

THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

# FINAL INVESTIGATION REPORT OF SUB-RECIPIENT PADAKHEP MANABIK UNNAYAN KENDRA (PMUK)–BANGLADESH

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the Global Fund to Fight 1. AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (The Global Fund) provides the results of an investigation conducted between May 2011 and March 2012 by the Investigations Unit of the OIG of Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra (PMUK), a non-governmental organization (NGO) that received US\$5.2 million in Global Fund financing as a Sub-Recipient (SR) and Sub-Sub Recipient (SSR) under several Global Fund grants in Bangladesh. The OIG investigated PMUK expenditures in its role as SR financed under HIV/AIDS Rounds 2, 6, and a Rolling Continuation Channel (RCC) as a result of irregularities found in multiple audits performed first by the Principal Recipient (PR) Save the Children USA (SCUSA), and then confirmed by the OIG Audit Unit. The OIG Investigations Unit was referred the matter by the OIG Audit Unit after an OIG audit and several audits by the PR. The OIG Investigation identified a number of further acts of misappropriation, which are identified herein. Beyond what was identified through these audits, the OIG investigation has identified a fraud scheme that was executed from 2004-2009 that resulted in at least a loss of grant funds in the amount of US\$1, 894,426, or 52% of the funds disbursed to this entity. Because the investigation is continuing with respect to other entities and recipients in Bangladesh, this report is final only as it concerns PMUK. Other parties will be addressed in the final report on Global Fund grants to Bangladesh, as necessary and as appropriate.

2. As a result of its investigation efforts, the OIG finds that the nature, extent, and prolonged continuation of the fraudulent scheme perpetrated by PMUK, coupled with PMUK's efforts to continuously interfere with efforts by SCUSA and the OIG to investigate the grants, presents a significant risk that the full amount disbursed to PMUK in its role as SR in the years 2004-2009–US\$3,625,428 was misappropriated, and that the full amount may be subject to repayment to the Global Fund. This amount should be recovered unless PMUK can justify that the funds were used in furtherance of grant purposes, as required by the Grant Agreement between the parties.

3. Notwithstanding the uses of amounts of grant funds that remain unknown, the OIG identified that between November 2004, the first months that PMUK received Global Fund financing, through and including December 2009, approximately, PMUK engaged in a scheme to divert at least US\$1,894,426<sup>1</sup> or 52%, of the US\$3,625,428<sup>2</sup> of Global Fund grant funds disbursed to PMUK as an SR under the HIV/AIDS program in this time period, from program purposes. To conceal this diversion, PMUK fabricated documents for submission to SCUSA, the Management Agent (MA) during this time period, including a set of manufactured books and records to justify withdrawals that never actually took place, and then withdrew funds separately. The fictitious books and records included: (i) fabricated and falsified bank statements; (ii) accounting journals maintained for recording the false program expenditures and activities in detail; (iii) falsified bids and invoices for purchases of services and goods by third party vendors that did not in fact occur; and (iv) copies of cheques allegedly issued to vendors that were never actually issued or presented for payment. All of these documents were created to attempt to justify the expenditures as having a legitimate program purpose, when in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> BDT 127,429,347

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> BDT 244,601,839

fact, they did not occur as presented, and PMUK instead withdrew the funds and diverted them to unknown locations. The minimum losses sustained by the program have been calculated to be US\$1,894,426 under this aspect of the scheme, which constitutes the amount of fabricated documentation but which did not in fact occur, with PMUK instead withdrawing the funds and diverting them to unknown locations.

4. While the diversion of the program funds was well-concealed through a scheme of creating documentation that appeared on its face generally complete and mutually consistent, upon closer examination, indicators of fraud were evident. For example, typographical and arithmetic errors appeared on the forged bank statements provided by PMUK. In addition, vendors who allegedly provided goods and services under the program confirmed in several instances that the bids and invoices bearing their companies' names were not authentic, that the vendors never provided the services/goods, and that these entities never actually received the money.

5. Besides concealing the diversion through fraudulent books and records, PMUK also actively attempted to thwart any discovery of the scheme by systematically undercutting efforts by SCUSA and the OIG to audit and investigate the funds. From at least September 2010 through June 2011, PMUK repeatedly refused first SCUSA's external auditors, and then OIG investigators, access to genuine National Credit and Commerce Bank (NCC Bank) bank statements. In addition, in June 2011, PMUK staff attempted to withhold electronic records from the OIG by misrepresenting their availability, by denying the OIG access to the records, attempting to remove records from the OIG's possession, and intentionally avoiding OIG investigators.

