

Community Engagement Strategic Initiative Update

June 2022

Community Engagement in the COVID-19 Response Mechanism

2021 was an unprecedented year for the Global Fund. In addition to investing US\$4.2 billion annually to defeat HIV, TB and malaria the Global Fund committed an additional US\$3.2 billion to countries through its COVID-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM).¹

There is definitive evidence that community engagement is key in health priority setting and yields more positive outcomes.²

Yet, after the first round of C19RM funding requests in 2020, a Global Fund survey revealed suboptimal engagement. Less than half of respondents (46%) said they were consulted on what priorities should have been included in the C19RM funding requests. Barriers to meaningful engagement of communities in C19RM included limited technical assistance availability, difficulty accessing information (especially in languages other than English), few opportunities to convene consultations, and opaque timelines and processes (especially for non-CCM members).^{3,4}

Based on this learning, the Global Fund invested \$2.1 million to support meaningful community engagement in

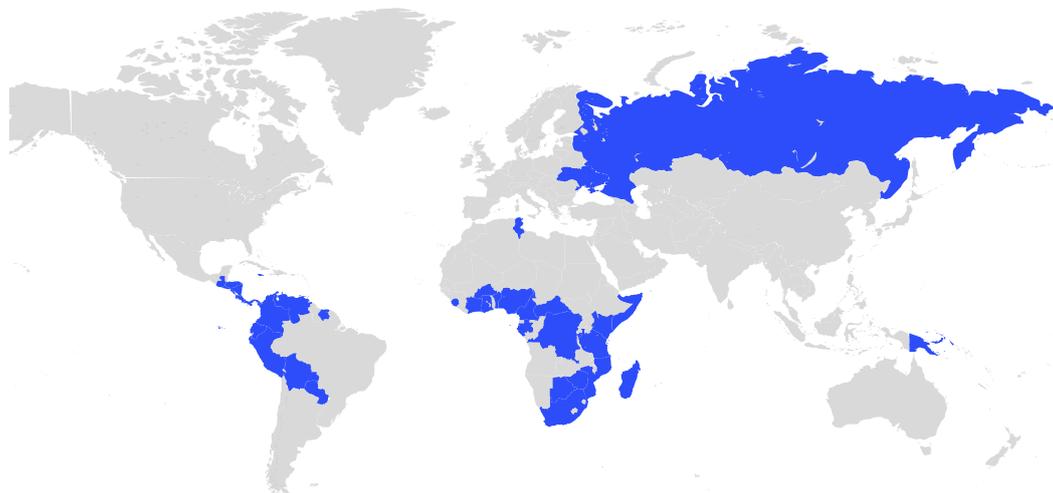
the development of C19RM funding requests in 2021. The rationale was clear: community engagement in C19RM was not satisfactory in 2020 and needed to improve.

The **Community Engagement Strategic Initiative's** architecture and partners were leveraged to support community engagement in C19RM in 2021. This included six out of 26 technical assistance providers, 12 key and vulnerable population networks, and six regional civil society platforms.

Between April and June 2021, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative technical assistance providers delivered 38 assignments in 31 countries and one multicountry grant in Latin America and the Caribbean (Figure 1). Twelve of these assignments supported

The existing architecture and partners of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative were leveraged to support community engagement in the Global Fund's C19RM in 2021.

FIGURE 1. Countries that received technical assistance for community engagement in C19RM.



civil society and community groups to conduct rapid assessments to inform program design in C19RM funding requests. Another 26 assignments supported priorities setting workshops where communities were guided on how to articulate their needs in the context of the COVID-19 Modular Framework and C19RM request template.

Complementary to the technical assistance provided, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners also gave direct support for C19RM community consultations in 64 countries (Figure 2). In many cases, the results of the rapid assessments supported through technical assistance helped guide the discussions during the consultations.



85% of C19RM technical assistance assignments were implemented online or through a hybrid format (online and face-to-face).

In 20 countries, global and regional key population networks supported their counterparts at country level to convene people who use drugs, sex workers, people living with HIV, women and girls in their diversity, men who have sex with men, transgender people, young people, TB survivors and activists, and civil society organizations working on malaria, to input into the C19RM funding requests.

In 14 countries, the regional platforms supported national civil society umbrella bodies or consortia of civil society groups to convene broad participatory spaces where non-governmental actors could help shape C19RM funding requests.

In 30 countries, key population networks and regional platforms worked together to foster meaningful engagement in C19RM. At times, these partners pooled resources to enable more participants to engage. In other countries, the key population networks supported several smaller constituency-specific consultations, that were then brought together for consolidation in national consultations supported by the regional platform.

