

Operational Update: Important Considerations for COVID-19 Response Mechanism Funding Requests

20 May 2021

Dear colleagues,

We would like to share some important updates for CCMs' consideration when developing C19RM Funding Requests, as these activities are critical in the fight against COVID-19:

The urgent need to **scale-up Antigen Rapid Diagnostic Tests for COVID-19**, and **Strengthening healthcare safety and Infection Prevention and Control**.

We also include key considerations for CCMs to **ensure submission of all mandatory documents of C19RM Funding Requests to facilitate a faster review**.

Thank you for your time reviewing this update and do not hesitate to contact your Country Teams should you have any questions.

Best regards,

The Global Fund

Scaling up COVID-19 Diagnostics using Antigen Rapid Diagnostic Tests (Ag RDTs)

The Global Fund has issued a [Briefing Note](#) to support countries' decision-making process when **including Ag RDTs in C19RM Funding Requests**, to encourage CCMs to consider the proactive scale-up of Ag RDTs as part of plans to decentralize COVID-19 testing services.

Ag RDTs play a critical role and their scale-up addresses the urgent need for **wider access to COVID-19 diagnostics** in diverse clinical and non-clinical settings, particularly as demand outstrips current laboratory capacities.

Implementing countries are strongly encouraged **to ensure that national testing policies for COVID-19 explicitly address whether non-laboratory staff**, specifically health care workers at facility level, lay cadres including community health workers and village health workers, are authorized to conduct Ag RDT testing and under what conditions. For example, considering training, quality assurance, supervision, biosafety and Infection Prevention and Control.

Depending on the national policy and strategy environment, the related testing policies should explicitly address task-shifting* within C19RM funding requests. The Global Fund will share WHO guidelines on this topic as soon as WHO makes them available on their website.

**Task-shifting refers to the redistribution of tasks among health workers, based on qualifications and skillset to make more efficient use of available human resources. For example, conducting tests would normally be a function for lab staff. However, this task can be shifted to nurses for tests that are of low complexity.*

Strengthening Healthcare Safety and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) through C19RM

Service disruptions during COVID-19 have highlighted the need to establish and maintain strong healthcare infection prevention and control (IPC) programs to protect healthcare workforces and patients, as well as to maintain access to essential health services.

To further strengthen health systems, it is important to carefully consider what activities should be prioritized for C19RM funding so that they result in resilient, self-sustaining programs after COVID-19.

IPC is much more than PPE

IPC is a unique program requiring:

- 1) specialized technical expertise and experience at national, sub-national, and facility levels.
- 2) program implementation approaches with monitoring and quality improvement.
- 3) policies, budget, and buy-in from leadership and
- 4) sufficient and correct use of commodities.

The Global Fund's [C19RM Technical Information Note](#) outlines in Annex 5 a list of activities to prioritize for each of the above-areas, which CCMs are encouraged to read in full.

C19RM Funding Requests – Key Considerations

As the Global Fund Secretariat receives C19RM Fast-track and Full Funding Requests, CCMs are reminded to ensure that **all mandatory documents are submitted with their requests.**

Lessons learnt from funding requests already received can be helpful for those CCMs currently preparing their proposals. We remind CCMs to ensure the following:

- The Funding Request C19RM Budget and the C19RM Health Products Management Template must be aligned with the C19RM Funding Request Form.
- Grant names into which C19RM funds will be signed into must be indicated in the documents.
- All CCM members must endorse both Fast-track and Full Funding Requests.
- National COVID-19 response coordinating body's endorsement must be provided for all Fast-track Funding Requests and for COVID-19 control and containment interventions of the Full Funding Requests.
- Any estimated available uncommitted funds and financial obligations (such as orders pending delivery) from the C19RM 2020 Award as at 30 June 2021, must be included in the C19RM Full Funding Request as part of the Funding Request C19RM Budget.

A complete application results in a faster review of the C19RM Funding Request. We appreciate your attention to this matter.

C19RM Resources

- Information Session for CCMs: [Recording](#)
- Step by step guidance on how to use the COVID-19 Health Product Management Template: [Recording](#).
- [Application Materials and other resources for C19RM.](#)