

## FOCUS ON

# Building Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health



Robust health systems are not only essential to ending HIV, TB and malaria as epidemics, but they yield broader outcomes, delivering health care in a sustainable, equitable and effective way. Resilient and sustainable systems for health accelerate progress toward universal health coverage, and help countries prepare for emerging threats to global health security.

The Global Fund recognizes the centrality of strong health systems to achieve its mission. Global Fund investments significantly contribute to building resilient and sustainable systems for health, supporting countries in a wide range of areas that include: improving procurement and supply chains; strengthening data systems and data use; training qualified health care workers; building stronger community responses and systems; and promoting more integrated service delivery so people can receive comprehensive care throughout their lives.

## The Challenge

The 2014-2015 Ebola outbreak in West Africa delivered the hard lesson that strong health systems are essential to prevent or mitigate the impact of infectious diseases and health emergencies. Countries with stronger systems like Nigeria quickly contained the outbreak, while those with ill-equipped systems – such as Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea – were overwhelmed. In addition to causing tragic deaths and suffering, infectious disease crises have substantial economic impact. The Ebola outbreak killed more than 11,000 people and resulted in US\$2.8 billion in economic losses.

Resilient and sustainable systems for health are also our defence against the growing global menace of antimicrobial resistance. Antimicrobial resistance, including drug-resistant malaria and multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, could erode progress against malaria, tuberculosis, HIV and many other infectious diseases. Containment strategies require a comprehensive approach and strong engagement at all levels of the health system.

## The Global Fund Response

The Global Fund Strategy 2017-2022 reaffirms our commitment to invest vigorously in building resilient and sustainable systems for health. For the first time, support for resilient and sustainable systems for health has been elevated to the level of a strategic objective. We are implementing our new strategy on health systems through grant allocations as well as by supporting special initiatives as part of the new catalytic funding mechanism. Global Fund investments in the treatment and prevention of HIV, TB and malaria improve the response to those diseases, while improving overall health systems by boosting the quality of care, data tracking and services; cross-cutting investments in the health system, likewise, strengthen the delivery of HIV, TB and malaria services. This mutually reinforcing relationship between funding disease control and overall system improvement typifies Global Fund investments.

## The Multiplier Effect

Investments in HIV, TB, malaria and strengthening health systems have a powerful multiplier effect not only on people's overall health status, but also on countries as a whole. A recent Lancet Commission report showed that in low- and middle-income countries, health improvements drove one-quarter of full income growth in developing countries between 2000 and 2011. For years, HIV, TB and malaria placed extreme strain on already overstretched health systems in developing countries. Greater control of HIV, TB and malaria has reinvigorated health and hospital systems, and led to more productive communities. Worldwide, approximately 70 percent of the decline in deaths of children under 5 since 2000 are due to the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases.

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*Lancet Commission Global Health 2035.*

### Our Strategy 2017-2022 outlines seven areas of work in building resilient and sustainable systems for health

- ▶ Strengthen community responses and systems
- ▶ Support reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and platforms for integrated service delivery
- ▶ Strengthen global and in-country procurement and supply chain systems
- ▶ Leverage critical investments in human resources for health
- ▶ Strengthen data systems for health and countries' capacities for analysis and use
- ▶ Strengthen and align to robust national health strategies and national disease-specific strategic plans
- ▶ Strengthen financial management and oversight



A community health worker in Sierra Leone draws blood from a young boy to conduct a malaria test. With the support of the Global Fund, Sierra Leone is developing a strategy to more effectively deploy and train the country's 15,000 community health workers.

## Universal Health Coverage

The Global Fund's work to build stronger systems for health aligns with the priorities of domestic governments by supporting national health strategies and disease-specific national plans. Universal access to health care is a critical component of the mission to end epidemics. In many countries, people cannot access health care, testing and treatment because they are unable to pay, live too far from health services, or are denied access due to discrimination or stigma. The Global Fund and its partners seek to knock those barriers down, by making health services more financially sustainable and thereby increasing their availability and accessibility, improving access and supporting countries in their progress towards universal health coverage.

In Rwanda, the Global Fund supports expanded community-based health insurance and provides support for performance-based financing, which covers HIV, TB, and malaria. Senegal and Kenya have worked with the Global Fund to find efficiencies in their delivery of services and health insurance coverage, boosting both coverage and sustainability of their respective health systems. The Global Fund also partners with the private sector to improve the financial and risk management practices of its implementing partners.