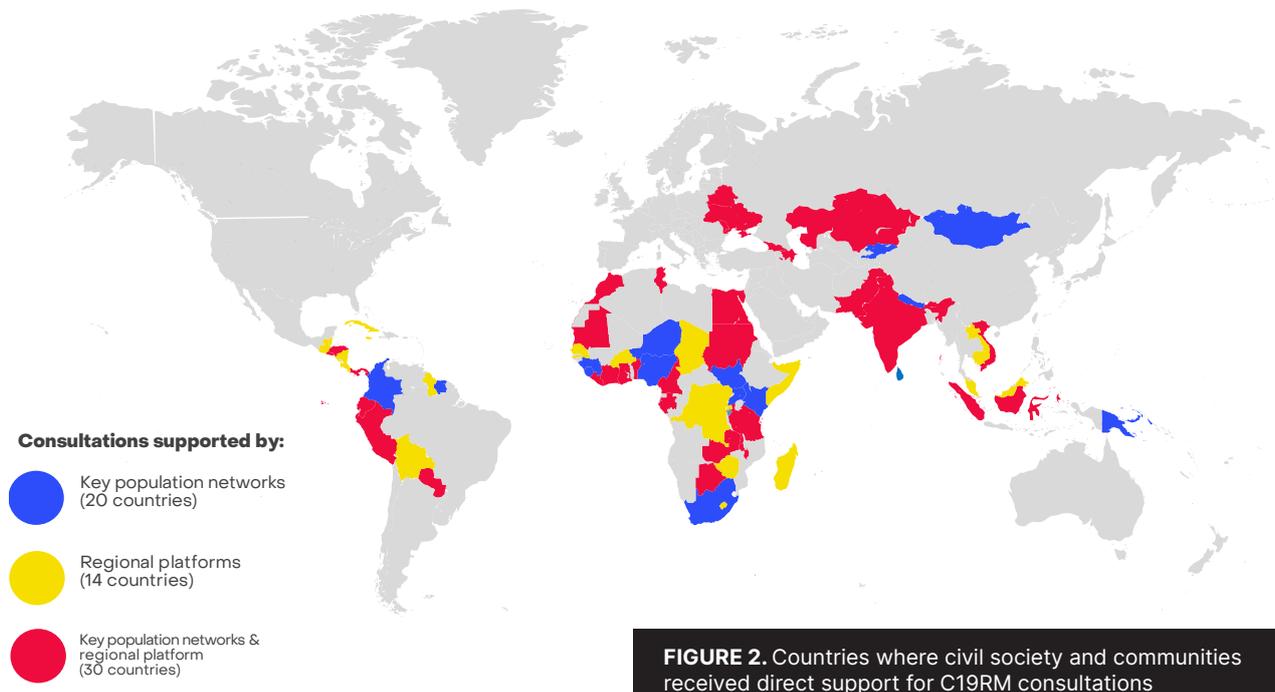


FIGURE 2. Countries where civil society and communities received direct support for C19RM consultations

To address information barriers, partners of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative developed several community-friendly C19RM tools and resources. Some partners translated the Global Fund’s C19RM guidance into **Russian** and **Arabic**. Others developed **recommendations** on gender-transformative and rights-based interventions that could be included in C19RM requests. Partners collaborated to create engaging animated videos that explained how to participate meaningfully in C19RM processes.

With so many moving pieces, coordination was critical. Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners met online on a weekly basis to update each other on their work and identify opportunities for collaboration. They also exchanged updates, tools and reports through a shared online calendar and resource folder.

Evidence of Effective Engagement and Stronger C19RM Funding Requests

In many countries, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners report* that community priorities were taken on board in C19RM requests. The inclusion of these community priorities strengthens C19RM grants, as the majority are technically sound and evidence-based interventions that are recommended in the Global Fund’s **C19RM Guidance Notes**.

In 2021, US\$122 million in C19RM funding was invested in six community systems interventions (gender-based violence, human rights, community-led monitoring, community-led advocacy and research, social mobilization, and capacity building) across 97 countries and 11 multicountry grants.⁵

NEPAL

In Nepal, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners supported consultations among men who have sex with men, male sex workers, transgender people, people who use drugs and young key populations. The resultant C19RM funding request included US\$5.1 million under the Ministry of Health and US\$980,000 under the civil society Principal Recipient, to expand community-based services for key populations. A further US\$500,000 was requested to address human rights violations and gender-based violence, and US\$111,000 to strengthen community-led monitoring.

