OPEX Evolution' framework. The recommended budget will ensure that Secretariat resourcing is in line with the increased mandate and ambition in a COVID-19 context. The Secretariat committed to work with AFC to perform deep dive analysis to determine optimal budget levels and the appropriate level of reporting details needed by the AFC and Board to perform their oversight roles.

### Board Discussion

21. Board members commended the Secretariat for a robust proposal, especially noting the clear communication of the budget narrative. The following items were highlighted during the discussion:
22. **3-year budget cap:** Board members noted that when evaluating the OPEX 3-year cap, a clear rationale will be critical, with the narrative covering the following:
- i. alignment of the budget to the new strategy;
  - ii. potential evolution in Global Fund operations;
  - iii. efficiency and focus on value for money; and
  - iv. consideration of recommendations from the Strategic Review 2020 (SR 2020) report.
23. **Impact from reduced travel:** The Board requested information on the operational consequences of reduced spending on travel and how this will impact in-country operations as well as Secretariat infrastructure needs.
24. **Monitoring and assurance activities:** The Board requested confirmation that the OIG, Local Fund Agents (LFAs), Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) and the Technical Evaluation Reference Group (TERG) will be adequately funded within the current COVID-19 context.

25. Other comments noted in the meeting, as well as in the constituency statements, also focused on:
- i. Consideration of strategic capabilities needed in countries, to be factored into Secretariat capabilities to provide support.
  - ii. With regards to the OPEX cap, the AFC may need support from other committees (e.g. from the Strategy Committee) to factor in the programmatic perspective and to determine an adequate fit that enables the Global Fund to do its work.
  - iii. Consideration for adjusting the operating model of the Global Fund following the lessons learnt from the current cycle, including COVID-19 mitigation responses. This was noted by the Chair to be a bigger topic warranting a separate discussion.
  - iv. Financial performance, including absorption and allocation matters on COVID-19 mitigation, C19RM expenditures and impact on funding for the three diseases, will be monitored as part of the forecasting, management and AFC oversight mechanisms.

#### Secretariat Response

26. **3-year budget cap:** The Secretariat informed that a deep dive will be conducted, and detailed analysis provided, on how the cost base has evolved, on structural investments as well as perspectives in 2021 budget execution for the March 2021 AFC meeting, where the budget ceiling will be discussed. Finance was consulted and provided inputs to the SR 2020 recommendations. These recommendations will inform the next Global Fund Strategy and the OPEX evolution will be aligned with this. The Secretariat added that as it performs costing of the next Strategy, it will be able to respond to some of the recommendations from the SR 2020 report and provide the cost implications of these choices to enable the organization to respond. This is already evidenced in some elements which could be activated in 2021, already integrated into parts of the budget such as the enhanced approach to RSSH, prevention, etc. where resources are being shaped in the Secretariat to respond to challenges in program delivery.
27. **Impact from reduced travel:** The Secretariat stated that while there have been savings noted from the reduction in Secretariat travel, a significant increase in other costs (e.g. additional support to the TRP, as well as to IT services within the Secretariat and to countries and in-country stakeholders to manage the preparation of grants, both for C19RM funding and grant programs) was recorded.
28. **Monitoring and assurance activities:** The Secretariat reaffirmed that monitoring and assurance activities were not expected to be adversely affected. The OIG budget is developed independently and thus not impacted. Funding levels have been maintained at 2020 levels for the TERG and the CCMs.
29. **Budget:** The Secretariat informed that along with forecasts, the budget discussion in March 2021 will be used to assess any additional resource needs and will include a strong narrative on efficiency levers activated, focus on value and a clear vision of how the funds will be spent. This might include LFAs as we anticipate additional costs needed for in-country assurance.

#### **Decision:**

30. The Board voted unanimously in favor of decision point GF/B44/DPO3.

## Agenda Item 5: Executive Session

31. The Board met in Executive Session on 10 and 12 November. The proceedings of those sessions, and the record arising, were managed in line with Article 22 of the Global Fund's Board and Committee Operating Procedures.