## Improving Procurement and Supply Chains

Efficient procurement and supply chain systems are a pillar of strong health systems and are critical to achieving universal health coverage. The Global Fund is investing in improving and integrating supply chains and pharmaceutical management, and is developing a supply chain strategy and implementation plan to significantly improve product availability, reduce product waste and supply chain costs, significantly improve forecast accuracy and increase inventory turnover. In Nigeria, the Global Fund is working with the government and partners to address structural problems, reduce costs and improve efficiency of supply chains.

Since the Global Fund began investing heavily in procurement four years ago, an expanded pooled procurement mechanism now covers 60 percent of procurement supported by the Global Fund and has saved more than US\$650 million. That is money that countries now use to save more lives and improve systems. On-time and in-full deliveries increased to 80 percent in 2016 for the pooled procurement mechanism, at levels achieved in the private sector.

## Gathering and Using Quality Information

Data is the foundation of a strong health system. The Global Fund has invested in better information systems in implementing countries, working with partners to collect critical sub-national data, including for key populations and specific sub-groups – members of the general population that are simultaneously most affected by the diseases, excluded from appropriate services, and subject to human rights violations. In some countries, it means a network of mobile phones at community-level clinics used to collect diagnostic, treatment and drug delivery information. In others, it means sophisticated laboratory analysis data. Global Fund-supported programs often finance the integration of multiple data collection systems into one national health management information system to improve decision-making. The use of quality data allows governments to respond quickly to an emerging public health crisis and to deliver the highest quality services. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Global Fund and partners are supporting the implementation of a health management information system to boost the collection and use of disaggregated and real-time data. Better use of data empowers countries to inform policies and improve decision-making.



# 40,000

HEALTH EXTENSION WORKERS

Ethiopia has created strong systems for health, combining solid infrastructure with skilled health workers, reliable information and logistics to deliver quality health care to its people. With support from the Global Fund, the country has trained over 40,000 health extension workers.

## Training and Retaining Health Workers

Health systems face the challenge of maintaining an adequate workforce. Training health workers through both pre-service and in-service opportunities is key to building resilient health systems. In Zimbabwe, the Global Fund has financed an emergency health worker retention scheme to reverse the brain drain of health care staff from the country due to its economic decline in 2008-2009.

Health workers play the critical role of bringing services to the people – particularly at the community level. In Senegal, community health workers have transformed health care delivery by providing lifesaving treatment in hard-to-reach rural areas where health facilities are either under-resourced or nonexistent. The Global Fund's investments in Senegal support the country's commitment to expanding health services deeper into its underserved communities, an initiative that has deployed more than 25,000 community workers.



Efficient procurement and supply chain systems are a pillar of strong health systems. In Mozambique, the Global Fund is working with the government to refurbish provincial storage facilities in poor condition, outsource transportation to improve delivery of medicines and train warehouse employees in supply chain management.

## Focus on the Person, Not the Disease

The Global Fund increasingly provides HIV, TB and malaria prevention and treatment programs through community service delivery points that provide a range of services – not just focused on the three diseases. The aim is to address an individual's multiple health needs at different points in their lives, improving overall health outcomes and resulting in a more cost-effective and efficient approach. The Global Fund recognizes the importance of this integrated approach to improve impact, as well as the vital

link between health services and community responses, particularly in efforts to reach key populations and vulnerable people who do not always go to health clinics because of stigma. In Afghanistan, the Global Fund is working with the government and partners to support the expansion of Family Health Houses, which integrate health services such as antenatal, maternal and new-born care and immunization for children. In Ukraine, Global Fund grants are supporting patient-oriented prevention, treatment and care of people living with HIV and TB.

## Supporting Communities

The Global Fund supports the role of communities in designing effective interventions, implementing and evaluating health services, and in helping reach those who may lack access to health care, particularly the most vulnerable or marginalized. The Global Fund's investments are supporting countries to better integrate community systems and responses in long-term national health plans, with a focus on sustainability.

## About the Global Fund

The Global Fund is a 21st-century organization designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics. As a partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and people affected by the diseases, the Global Fund mobilizes and invests nearly US\$4 billion a year to support programs run by local experts in more than 100 countries. The Global Fund's operating costs are approximately 2 percent of grants under management, reflecting an exceptionally high degree of efficiency. By challenging barriers and embracing innovative approaches, we are working together to better serve people affected by the diseases.

February 2018

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