6. Finally, since July 2011, when the OIG uncovered and shared with relevant parties evidence of this fraudulent scheme, PMUK has nevertheless continued to defy efforts by SCUSA and the Global Fund to safeguard Global Fund funds. First, it did not accept termination as an SR and acted aggressively in response. Second, it contested SCUSA's efforts to take over management of PMUK's Drop-In-Centers (DICs) and Sub-Sub Recipients (SSRs) by threatening the Country Director with expulsion.

7. The OIG has not identified the current location of the misappropriated sums, nor has PMUK responded to this report to identify the uses to which these funds were put. Indeed, PMUK has not commented substantively on the report at all, while having been provided a copy of the document well in advance of release. As described in more detail herein, PMUK has interfered with the investigation and failed to cooperate fully with it. In that regard, the OIG has followed due process by providing the relevant entities, the subjects, PMUK's managing officers, the Bangladesh CCM and the Secretariat with copies of the report well in advance of release, allowing full opportunity to comment. Comments received were taken into consideration prior to finalizing the report.

8. The OIG makes recommendations contained in the Conclusion at the end of the Report.

# II. GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

## III. OIG INVESTIGATION

9. The Investigations Unit of the OIG is responsible for conducting investigations of fraud, abuse, misappropriation, corruption and mismanagement (collectively, "fraud and abuse") that may occur within the Global Fund and by PRs and SRs, (collectively, "grant implementers"), Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs), Local Fund Agents (LFAs), as well as third party vendors.<sup>3</sup>

10. OIG investigations aim to: (i) uncover the specific nature and extent of fraud and abuse of Global Fund funds, (ii) identify the staff or private entities implicated in the schemes, and (iii) determine the amount of funds misappropriated. OIG investigations establish findings of fact upon uncovering "credible and substantive evidence" of that fact. This standard that is akin to the "more likely than not" (greater than 50 percent likelihood) administrative standard used by the community of International Organizations and Multilateral Institutions.<sup>4</sup>

11. The OIG is an administrative body with no law enforcement powers. It cannot issue subpoenas or conduct criminal prosecutions. As a result, its ability to obtain information is limited to the rights the Global Fund reserves vis-à-vis the entities contractually and on the willingness of witnesses and other interested parties to voluntarily provide information. The OIG can, however, coordinate with law enforcement to obtain evidence if the need arises.

12. Upon concluding its findings, the OIG makes recommendations to the Global Fund for recovery of losses, administrative action in relation to misconduct of Global Fund staff, and sanctions/debarment of vendors, as appropriate. It also provides the Global Fund Board with an analysis of lessons learned for the purpose of preventing future harm to grants due to fraud and abuse. Finally, the OIG makes referrals to national authorities for prosecution of any crimes or other violations of national laws, and supports such authorities as necessary throughout the process.

## A. RELEVANT CONCEPTS OF FRAUD AND MISAPPROPRIATION

13. The Global Fund Code of Conduct for Suppliers provides the following definition of the relevant concept of misconduct:<sup>5</sup>

"Fraudulent practice" means any act or omission, including a misrepresentation that knowingly or recklessly misleads, or attempts to mislead, a person or entity to obtain a financial or other benefit or to avoid an obligation.

14. The International Financial Institution Anti-Corruption Task Force provides similar definitions.<sup>6</sup> Another relevant concept of criminal law is:

<sup>4</sup> See Uniform Guidelines on Investigations, available at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Global Fund Charter and Terms of Reference for the Office of the Inspector General, available at http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/oig/TheCharter.pdf

http://www.un.org/depts/oios/pages/uniformguidelinesenglish.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> <http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/business/CodeOfConduct.pdf>

"Misappropriation" means the intentional, illegal use of the property or funds of another person for one's own use or other unauthorized purpose, particularly by a public official, a trustee of a trust, an executor or administrator of a dead person's estate, or by any person with a responsibility to care for and protect another's assets (a fiduciary duty).