## Agenda Item 6: COVID-19 Response and Business Continuity

### Presentation

[GF/B44/06 COVID-19 Response & Business Continuity](#)

[GF/B44/06 Annex 1 The Global Fund COVID-19 Update to the Board](#)

32. The ED provided the latest available updates on the four pillars of the Global Fund response: keeping our people safe, protecting the Global Fund's core mission, helping countries respond to COVID-19 and the Global Fund's role in the global response, as set forth in detail in the documents presented to the Board. Addressing points raised earlier on supporting community-led initiatives and incremental OPEX costs in relation to C19RM, the ED confirmed that (1) retrospective analysis will be conducted on spending on community-led initiatives, to be shared with the SC once completed, along with the outcomes of the OIG review; and (2) incremental OPEX costs in relation to C19RM will be USD 3.9 million for 2021, as reported in the context of the extension of C19RM.
33. With regards to the Global Fund's global role, the ED brought to the attention of the Board the urgent needs in relation to ACT-A, highlighting the critical gap in resources available for diagnostics and for health systems.

### Board Discussion

34. The Board commended the Global Fund's efforts in response to COVID-19 and its active leadership role in the ACT-A partnership and noted the critical need to maintain focus on safeguarding the core mission and the gains made in the fight against the three diseases. Board discussion included the following points:
  - i. **Operating model:** Reflecting on the impact of COVID-19 on the working environment, suggestions were raised for the Secretariat to assess its operating model with regards to country presence, the role of LFAs and Principal Recipients, and collaboration with partners, as well as the approach to utilization of unoccupied space at the Global Health Campus.
  - ii. **Leveraging lessons learned:** Reflecting on the opportunities offered by the crisis, commentary noted the need to support health systems to enhance pandemic preparedness and response capacities; leverage community platforms; better showcase, share and institutionalize lessons learnt; foster innovation and address bottlenecks. Furthermore, constituencies reflected on the importance of real-time data gathering to monitor the impact of the pandemic at country level, and lessons regarding real-time data and strengthened monitoring for the fight against the three diseases.
  - iii. **COVID-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM):** Flexibility in the use of funds to address urgent needs was appreciated. Constituency commentary included reflections on:

- a. The need for continued reporting on the use of C19RM resources, including focus on areas of the Global Fund COVID-19 response that bring added value.
  - b. The need to balance investments in the COVID-19 response versus the need to continue focusing on the three diseases, with a request for information on the possible impact of C19RM on Portfolio Optimization and Unfunded Quality Demand.
  - c. A request for clear guidance to CCMs on C19RM.
- iv. **Core programs and barriers:** Constituencies noted concerns regarding the increase in human rights abuses in the crisis environment, and the challenges faced in terms of prevention and reaching vulnerable groups and key populations. Comments emphasized the importance of funding to local communities, investments to strengthen and adapt health systems, the removal of structural barriers to accessing health services and the protection of health workers. In addition, the environmental threats resulting from COVID-19 were noted.
- v. **Community-led initiatives and community strengthening:** Discussion reflected on the importance of community-led initiatives in the COVID-19 response, and of learning lessons from their role in the pandemic response. Some constituencies urged the Secretariat to expand funding for community response and community-led initiatives, prioritizing C19 allocations for communities, civil society and key populations.
- vi. **Partnership:** Constituencies acknowledged the importance of ongoing and strengthened collaboration, encouraging health agencies to take stock of the lessons learnt from the work on AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria to inform the COVID-19 response, while maintaining focus on long-term goals. A group of country-based partners supporting CCMs in the COVID-19 response was suggested.
- vii. **Risk management:** Commentary reflected appreciation for a robust Risk Management Report and reflected on increased levels of risk in different areas (e.g. fraud or misuse of funds, program delivery and quality, sexual harassment and abuse, burnout, domestic financing and economic risk for transitioning countries). In this context, a number of constituencies looked forward to discussing adjustments to risk appetite, with the observation that increased acceptance of risk may be necessary to further explore and scale up innovation.
- viii. **Resource mobilization:** Appreciating the Global Fund's resource mobilization efforts, discussions acknowledged the significant ACT-A funding gap. In addition:
- a. A request was made regarding budget scenario planning to understand trade-offs in the absence of adequate funding for the COVID-19 response.
  - b. Some constituencies supported flexibility with respect to Sixth Replenishment funding, while others requested further information regarding the rationale for allocating resources between the COVID-19 response, and mitigation of impact on the Global Fund's core mission.
  - c. Some constituencies enquired about risks to Sixth Replenishment pledge conversion, and to domestic resources, alongside interest in the strategy to approach resource mobilization challenges in view of the Seventh Replenishment.
- ix. **wambo.org:** Constituencies encouraged the Secretariat to ensure full transparency in the cost of health commodities, and also expressed support for efforts to coordinate global procurement of COVID-19 health products. Commentary recognized the role of wambo.org as a platform to provide access to diversified production and supply chains,

through a transparent and efficient mechanism. One constituency called for expansion of wambo.org, while another noted that it should remain an optional platform for countries.