INDONESIA

In Indonesia, four Strategic Initiative partners collaborated to support a total of 16 C19RM consultations, engaging 383 participants from 81 organizations. Emerging priorities included strengthening community-based services for key and vulnerable populations during COVID-19, community-based advocacy for COVID-19 vaccine uptake, strengthening psychosocial/post-support services for survivors of gender-based violence, temporary shelter and continuity of services for people with disabilities. The network of people living with HIV in Indonesia conducted an analysis of the final C19RM funding request and concluded that two thirds of the community recommendations were included, with the proposed budget allocation.

PERU

In Peru, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners supported a C19RM consultation with 69 participants across 10 regions. Community priorities included a human rights observatory to follow up on violations against key populations, inclusion of key populations in social protection programs and institutional capacity building of civil society organizations working on COVID-19.⁶ The Global Fund is now investing in these activities, including capacity building and community engagement in C19RM interventions, platforms to reduce stigma and discrimination and support for community-based monitoring, community involvement in awareness-raising campaigns on gender-based violence and human rights, and support for mental health of affected communities.⁷

SUDAN

In Sudan, several recommendations from consultations supported by Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners were included verbatim in the C19RM funding request.⁸ Communities asked for the development of a comprehensive multisectoral response strategy to gender-based violence, strengthening of the hotline services provided by the Ministry of Social Welfare, and the establishment of a national observatory to monitor cases and response to gender-based violence, all of which were included. Sudan's request earmarks \$4.6 million for community, rights and gender activities.

UGANDA

In Uganda, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners provided support to help key populations engage in C19RM funding request development. Key populations priorities were consolidated by the Uganda CCM. A number of the requested interventions were incorporated in the request, including US\$5.3 million for community, rights and gender activities.⁹

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- MOLDOVA** **In Moldova**, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners supported a local organization to conduct a needs assessment of prisoners in the context of COVID-19. They surveyed 320 current prisoners and 43 prison staff in 13 prisons, as well as 28 people who were recently released. The results were presented to and agreed with representatives of the National Administration of the Penitentiary System and were submitted to the CCM committee responsible for the development of the C19RM application. Five out of the six interventions proposed were included in the final C19RM request.
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- BOLIVIA** **In Bolivia**, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners supported four separate consultations with key populations (including female sex workers, men who have sex with men and transgender people), people living with HIV and people affected by TB. Priorities focused on addressing human rights violations and social support for key populations. The CCM Chair actively participated in the community consultations convened by Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners. Ultimately, 12 community priorities worth \$1.6 million were approved for C19RM funding.
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- UKRAINE** **In Ukraine**, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners supported women living with HIV to consult their constituency on the C19RM request. Four key priorities were included in the C19RM funding request, including psychosocial support for HIV-positive pregnant women. A total of \$767,766 was earmarked in the request for women living with HIV. In addition, the community of people in prisons and closed settings received short-term technical assistance to identify their needs. Twenty-three out of 43 proposed interventions were part of the final funding request.
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- SOMALIA** **In Somalia**, the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative provided short-term technical assistance to community representatives who had largely not been engaged in C19RM 2020. During 15 rounds of online meetings, more than 20 civil society organizations as well as key and vulnerable population members and their representatives, including pregnant women, internally displaced people, refugees, mobile populations, and people who inject drugs, engaged in a highly consultative process to identify, prioritize, budget and negotiate priority interventions. This resulted in 6% of the final funding request budget being set aside for community priorities.
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- CÔTE D'IVOIRE** **In Côte d'Ivoire**, the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative provided short-term technical assistance to a consortium of civil society organizations and networks working on HIV, TB and malaria. Focus group discussions with men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender people, people living with HIV, and former TB and COVID-19 patients complemented the consultation process among civil society organizations. Since the consultant formed part of the writing team, a good transfer of knowledge between consultations and funding request writing was ensured. According to the technical assistant requestor, all community priorities were included in the final C19RM funding request.
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*Examples are excerpts from Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partner reports. They are not independently verified by the Global Fund.

“Through the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative and the regional MENA Platform, we have successfully finalized the technical assistance allocated to us to support us in virtual consultation processes with civil society and communities. It is the first time that Somalia has fully engaged communities right from consultations, identifying priorities, apportioning a percentage of the funds for community interventions, and allocating activities to be implemented by the communities at the grassroots level.”

Ahmed Hassan
Global Fund Steering Committee, Somalia

“We are excited about the C19RM request that we have received, and at this point, will be prioritizing all the community-based and led activities. The Government’s human resources request is largely for community-level work, with high-level Government commitment for the long-term financing. This is an important turning point for Nepal’s health system development that will ultimately benefit communities.”

Nicole Delaney
Global Fund Portfolio Manager, Nepal

“Congratulations on behalf of the Global Fund’s Central African Republic Country. Great job. Thanks to the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative, UNAIDS colleagues in country and civil society representatives. We are confident about the alignment of investments included in the C19RM proposal with population’s needs.”