### **B. EXCHANGE RATE**

15. This report describes amounts in United States Dollars (US\$), with the Bangladesh Taka (BDT) being noted where appropriate, for ease of reading. For the purposes of comparison and conversion the exchange rate BDT 67 to US\$1 has been utilized, unless otherwise specified.<sup>7</sup>

### C. DUE PROCESS

16. Prior to this Report's publication on the OIG's website, the relevant substantive sections of this Report have been made available to relevant entities for comment, including the PMUK, the Bangladeshi CCM, Save the Children, the Global Fund Secretariat and the Global Fund Legal Unit, consistent with the procedures of the Global Fund and the due process requirements upon the OIG. No entity has challenged the substance of the report. PMUK was provided a PDF copy of the draft report, and was allowed an extension of time to review it. PMUK responded, but did not provide substantive comments. SCUSA had one substantive comment concerning the precise role of SCUSA in the grant programs. This change was accepted.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> <u>http://www.adb.org/Documents/Reports/IFI-TaskForce-on-Anticorruption/IFI-TaskForce-on-Anticorruption.pdf</u>, signed by the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, International Monetary Fund, Inter-American Development Bank, and World Bank. The relevant definition is: - A fraudulent practice is any act or omission, including a misrepresentation, that knowingly or recklessly misleads, or attempts to mislead, a party to obtain a financial or other benefit or to avoid an obligation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Based on historical exchange rates, <<u>http://www.oanda.com/currency/historical-rates</u>>. Strikes a balance between the average rates between November 2004 and March 2011 (66.63) and the average rates between August 2005 and March 2011 which reduces the effect of the sharp decline in the BDT rates during late 2004-early 2005, (67.35).

# IV. BACKGROUND: HIV/AIDS GRANTS IN BANGLADESH

17. To date, Bangladesh has received five HIV/AIDS grants from the Global Fund, as indicated in the table below. In total, US\$82 million has been committed to various entities in Bangladesh for HIV/AIDS programs.<sup>8</sup> PMUK was a sub-recipient under each of these grants.

HIV/AIDS Grant Round	Grant Title and Number	PR	Total signed Amount (USD)	Phase and Status	PMUK as SR
2	Prevention of HIV/AIDS Among Young People <i>BAN-202-G01-H-00</i>	MOF	19.6 million	Phase II - Closed	Yes
2/RCC	Expanding HIV/AIDS Prevention in Bangladesh <i>BAN-202-G11-H-00</i>	MOHFW	3.35 million	RCC I - In Progress	Yes
2/RCC	Expanding HIV/AIDS Prevention in Bangladesh <i>BAN-202-G12-H-00</i>	SCUSA	26.8 million	RCC I – In Progress	Yes
2/RCC	Expanding HIV AIDS Prevention in Bangladesh <i>BAN-202-G13-H-00</i>	ICDDR'B	12.2 million	RCC I – In Progress	Yes (and ongoing)
6	HIV Prevention and Control among High-Risk Population and Vulnerable Young People in Bangladesh <i>BAN-607-G08-H</i>	MoF	20.2 million	Phase II - Closed	Yes

#### List of Global Fund HIV/AIDS Grants to Bangladesh9

18. The Round 2 HIV/AIDS Grant: "Prevention of HIV/AIDS among young people in Bangladesh" commenced in March 2004 and was closed in November 2009. Upon inception, the grant was approved to the upper-ceiling value of US\$ 19.7 million. The Economic Relations Division (ERD), of the Ministry of Finance (MoF), of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) was the PR for this grant due to Bangladeshi regulatory restrictions, while the actual implementing entity was the National AIDS/STD Programme (NASP)<sup>10</sup>, which operates under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) of the GoB. NASP is responsible for coordinating all stakeholders and development partners involved in HIV/AIDS program activities in Bangladesh. SCUSA was appointed Management Agent under contractual agreement with the MOHFW in this case.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> <u>http://portfolio.theglobalfund.org/en/Grant/List/BAN</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Global Fund external website, 13 April 2012.