### Secretariat Response

35. The ED thanked the Board for the rich and insightful discussion and invited the relevant Management Executive Committee (MEC) members to provide clarifications on the issues raised by the Board:

- i. **Operating model:** The Head of the Grant Management Division (GMD) noted that the operating model of the Global Fund had proven to be robust over the past few months, and reassured the Board of the effectiveness of the enhanced monitoring function performed by LFAs, with requirements adapted to the COVID-19 environment (e.g. requests for enhanced procurement and supply chain reviews, COVID-19 specific monitoring exercises, focus on areas of particular risk). He also confirmed that any ineligible costs found in LFA reviews of transactions during the year were subject to recoveries as per standard procedure. The virtual working environment was acknowledged as a challenge, as it has been in all countries, and the Secretariat has addressed it through continuous communication through the PRs, governments and CCMs. The Head of GMD cautioned that changes to the business model must take into account medium- to long-term steady state post COVID-19, noting that reflections on country presence and the business model should preferably not take place during the COVID-19 crisis.
- ii. **Community-led initiatives and community strengthening:** The Head of GMD recalled that funding proposals are prepared and submitted by CCMs, stressing that community involvement at CCM level is critical. Global Fund guidance encourages countries to include community-led initiatives in funding requests.
- iii. **COVID-19 lessons learnt:** The ED reflected on two areas where COVID-19 offered lessons learnt to build upon in the fight against the three diseases:
  - a. **Data:** A paradigm shift is necessary in the way data are collected, analyzed and used, requiring the commitment of the whole Global Fund partnership. Current data on HIV, tuberculosis and malaria are not updated frequently enough, nor are sufficiently disaggregated to provide adequate evidence for informed decision-making. Better data should help the Global Fund's partnership be more agile and more effective in addressing the needs of key populations and vulnerable groups and should be a driver of operational changes.
  - b. **Partnerships:** The global health partnership model has been more effective in the COVID-19 emergency context than ever before. Lessons learnt from ACT-A on the importance of purpose-driven partnerships driven by collaborative leadership should be used to inform the future evolution of the Global Action Plan (GAP).
- iv. **Risk management:** Noting the increase in level of risk across several areas, including grant-facing risk, the Chief Risk Officer reassured the Board of the robustness of the Global Fund partnership's response to the pandemic from a risk perspective, and confirmed that the risk framework remains effective. Adjustments are anticipated with respect to recalibration of risk appetite, expanding the mitigation toolkit, and increased focus on use of data to measure level of risk.

- v. **Resource mobilization:** The Head of External Relations and Communications (ERCD) confirmed that Sixth Replenishment pledge conversion is a priority for the Secretariat and is on track. She clarified that resource mobilization for C19RM is complementary to Sixth Replenishment resources and recognized the donors who have already pledged additional funds. Noting the focus on funding for vaccines, the Head, ERCD recalled the need to balance incremental resources across all ACT-A pillars. In addition, it was noted that engagement with key stakeholders outside the Official Development Aid (ODA) space (e.g. Ministries of Finance and development banks) had started.
- vi. Looking ahead, both the Head of ERCD and the ED reflected further on the linkages between the COVID-19 crisis, its health and economic impact, the success of the next Replenishment, and recovering ground in the fight against the three diseases. Meaningful Global Fund involvement in the global COVID-19 response is essential to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the three diseases, ensure continued focus on, and involvement of, communities and key populations, protect Sixth Replenishment allocations, ensure that the three diseases remain high on the global health agenda, and position the organization for a successful Seventh Replenishment.
- vii. **Communication:** The Global Fund provides public information on its COVID-19 response, including C19RM, on a dedicated section of the Global Fund website. This includes regular situation reports which provide in-depth information on the Global Fund COVID-19 response and mitigation of impact on the three diseases; information on funding awarded to countries and the ACT-A partnership.
- viii. **wambo.org:** The ED confirmed that the use of the wambo platform is optional for non-Global Fund financed purchases, and that other procurement mechanisms are available also for Global Fund grants, provided that the required transparency and quality standards are complied with.