Juan Ramos Peris
Global Fund Senior Program Officer Central African Republic

“Thank you for the report. The support provided by the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative [to Côte d’Ivoire for C19RM engagement] has been a big help to the Country Team as we have been reassured that CSO voices were heard and their expressed needs included in the Funding Request.”

Paula Hacopian
Global Fund Portfolio Manager Côte d’Ivoire

“[The Global Fund allocated funds to leverage the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partnerships. This enabled] regional platforms to recruit a C19RM focal point and to develop tools and disseminate information on C19RM. Following the technical support received, the consortium of PLHIV and key populations were able to play a central role throughout the process, which led to the budgeting of priority community activities based on a deliverable that was shared with the CCM for inclusion in the funding request.”

Global Fund Observer
Burkina Faso’s C19RM Experience

“With the support of the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Platform and Socios en Salud, community consultants with knowledge of community systems facilitated the [C19RM] dialogue process with inclusivity and empathy. The coordination with the LAC Platform was helpful. They provided a toolbox that was very useful to see what we could use for social dialogues to make them more participatory, and to help prioritization.”

Corresponsales Clave
Peru’s C19RM Experience



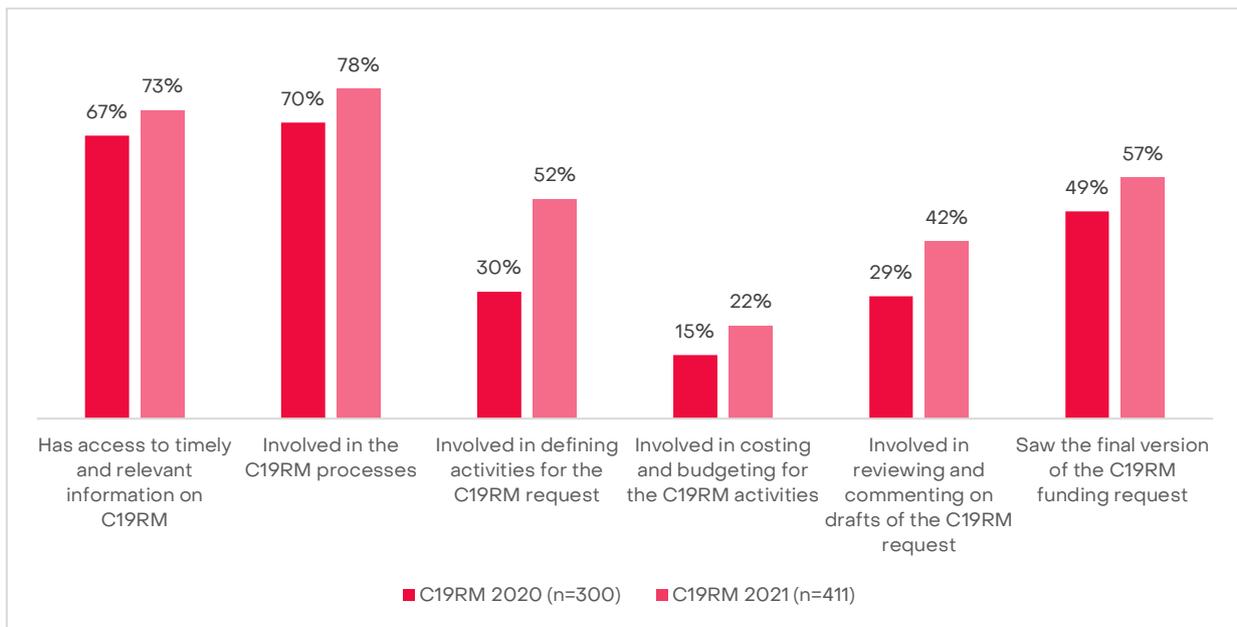
One in seven community members who accessed C19RM information in 2021 did so through the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative.

The many positive outcomes from Community Engagement Strategic Initiative support for community engagement in C19RM is also evidenced in Global Fund survey data (Figure 3). Although more remains to be done, there are encouraging improvements across a range of indicators on community engagement in C19RM.

The proportion of communities that were involved in defining activities for C19RM in 2021 nearly doubled compared to 2020. There were also notable improvements in the proportion of communities involved in costing and in reviewing C19RM requests.

Some of the most marked positive changes in C19RM engagement were among communities outside of CCMs, suggesting increased transparency of C19RM processes at country level. The proportion of non-CCM members who had access to C19RM information increased from 35% in 2020 to 55% in 2021 (a 57% increase). The proportion of non-CCM members who saw the final C19RM funding request increased from 16% in 2020 to 37% in 2021 (a 130% increase).