<sup>10</sup> http://www.bdnasp.net/

19. The Round 6 HIV/AIDS Grant: "HIV Prevention and control among high risk population and vulnerable young people in Bangladesh" commenced funding in May 2007, and was consolidated into the RCC in December 2009. Here the ERD of the MoF was the PR, the MOHFW remained the implementing entity, and SCUSA was engaged as the Management Agent for the grant.<sup>11</sup>

20. The remainder of the Round 2 grants was rolled over into the RCC grants, which began in December 2009. Initially, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare functioned as PR under these Round 2 grants, however the PR-ship changed hands under the RCC grants. RCC grants were available only to those PRs who were invited by the CCM to apply, as the purpose of the RCC structure was to facilitate streamlined access to continued funding for strong performing grants that reached the end of Phase 2. Under the RCC, SCUSA shifted status from MA to PR.<sup>12</sup> NASP also again became a PR under Phase I of the RCC,<sup>13</sup> as did the International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research, ICDDR'B.

### A. PMUK'S INVOLVEMENT IN GLOBAL FUND GRANTS

21. PMUK has received a total of US\$5,195,139 from the Global Fund. It received the majority of funding, US\$5,167,235, for HIV/AIDS. Within the HIV/AIDS program, US\$4,820,889 of this was disbursed directly to PMUK in its role as an SR under Rounds 2 and 6 and the RCC. Besides serving as SR under the HIV/AIDS grants managed by SCUSA, PMUK also functioned as an SSR under other portions of these grants and received US\$211,781,<sup>14</sup> and as an SR under another HIV/AIDS PR, the ICDDR'B, where it received US\$134,564.

22. Besides its engagement on the HIV/AIDS portfolio, PMUK also served as SR under a Tuberculosis grant managed by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), under which it received US\$27,904.<sup>15</sup>

Disease Type	Principle Recipient /	PMUK's Role	Period of	BDT	Exchange	USD
	Management Agent		Disbursements		Rate	
HIV/AIDS	SCUSA	SR	Nov-04 to Jul-11	n/a	n/a	4,820,889
HIV/AIDS	SCUSA	SSR of BWHC	Nov-04 to Jul-11	14,189,345	67	211,781
HIV/AIDS	ICDDR'B	SR	Dec-09 to Apr-12	9,823,197	73	134,564
Tuberculosis	BRAC	SR	Sep-10 to Sep-11	1,926,389	69	27,904
		Total				5,195,139

Summary of Global Fund Funds which PM	<b>IUK Received in Total<sup>16</sup></b>
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Agreement for Management Services Agency between MOHFW GoB and SCUSA (Save the Children Federation Inc. Bangladesh Country Office), 13 March 2007

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> At the time of this report's publication, the Bangladesh office of SCUSA has changed name to Save the Children International (SCI). SCUSA, which is headquartered in Washington DC, USA, however, remains PR, and it outsources responsibilities to SCI-Bangladesh. For ease and consistency, this report continues to refer to SCI as SCUSA.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> At the time of the publication of this report, the status of NASP as PR is under discussion for Phase II financing.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> PMUK was also engaged as a Sub-Sub Recipient (SSR) for the implementation of Package 908, intended for "Expanding provision of Essential Services to Street, Hotel and Residence Based Female Sex Workers" under the SR Bangladesh Women's Housing Cooperative (BWHC).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> <u>http://portfolio.theglobalfund.org/en/Grant/List/BAN</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Note that exchange rates differ, as the numbers were provided to the OIG by the PRs and each PR has reported the US\$ equivalent using different exchange rates.

23. The OIG's investigation focused on the largest funding bundle, the US\$4.8 million, which SCUSA had disbursed to PMUK in its role as SR under the HIV/AIDS program. This financing was intended to finance two "packages" of services. Package 904 was intended to finance "Advocacy for creating enabling environment and reducing stigma and discrimination." Package 907 was intended to finance "Expanding provision of Essential Harm Reduction Services for Injecting Drug Users." The table below summarizes the Global Fund-financed bank accounts the OIG reviewed and into which the entire US\$4.8 million was paid.