## Agenda Item 7: Development of the Next Global Fund Strategy

### Presentation

#### [GF/B44/07 Development of the Next Global Fund Strategy](#)

- 36. The Board Chair opened the session by sharing reflections on the Strategy development process, emphasizing the importance of open and frank dialogue to take work forward on the next Strategy. He noted the need to define its structure, with clear roles for the Board and the SC and inputs from technical partners, while reiterating the Board's ownership and leadership of the strategy development overall.
- 37. The Strategy Committee (SC) Leadership shared a synthesis of the SC and Board input received through the Q4 2020 Strategy discussions, which focused on the Global Fund's future role in RSSH, global health security and strategic refinements to the partnership model to improve program impact. The Secretariat presented a high-level overview of the current health and development landscape to contextualize the Strategy development discussions, and in response to the Board's request, shared initial thinking on the Secretariat's vision for the next Strategy.

## Board Discussion

38. The Board thanked the Secretariat for sharing its initial vision for the next Strategy and acknowledged that progress had been made through the Q4 discussions. Reflecting on the Secretariat's vision, constituencies appreciated the strong emphasis on equity, human rights and gender and community responses, and noted the need for the next Strategy to build on the Global Fund's comparative advantages.
39. Some constituencies noted that while leveraging strengths to address current and future epidemic threats more broadly was important, the Global Fund's primary focus should remain on ensuring the continuation of work to make progress against the three diseases. Other constituencies noted that any expansion to the Global Fund mandate would need to be accompanied by additional resources. Other constituencies also highlighted the expectation for the next strategy to have a stronger focus on sustainability and emphasized the importance of RSSH investments to ensure sustainable outcomes on the three diseases.
40. Following a request supported by various constituencies, there was general consensus that the last Board discussion of 2020 on Strategy development should be informed by a summary paper, highlighting areas of Board convergence and divergence through the Q4 2020 discussions to date, "the what" and "the how" of these topics, discussing trade-offs, and presenting the Board with options to take forward in its discussions.
41. Constituencies highlighted a number of other topics for discussion in more depth through the Strategy development process. These include: disease-specific issues including incidence reduction; ways of strengthening meaningful community engagement and leadership of the response; redoubling efforts to address human rights, gender and equity; strengthening programs to meet the needs of key and vulnerable populations; addressing risk appetite to facilitate improved program outcomes; engaging with the private sector; evolving the CCM model to increase integration and meaningful engagement; specific adjacent health areas that could be supported through Global Fund RSSH investments; further clarity around how the Global Fund can support a people-centered approach through its investment; what is needed to deliver better quality, more timely data to inform programming; resource mobilization and program sustainability; adapting to a changing environment and reviewing the interactions between health, climate and environment (including the One Health concept); and country ownership.
42. Constituencies also noted the importance of a strengthened key performance indicator framework to promote accountability in delivering on the next Strategy.

## Secretariat Response

43. The Secretariat acknowledged the Board's request for a paper to inform the next Board discussion on Strategy development. The Secretariat also highlighted areas of convergence brought up during the session, including the importance of more meaningful community engagement and community and civil society leadership of the response; a strengthened focus on equity, human rights, gender and the most vulnerable populations; and the importance of strengthening the Global Fund's partnership model.
44. The Secretariat agreed on the importance of in-depth discussions going forward on other Strategy development topics, noting that these discussions will be undertaken in various ways including at the Partnership Forums in Q1 2021, with the follow up discussions on

development of the next Strategy framework and narrative, and through associated policy discussions led by the Strategy Committee and Board, which will also take place throughout 2021-2022 (such as on the allocation model and disease split) and in preparation for Strategy implementation and the first cycle of grants under the next Strategy from 2024.

45. The Secretariat also emphasized the importance of the Board providing steer on the way forward on the 3 focus topics of the Q4 2020 discussions, to give structure for subsequent Strategy discussions.
46. In response to questions raised (including from constituency statements), the Secretariat noted that:
  - i. It will continue to work closely with technical partners in the development of the Global Fund's next Strategy and is participating in the Strategy development processes of its technical partners;
  - ii. SR2020 and TRP recommendations have been incorporated into background materials for Q4 Board and SC discussions; and
  - iii. The scheduling of Partnership Forums will account for the focus regions' time zones, with the Secretariat currently in the process of reviewing participant nominations in line with the participant selection methodology.
47. The Board Leadership concluded the session by affirming its commitment to advancing the Strategy discussions. Based on the feedback received from the Board, Board Leadership confirmed that they would work closely with the Secretariat to develop a paper to inform the last Board discussion of 2020 on Strategy development, noting that the scheduled date of 30 November for this meeting would likely be moved to December to give time for constituency review of the paper before the meeting.

#### Action points

- The Secretariat will develop a summary paper to inform Board discussions at a December 2020 meeting on Strategy development.