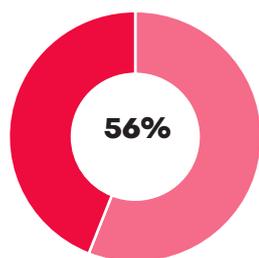
Figure 3. Self-reported levels of community engagement in C19RM funding requests, 2020 and 2021



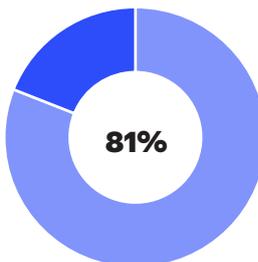
In March 2022, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) published its Audit of the COVID-19 Response Mechanism 2021.¹⁰ One of the key achievements and good practices that the audit identified was improved inclusiveness, specifically noting the strengthened engagement from leveraging implementers of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative. The OIG concluded that “community and civil society partners were strongly engaged in the process” highlighting the significant improvement compared to the previous year (Figure 4).¹¹

The OIG Audit of the COVID-19 Response Mechanism 2021 concluded that “community and civil society partners were strongly engaged in the process”, crediting implementers of the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative.¹²

Figure 4. Civil society and key populations’ engagement comparison, C19RM 2020 VS. C19RM 2021



C19RM 2020
CSOs & KVPs sufficiently consulted/engaged



C19RM 2021
CSOs & KVPs sufficiently consulted/engaged

Ongoing Support for Community Engagement in Global Fund and National Processes

Alongside supporting community engagement in C19RM in 2021, the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative maintained its ordinary business of ensuring the same in HIV, TB and malaria grants.

Short-term technical assistance program

In 2021, the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative completed 20 technical assistance assignments in 14 countries as well as four multicountry assignments. Another 14 assignments have begun implementation and are still ongoing (in nine countries and three multicountry assignments). Fifteen requests were received that were not eligible for support, and another three are ‘on hold’ for strategic timing reasons.

Technical assistance requests were received from all 10 Global Fund regions. The 20 assignments completed in 2021 supported the engagement of a broad range of populations: people living with HIV (n=10), men who have sex with men (n=10), sex workers (n=9), transgender people (n=9), people who use drugs (n=7), adolescent girls and young women (6), migrants (n=4), prisoners (n=3), TB affected communities in general (2) and miners (n=1). The Strategic Initiative is making specific efforts to increase TB and malaria technical assistance.

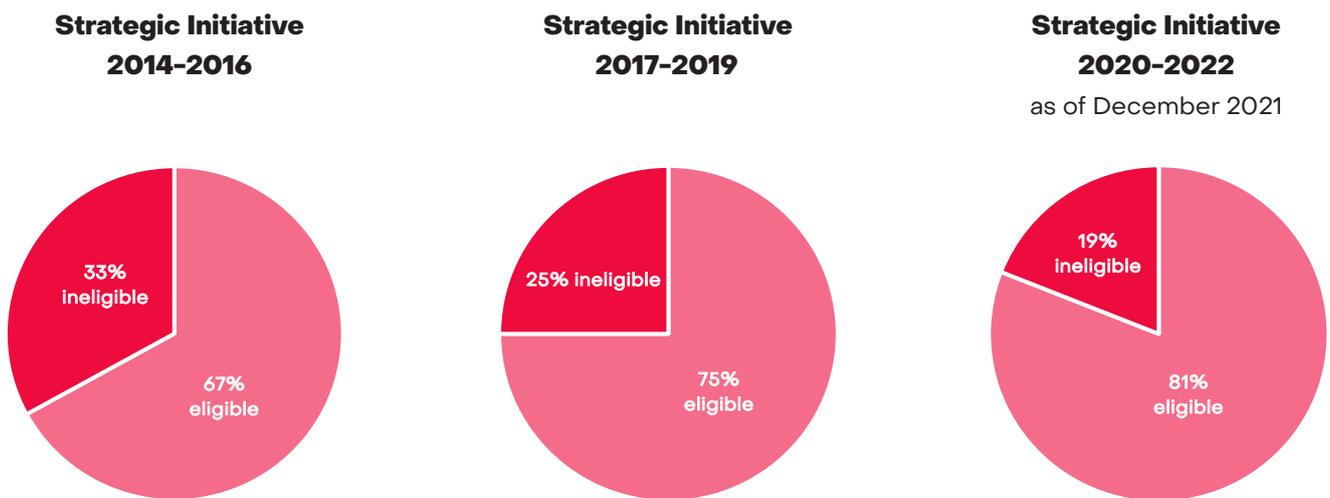
Three quarters (75%) of assignments focused on community engagement in HIV grants, with the remaining focused on engagement in malaria grants (10%), TB/HIV grants (10%) or all grants across a country (5%).