## **Agenda Item 8: Governance Priorities**

#### Presentation

48. The Vice-Chair of the Board introduced the agenda item, emphasizing the session was an opportunity to reflect on governance priorities, continuity and culture and invited committee leadership to share the highlights of their respective workplans and key priorities for the year ahead.
49. The SC's Vice-Chair noted the ongoing work of the Committee on strategy development and the different stages leading to the approval of the strategy, including the next Board retreat, the Partnership Forums and the approval of the strategy framework. She stated that in addition the Committee would focus on the following priorities:
  - i. Monitoring and Evaluation, including the development of the new framework. In this regard, the Vice-Chair acknowledged the creation of an informal cross-committee working group on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to facilitate and support the SC's contributions to M&E;

- ii. Developing a new Key Performance Indicator (KPI) framework in line with the objectives identified in the new strategy. Acknowledging the preliminary findings of the Governance Performance Assessment conducted by Nestor Advisors, the Vice-Chair reaffirmed these would be taken into consideration when developing the new framework. She added that adjustments to current KPIs had and will continue to take place to ensure strategic performance was adequately tracked; and
  - iii. The review of eligibility and allocation methodology that will take place in 2021, in preparation for the next cycle of grants.
50. The SC Vice-Chair added that the list of priorities mentioned was not exhaustive and that to adapt to the new environment and to ensure efficiency, serious prioritization needed to be done, along with the adoption of new and creative ways of addressing issues.
51. The AFC Chair presented the following priority topics, calling for a cooperative approach with other committees on cross-cutting issues:
  - i. OPEX, specifically identifying together with the other Committees, options and trade-offs for the Board's consideration;
  - ii. Risk management, looking at how the Committee uses risk in terms of its overview and oversight of the Global Fund and advising the Board on a potential update of risk appetite decisions in 2021;
  - iii. With regards to resource mobilization, in addition to conversion of Sixth Replenishment pledges, the Committee will continue to focus on domestic financing
  - iv. Human resources, noting that the Committee will consider reputational risk and risk with regards to completion of programmatic activities. In addition, the Committee will also consider how to ensure sound structures, processes, procedures and controls to mitigate issues;
  - v. Effective information-sharing, including tracking of funds, absorption, etc. He emphasized, referencing the conversation of the day before, the development of different dashboards to ensure efficient tracking of the various funding movements and streams; and
  - vi. The AFC looks forward to working closely with the next Inspector General.
52. Due to technological difficulties, the Board Vice-Chair presented the Ethics and Governance Committee (EGC) priorities on behalf of the Chair of the EGC. The presentation of EGC priorities was made available to constituencies via the Governance Portal. In session, the Board Vice-Chair highlighted the following EGC priorities:
  - i. Governance strengthening initiatives, including on culture and governance effectiveness in the current context;
  - ii. Finalizing the assessment, and taking forward the outcomes of the Governance Performance Assessment; and
  - iii. Numerous appointments and selection processes taking place in 2021-2022 (including the next Board Leadership process).
53. The Board Vice-Chair presented the Board workplan, noting in particular the need to drive attention to current and new strategic objectives, ensuring high impact against the three diseases especially as COVID-19 continues, and underlining the importance of supporting

delivery of the high volume of grants currently being processed by the Secretariat. The Vice-Chair recalled the Board would continue engaging in overseeing and supporting resource mobilization throughout the Sixth Replenishment and in preparation for the Seventh Replenishment, including domestic financing. The Vice-Chair stated that the next Board meeting in May 2021 would address various key items, noting that the details can be found in the Governance Portal.

54. The Vice-Chair reminded that an additional Board meeting will take place in mid-2021 when a decision on the new Strategy framework will be taken, ahead of the adoption of the full Strategy.
55. The Board's attention was drawn to the decision points coming to the Board after the meeting, including a high volume of funding recommendations, adjustments to the KPIs, appointment of the Inspector General, and revision of the Code of Conduct for Governance Officials.