Table 1. Examples of Technical Assistance Delivered through the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative in 2021 (select assignments)

| COUNTRY/REGION | SCOPE OF ASSIGNMENT |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Djibouti | To review existing data and conduct community consultations to identify barriers and enablers for ARV adherence and retention among women living with HIV in their diversity. |
| Peru | To support the systematization of the community-led monitoring experience developed by the Antiretroviral Drug Supply Surveillance Group (GIVAR) since 2010. |
| Paraguay | To support key populations to participate in the development of a strategy and activities to address human rights and gender-related barriers to HIV and TB services. |
| Multicountry (MENA) | To support the meaningful engagement of key populations in the development of the MENA multicountry HIV funding request. |
| Niger | To support the analysis of services for men who have sex with men and sex workers to improve service delivery under the 2021-2023 HIV grant. |
| Mali | To capture communities' experiences with malaria in order to identify determinants and barriers in seeking and accessing care for people suffering from malaria. |
| Georgia | To support meaningful engagement of TB and HIV community groups in the development of the Georgia HIV/TB funding request. |
| Kenya | To undertake a rapid mapping to inform implementation of the Malaria Matchbox Tool and to prepare civil society organizations to meaningfully engage in the assessment. |
| Nepal | To assess the needs of children as part of the Global Fund HIV grant. |
| El Salvador | To support key and vulnerable populations to participate in the process of addressing Technical Review Panel comments. |
| Russia | To strengthen the participation of key community forums in Global Fund HIV grant implementation. |
| Burkina Faso | To strengthen the engagement of women and girls' community organizations, networks and groups in Global Fund processes. |
| Multicountry (LAC) | To ensure the involvement and participation of people who use drugs in Global Fund and related processes in 11 countries of the Multicountry HIV Latin America ALEP grant. |
| Côte d'Ivoire | To support a programmatic mapping on the size, location and risks of transgender people, and develop a comprehensive HIV prevention service package for this group. |
| Tanzania | To assess the barriers to HIV services faced by under 18 youths living with HIV and their mothers who use drugs to inform targeted advocacy. |
| Multicountry (Asia Pacific) | To support the development and dissemination of a resource manual on chemsex to inform HIV program design. |

The proportion of requests for technical assistance that are eligible for support continued to improve (Figure 5). This reflects greater efficiency both at country and at the Global Fund Secretariat levels, as less time and fewer resources go into the development and the review of ineligible requests. The improvement can be attributed to enhanced support from the regional platforms working with communities to conceptualize and draft high-quality requests. It is also linked to improved early engagement with the regional focal points and Global Fund Country Teams once a need is identified.

Figure 5. Proportion of technical assistance requests submitted to the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative that are eligible for support



“The Community Engagement Strategic Initiative is a very good example of how technical assistance can be coordinated between different partners e.g. through the tracker, which is maintained on a monthly basis. The quarterly technical exchanges are also very fruitful and a good occasion to share best practices. We also greatly appreciated the technical workshops organized by the Initiative for partners to align on community-led monitoring.”



“The engagement process has been encouragingly participatory. The TRP commends the support sought and received from the Global Fund Community Engagement technical assistance program, and is confident that the entire process of implementation of the strategy developed will be monitored closely and the actions taken forward. The barriers to access of services have been well articulated and defined and an action plan put in place.”



Long-term capacity strengthening of key and vulnerable population networks

In the 2020-2022 cycle, the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative is taking a more outcomes-focused approach at the country level to investing in community engagement. In 2021, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners articulated a number of projected outcomes for their respective investments through December 2023 including but not limited to:

Across six **HIV** key population networks:

- Stronger key populations representation in CCMs (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan and Nigeria).
- Ensuring key populations' priorities are included in HIV national strategic plans (NSPs) and Global Fund funding requests (Cameroon, Eswatini, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Indonesia, Malawi, Moldova, Nepal, Papua New Guinea and Pakistan).
- Community-led monitoring to inform program quality and design (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, South Sudan, Ukraine, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

Across four regional **TB** activist networks and organizations:

- Inclusion of costed action plans in TB NSPs (Cameroon, Ethiopia and Indonesia).
- Recommendations from the Stigma Reduction Assessment integrated into the TB NSP (Ghana).
- Development of a rights-based TB Isolation Policy (Nigeria).
- Stronger integration of community, rights and gender approaches in TB NSPs (Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam).
- Development of a multisectoral roadmap to enable the creation of the Multisectoral Accountability Mechanism (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan).
- Greater engagement of TB communities in TB decision-making spaces (Colombia, Paraguay and Peru).