### Board Discussion

56. Board members expressed general agreement that many matters should be addressed in a transversal manner, ensuring cross-committee collaboration, particularly on issues such as KPIs, M&E, fraud and corruption, and risk. Members stressed the importance of follow-up to themes raised in the recent Ombudsman Report, including the approach to matters relating to inclusion and diversity. Constituencies also emphasized the importance of the ongoing work in relation to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, as well as the upcoming deep dive on Strategic Objective 3 (SO3). On KPIs, it was suggested that a cross-committee working group be established.
57. Regarding the EGC workstream on governance roles and responsibilities, some constituencies called for a shift of terminology, from "simplifying" to "clarifying" roles and responsibilities. There was also a request to discuss length and format of governance meetings in the continuing virtual environment, to ensure meaningful engagement by Board and Committee members.
58. The Board Vice-Chair acknowledged the comments made, emphasizing that further discussion was required, including through the Coordinating Group.
59. On fraud and corruption, the AFC Chair emphasized focus on implementation of the Policy to Prevent Fraud and Corruption, to ensure processes and procedures are strong. He added the AFC's discussions on Human Resources matters would include focus on matters raised in the Ombudsman report.

### **Agenda Item 9: Closing session**

60. The Chair thanked members for the productive meeting, noting the important decisions that have been taken. In his closing, Dr. Kaberuka commended the Global Fund for the leadership it has shown in times of crisis, and in doing so, securing its core mission while demonstrating that risk-taking can yield high results.
61. He reiterated the significant economic impact that COVID-19 is having on the people the Global Fund serves, adding that some African economies may suffer their first recession in 30

years. This, he recalled, will in turn have an impact on the distribution of resources, and as such, the Global Fund will need to think innovatively with regards to the next Replenishment.

62. On the new Strategy, the Chair emphasized that it will define the Global Fund's legacy, saying that conscious consideration of what goes in the strategy would need to be made, ensuring it was not a strategy of "business as usual". He added that it was time to move from principles to practicalities, providing granularity to the issues discussed.
63. Lastly, Dr. Kaberuka thanked the Secretariat, its management and staff, for their hard work and commitment during this time, and called for ensuring that staff are heard, noting the importance of continuing the work on inclusion and diversity. He also recognized the work that the Office of the Inspector General had done during the transition and at a time of increased risks.

## **Item 10: Items Discussed in Writing**

64. As indicated in the 44th Board Meeting Agenda, the following items were discussed in the form a written exchange between the Board and the Secretariat. Official background documents and pre-recorded presentations were shared with the Board in advance as basis for this exchange. Some of the queries shared by Board members are addressed below (with others reflected in the Secretariat responses in the previous sections).

### Report of the TRP and Country Funding Update

65. TRP recommendations: The Secretariat recognizes the value of TRP recommendations and the need for them to be appropriately addressed. The Secretariat has already operationalized a very robust monitoring system to ensure that that TRP issues/recommendations made in TRP Review and Recommendation Forms for country applicants are comprehensively addressed. These are recorded in and responded to through the Secretariat's Grant Operating System and in the 2017-2019 cycle almost 80% of the recommendations were cleared on time either during grant- making or grant implementation, respectively. The 'global' recommendations made by the TRP in their lessons learned reports can be addressed to applicants, partners or the Secretariat. While the monitoring of responses/actions to address these recommendations is less formalized, the Secretariat is considering setting up a monitoring and reporting system on these global recommendations.
66. Human rights and gender-related barriers: The Global Fund acknowledges the continuing challenges to address human rights and gender related barriers to services in Funding Applications. The Secretariat is advancing strategic initiatives to provide increased relevant and timely technical assistance to programs in Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) HIV incidence reduction, human rights, finding missing people in TB, and community led monitoring. The Community, Rights and Gender (CRG) Strategic Initiative continues to provide support for key populations to engage with Global Fund-related processes through short-term technical assistance and longer-term capacity development. In countries where responses are not recognizing criminalized and marginalized populations (i.e. internally displaced, MSM, etc.) the Secretariat is engaging partners, including faith-based organizations and leaders, to find ways to influence national responses to allow work to commence or continue. This includes leveraging existing platforms such as the HIV Situation Room and Global Prevention Coalition as well as exploring partnerships for advocacy with regional and global

civil society organizations and networks supported by bilateral partners (e.g. Love Alliance supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Importantly, the Secretariat continues to monitor the implementation of TRP recommendations on conducting formative assessments, estimating population sizes and developing differentiated service packages during grant implementation, while ensuring meaningful and safe engagement of key populations in the design and delivery of activities in this area.