For the global network of civil society organizations working on **malaria**:

- Community-led rapid assessments of barriers to accessing malaria services among pregnant women and children (Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria).
- Data-informed advocacy with CCMs and national malaria elimination programs to ensure that malaria NSPs and Global Fund funding requests address the needs of vulnerable communities (Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria).
- Systems in place to carry out routine community-led monitoring of malaria services to improve program quality (Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria).

An expected outcome from Community Engagement Strategic Initiative investments is for national strategic plans to be more inclusive of key and vulnerable populations' priorities.



The Global Fund and SCDI/Lê Văn Kiến

Towards achieving these objectives, several tools were developed by Community Engagement Strategic Initiative Partners in 2021. These include a **rapid community assessment guide** for malaria interventions, a **four-part video series** on the basics of engaging in CCMs, a **guide** on how to convene and run a community forum, translation of the transgender implementation tool (TRANSIT) into Russian, and a safety and security training for key populations groups.

Important strategic information was also gathered through a situational assessment of young people in 18 CCMs in Asia Pacific, as well as a rapid community assessment of malaria barriers for women and children in Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria.

Through Community Engagement Strategic Initiative support, community-led monitoring initiatives are supported in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and South Sudan (led by sex worker networks) and Nigeria (led by networks of people who use drugs). Sex workers in Papua New Guinea began doing community-led monitoring for the first time in 2021. Now, they have a team of trained peer consultants collecting data on availability and acceptability of services. Community data is being used to inform decision-making on how to strengthen Global Fund grant implementation.

Improved participation of people living with HIV (PLHIV) in Global Fund-related processes was evident in 2021. Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners established a PLHIV Forum in Pakistan, including key populations, women and young people, as a consultative body on differentiated service delivery guidelines and protocols. In Malawi, the Community Forum selected a new CCM representative and held orientation trainings for the new CCM members.

In 2021, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners supported TB communities in Cameroon, Ethiopia and Indonesia to establish stronger linkages with national TB programs. TB survivors and TB key populations engaged in different stages of the CRG

assessment process, including planning, validation of the findings and development of costed CRG action plans. In the Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) region, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners successfully advocated for more than 100 TB civil society and community representatives to be considered for inclusion as consultants on the WHO-Europe roster for National TB Program reviews. In Kyrgyzstan, national civil society partners successfully lobbied for adoption of a **standardized package of community-based TB services**.

Communication and coordination support through the six regional platforms

The regional platforms provide strategic communications support to improve Global Fund knowledge among civil society and community groups. Together, the six regional platforms reach an audience of nearly 90,000 contact points across a range of communication channels. Surveys demonstrate that the information shared by the regional platforms improves community knowledge of the Global Fund.¹³ A **geo-map** in Anglophone Africa, a **virtual map** in Latin America and the Caribbean, and a **social network mapping** in Asia Pacific help these contacts connect with one another.

Oftentimes, the platforms turn complex Global Fund information into more accessible and community-friendly formats. For instance:

- The six platforms collaborated with Women4GlobalFund to develop a **brief** on the opportunities for women to influence Global Fund processes at country level, including technical assistance programs. The brief has already been downloaded more than 100 times. In May 2021, the Technical Evaluation Reference Group (TERG) recognized that “recently, there has been a greater focus on the provision of technical assistance by the Global Fund to address key issues related to key populations and adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), including through Community Engagement and AGYW Strategic Initiatives.”¹⁴
- In September 2021, the LAC Platform translated the Technical Review Panel’s Window 5 Lessons Learned report into a **short infographic** (also in **Spanish**) with key messages for community organizations, including the need to increase ambition for HIV prevention towards the 2025 targets. The TERG has also noted that Global Fund “grants could benefit from strategic initiatives, the most relevant for HIV prevention being the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative.”¹⁵

Strategic capacity building initiatives helped communities in 25 countries

In 2021, the regional platforms helped communities submit 81 requests for technical assistance to improve the effectiveness of their engagement in Global Fund grants.

“Grants could benefit from strategic initiatives, the most relevant for HIV prevention being the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative” – Technical Evaluation Reference Group: Thematic Review on HIV Primary prevention, 2021

engage more effectively in Global Fund-related processes. The regional platforms supported needs assessments in six Asia-Pacific countries (with another nine planned for 2022), social dialogues in Honduras and Peru ahead of their Window 6 funding requests, readiness of community implementers during grant-making processes in Lesotho and Mozambique, and others.