67. Monitoring COVID-19 impact on Global Fund programs:

- i. The Global Fund’s monitoring approach is dynamic, agile and focused on guiding understanding and decision making. To respond to the current health crisis, the Secretariat designed and rolled out a ‘Covid Monitoring of COVID- 19 Impact’ on Global Fund grant results and service delivery that monitors a range of key program indicators in 38 countries and conducts programmatic spot checks, carried out by LFAs, to monitor service continuity at 15 selected health facilities/community sites in each of these countries. In addition, every two weeks, the Global Fund conducts a survey to collect qualitative information from over 100 countries about their context, risk of disruption to grant creation and grant implementation, which contributes to rapidly identifying areas where there may be challenges for further investigation. The survey complements the service delivery information from the “Covid Monitoring of COVID-19 Impact” by providing insights into potential disruption to levels of national stocks by disease, in-country supply chains, lab services, Logistics Management and Information System (LMIS) and Health Management and Information System (HMIS) reporting capabilities and financial absorption of grants.
- ii. This is enabling Global Fund Country Teams (CTs) to better understand COVID-19 impacts on Global Fund supported programs, complementing the regular communications between the CTs, Principal Recipient (PRs), CCMs and partners, and helping CTs and countries to develop and implement targeted catch up plans and program adaptations. The monitoring information is designed for internal Global Fund audience and use, and is triangulated with the information received from other partners, including WHO.
- iii. The Secretariat has worked closely with community partners, especially through Disease Situation Room meetings, to monitor, understand and respond to COVID-19 disruptions to program performance, service availability, access and results. This has enabled responsive coordinated actions, including joint advocacy with country leaders to enable appropriate adaptations to programs and campaigns. This is critical to maintaining the important coverage gains achieved in previous years and to continue reducing disease cases in the COVID-19 era.
- iv. In addition to investing significantly in strengthening in-country HMIS and analytic capacity for decision making, in response to COVID-19 the Global Fund has supported countries to rapidly integrate the DHIS2 Covid-19 surveillance modules into their systems. In Burkina Faso, for example, where the Global Fund has supported DHIS2-based HMIS over many years, the national HMIS was successfully adapted to report on COVID-19 impacts, generating regular surveillance reports. This strengthened approach avoids adding new parallel systems and provides the Global Fund quality and timely reports.

## Risk Management Reporting

68. As described above, the bi-weekly survey continues to provide visibility of disruption levels, and monthly monitoring of key disease indicators across 38 high burden portfolios has helped increase visibility of the impact on programs. These initiatives together with other Global Fund and partner data contribute to understanding where resilience and adaptations are working well and where a more focused effort on program adaptations is required. Building on lessons learned from 2020 the Global Fund will be working closely with implementers on the ground and partners, including through the Situation Room, to develop and implement risk mitigation strategies to bring risk levels down. The Committees will have an important role to play in helping to guide this process and the Secretariat will keep the Committees updated on progress.

## Annex 1. Decisions Taken at the 44<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting

Decision Point number	Decision Point text
<p><b>GF/B44/DP01</b></p>	<p><b>Appointment of Rapporteur</b>            Robin Montgomery from the Developed Country NGOs constituency is designated as Rapporteur for the 44<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.</p> <p>The decision point was approved unanimously.</p>
<p><b>GF/B44/DP02</b></p>	<p><b>Approval of Agenda</b>            The agenda for the 44th Board Meeting (GF/B44/01 – Revision 1) is approved.</p> <p>The decision point was approved unanimously.</p>
<p><b>GF/B44/DP03</b></p>	<p><b>Approval of 2021 Work Plan and Budget Narrative and the 2021 Operating Expenses Budget</b>            Based on the recommendation of the Audit and Finance Committee, the Board approves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 2021 Work Plan and Budget Narrative, as set forth in GF/B44/02A; and</li> <li>b. The 2021 Operating Expenses Budget in the amount of US\$315 million, as set forth in GF/B44/02B (the “2021 OPEX Budget”), which includes US\$ 14.90 million for the Office of the Inspector General’s 2021 operating expenses.</li> </ul> <p>The decision point was approved unanimously.</p>

## Annex 2. 44<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Documents List

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Document Title</i>
<b>For Decision</b>	
GF/B44/01	44 <sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Agenda
GF/B44/02A	2021 OPEX Budget and Corporate Work Plan
<b>For Information</b>	
GF/B44/02B	2021 Operating Expenses Budget
GF/B44/03	Report of the Executive Director
GF/B44/04	Office of the Inspector General, Progress Report
GF/B44/05	Joint Agreed Management Actions (AMAs) Progress Report
GF/B44/06	COVID-19 Response & Business Continuity
GF/B44/06 Annex 1	The Global Fund COVID-19 Update to the Board
<b>Strategy Development</b>	
GF/B44/07	Development of the Next Global Fund Strategy
GF/B44/08	Technical Review Panel 2020 Lessons Learned <i>High-level summary of Lessons Learned Reports from Windows 1&amp;2</i>
GF/B44/09	Report of the Technical Evaluation Reference Group
<b>Governance Oversight</b>	
GF/B44/10	Report of the Coordinating Group
GF/B44/10 Annex 1	Annex to the Report of the Coordinating Group
GF/B44/11	Annual Report on Privileges and Immunities
GF/B44/12	Annual Report on Status of Board Decisions
<b>Commitment of Financial Resources</b>	
GF/B44/13	Financial Performance Update
GF/B44/14	Recoveries Report for the Period Ended 20 June 2020