Regional platforms convened webinars to share information about the availability of Global Fund-related technical assistance from the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative, the Community-led Monitoring Strategic Initiative, the CCM Evolution Strategic Initiative, the UNAIDS Technical Support Mechanism, BACKUP Health (GIZ), L'Initiative, and others. Webinars were complemented by the publication of **technical assistance directories**, as well as **case studies** that showcase particularly successful assignments. The platforms provided support to communities to conceptualize, draft and submit high-quality technical assistance requests.

Starting in January 2021, the Coordination Mechanism for the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative began integrated tracking of all Global Fund-related technical assistance that members provide to civil society organizations and community groups. The technical assistance tracker helps the regional platforms identify appropriate providers for country-specific needs. At the time of writing, the tracker includes more than 400 requests to 13 Global Fund technical assistance programs. The tracker also helps the platforms monitor and coordinate technical assistance demand and link to the most appropriate technical assistance provider. For instance, through the tracker, the regional platform for Francophone Africa became aware that UNAIDS is supporting Mali to develop its new HIV NSP for 2022-2026. The Platform is now helping community groups in Mali access technical support to engage in this process.

Several regional platforms facilitated peer learning and exchange forums to take stock of lessons learned and strategize for the future. Surveys show that regional platforms help communities to learn about effective engagement strategies in other countries that can be replicated or adapted.¹⁶ In April 2021, the LAC Platform convened a webinar to share lessons learned from funding request submissions in Windows 1-4, preparing countries for Window 5 and 6. In June 2021, the Anglophone Africa Platform developed and disseminated a regional lessons learned report for the 2020-2022 cycle. The report found that 87% of civil society organizations were involved in their country's funding request development, but only 34% felt they could be effective at raising issues.¹⁷ A regional webinar was convened thereafter where countries shared good practices, such as ensuring civil society is on the writing team.



The Global Fund/Karin Schermbrucker

Strengthening Community Engagement on Country Coordinating Mechanisms

In the 2020-2022 cycle, the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative and CCM Evolution Strategic Initiative are collaborating closely to strengthen community engagement in CCMs. Recognizing their experience and expertise, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners were pre-qualified as providers for technical assistance on CCM engagement. This was done through an integrated request for proposals between the two strategic initiatives. Sixteen Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners successfully applied to the CCM Hub and were offered indefinite quantity contracts as part of the CCM Evolution Strategic Initiative.

The first assignment took place in late 2021. The EECA Regional Platform identified a need for CCM engagement support in Kazakhstan. The CCM Evolution Strategic Initiative engaged TB Europe Coalition (TBEC) to provide technical support to people living with HIV, women living with HIV, sex workers and people who use drugs, to support their constituency elections for new CCM members. The CCM Hub provided very positive feedback about the technical assistance that Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners provided.

In early 2022, Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners were contracted to provide CCM election support to civil society and key populations constituencies in 20 more countries. This technical support will help respond to the Office of the Inspector General's CCM Audit Report, which found that membership and meaningful engagement of civil society and key populations is not optimal.¹⁸

The two strategic initiatives are coordinating with the Global Fund's technical partners as well as CCMs to encourage the use of Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners as technical assistance providers for CCM community engagement. For example:



Through coordination with the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative and the CCM Hub, GIZ will be engaging the Eastern Africa National Networks of AIDS and Health Service Organizations (EANNASO) to support nine constituencies (including four key and vulnerable population sub-constituencies) with membership renewal process in Tanzania in 2022.

-  The CCM in Madagascar engaged the Réseau Accès aux Médicaments Essentiels (RAME) to support its online CCM orientation. As host of the regional platform for Francophone Africa, RAME was able to tap into its vast network and quickly identify a qualified community consultant in Madagascar to support this work.
-  L'Initiative engaged the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition - Middle East and North Africa (ITPC-MENA) as part of a learning exchange between the Mauritania and Morocco CCMs, aimed at strengthening the functionality of the Mauritania CCM, including community engagement.
-  The CCM in Nepal requested the support of the Asia Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organizations (APCASO) to help review its governance manual and help the civil society and key populations entities organize a democratic process in electing their representatives.

Representation of key populations on CCMs was also expanded in 2021 through the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative. In Ghana, sex workers achieved observer status on the CCM, with the promise of a full seat in 2023. The training provided by Community Engagement Strategic Initiative partners was integral to this achievement, especially how to use community-led monitoring data to make evidence-informed decisions. In 19 regions of Ukraine, a total of 26 people who use drugs, including seven women, became part of regional and municipal CCMs in 2021. The collection and discussion of gender-disaggregated data at CCM level is helping to address barriers to access for women who use drugs.

**Visit the Global Fund's
Community Engagement Website to Learn More**

<https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/funding-model/throughout-the-cycle/community-engagement/>

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