<b>Assessment of Organizational Performance</b>	
GF/B44/15A	Strategic Performance Report mid-2020
GF/B44/15B	Adjustments to KPI Framework
<b>Risk Management</b>	
GF/B44/16	Risk Management Report
<b>Resource Mobilization and Partnerships</b>	
GF/B44/17	Update on Resource Mobilization
<b>Supporting documents</b>	
GF/SC14/07 Annex 2 (vol. I and II) <i>Shared Sept 2020</i>	Strategic Review 2020
GF/SC14/07 Position Paper	Technical Evaluation Reference Group: Strategic Review 2020 (position paper)
GF/EGC14/04	Nestor Advisors: Governance Performance Assessment (preliminary findings)
Public Document	The Global Fund Results Report 2020

### **Annex 3. Glossary of Acronyms**

<b>ACT-A</b>	Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator
<b>AFC</b>	Audit and Finance Committee
<b>ALM</b>	Asset Liability Management
<b>AMAs</b>	Agreed Management Actions
<b>AGYW</b>	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
<b>BLNC</b>	Board Leadership Nominations Committee
<b>CCM</b>	Country Coordinating Mechanism
<b>CFO</b>	Chief Financial Officer
<b>CRG</b>	Community, Rights and Gender
<b>CRO</b>	Chief Risk Officer
<b>CRP</b>	Country Results Profiles
<b>ED</b>	Executive Director
<b>EGC</b>	Ethics and Governance Committee
<b>ERCD</b>	External Relations and Communications Department
<b>GAP</b>	Global Action Plan
<b>GHC</b>	Global Health Campus
<b>GMD</b>	Grant Management Division
<b>HMIS</b>	Health Management and Information System
<b>HSS</b>	Health Systems Strengthening
<b>KPIs</b>	Key Performance Indicators
<b>LMIS</b>	Logistics Management and Information System
<b>MEC</b>	Management Executive Committee
<b>MSM</b>	Men who have Sex with Men
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Aid
<b>OIG</b>	Office of the Inspector General
<b>OPEX</b>	Operating Expenses
<b>PR</b>	Principal Recipient
<b>RSSH</b>	Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SC</b>	Strategy Committee
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SIP</b>	Strategy Implementation Plan
<b>STC</b>	Sustainability, Transition and Co-financing Policy
<b>TERG</b>	Technical Evaluation Reference Group
<b>TRP</b>	Technical Review Panel
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

**UQD** Unfunded Quality Demand

**UMI** Upper middle Income

**WHO** World Health Organization

## Annex 4. Written Statements received from Constituencies

The following Constituency Statements and Joint Position Papers are available on the [Governance Portal](#):

- a. African Constituency Statement
- b. African Constituency Interim Positions on the Next Global Fund Strategy
- c. Communities Delegation Full Report of Communities Consultations on the New Global Fund Strategy
- d. Communities Delegation Constituency Statement
- e. Developed Country NGO Delegation Constituency Statement
- f. Developing Country NGO Delegation Constituency Statement
- g. European Commission/Belgium/Italy/Portugal/Spain Constituency Statement
- h. European Commission/Belgium/Italy/Portugal/Spain, France, Germany and Point 7 Joint Position Paper on Global Fund New Strategy Development
- i. EECA, EMR, ESA, SEA and WCA Joint Constituency Statement
- j. Eastern Europe and Central Asia Constituency and WHO Joint Statement
- k. Eastern Mediterranean Region Constituency Statement
- l. France Constituency Statement
- m. Germany Constituency Statement
- n. Implementer Group Statement
- o. Latin America and the Caribbean Delegation Constituency Statement
- p. Private Sector Constituency Statement
- q. Southeast Asia Constituency Statement
- r. United States Constituency Statement
- s. Western Pacific Region Constituency Statement
- t. WHO Briefing on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on HIV, TB, and Malaria