Round	Pack-	Bank Name	Account Title	Account Number	Dates Used	
	age			(Valid)		
R-2	904	National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd.	Save the Children USA Fund	#0400082	Nov-04 to Sep-05	
				#0010505054	Dec-05 to Dec-07	
				#0325000313	Jan-08 to Nov-09	
R-6	904	National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd.	GF-904-R6, Scalling Up	#0325000975	Feb-08 to Dec-09	
R-6	907	National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd.	IDU-GFATM-Round 6	#0325000948	Jan-08 to Dec-09	
R-2	904	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	HIV/AIDS, GF 904 (R-2)	#01481200752	Nov-09 to Oct-10	
R-6	904	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	HIV/AIDS, GF 904 (R-6)	#01481200764	Nov-09 to present	
RCC	904	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	GFATM 904 HIV-AIDS RCC	#01481201006	Apr-10 to Jan-11	
R-6	907	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	GF-907	#01481200776	Oct-09 to Jan-11	
RCC	907	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	GFATM 907 HIV-AIDS RCC	#01481201018	Apr-10 to present	

#### List of Global Fund-Financed Accounts held by PMUK

Addresses:

National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd. Dhanmondi Branch, Quality Center, 744, Sat Masjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd. Ring Road Branch, BAitul Aman Tower (1<sup>st</sup> Floor), 840-841, Ring Road, Adabor, Dhaka-1207

24. Besides receiving financing from the Global Fund, PMUK has received funding from other donors for the implementation of programs in the areas of micro-finance; agriculture; education, child development and gender issues; heath, sanitation and nutrition; and prevention of HIV/AIDS. PMUK's website at the time of investigation listed 14 international (financing and other) donors:<sup>17</sup>

25. In addition, governments, commercial, not-for-profits as well as public sector entities such as GoB, Bangladesh Bank, Concern Worldwide, Grameen Trust, Practical Action of Bangladesh and SCUSA, among others, also support or have supported PMUK.

26. The President of the PMUK Executive Committee is also a principle—CEO and Legal Representative—at an organization named Kranti Associates,<sup>18</sup> which also reports receiving funds from the World Bank, ADB, IFAD, and the Government of Bangladesh.

## **B. PREVIOUS REVIEWS AND AUDITS OF PMUK**

27. Irregularities surrounding PMUK's financial management had begun to come to light in mid-2009: In June of that year, SCUSA identified as part of its SR monitoring visit<sup>19</sup> a number

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> See July 2011 PMUK official website www.padakhep.org. This information is no longer available on PMUK's website. The same information was repeated in PMUK's response on SCUSA's Financial Monitoring Report (issue date of the Report 3 May 2010) dated 12 May 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Available at http://www.bizearch.com/company/Kranti\_Associates\_322954.htm on 13 April 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> SCUSA's Internal Audit was conducted on 17 June 2009. See Internal Audit Follow-Up Report Padakhep SR 7 February 2010.

of financial irregularities at PMUK, such as the absence of supporting documentation for certain transactions and weak financial management.<sup>20</sup>

28. In response, in December 2009, SCUSA's Assurance and Risk Management Unit conducted a follow-up review of various activities and transactions undertaken by PMUK in the time period from October until December 2009, prior to the commencement of the consolidated RCC grant (December 2009).<sup>21</sup> As a result of SCUSA's review, a draft report was issued and shared with PMUK in February 2010. PMUK disagreed with the findings of SCUSA's report and informed the Global Fund Secretariat about its position.<sup>22</sup> SCUSA then engaged its Global Audit and Risk Services Unit to conduct further follow-up reviews of PMUK in March and April of 2010.<sup>23</sup> The final version of SCUSA's report relating to PMUK was issued in May 2010 and shared with the Global Fund. It identified irregularities in printing and furniture purchases, as well as related-party transactions; payments for activities which did not take place; and fabricated documents within tender/procurement processes.<sup>24</sup>

29. Further sampling undertaken by SCUSA in late April 2010 indicated that one of the procurements for furniture had potentially been fabricated.<sup>25</sup> PMUK provided invoices, delivery documents and cheque payments as supporting documentation for the payment made to the winning bidder; however this bidder confirmed that it had never submitted a bid, that it never issues quotations on letterhead pads, as provided in PMUK's documentation, and that it had never issued the delivery receipt for the goods.<sup>26</sup> The reviewers found no record of the payment of the US\$12,581<sup>27</sup> in the vendor's ledgers.

30. As a result of SCUSA's findings, SCUSA engaged A. Wahab and Co. Chartered Accountants (A. Wahab) to conduct a third party audit of PMUK. This audit took place in September 2010 and consisted of an institutional and capacity review of PMUK.

A. Wahab's audit report, issued in November 2010, identified several areas of concern. The auditors listed US\$32,713<sup>28</sup> in disallowed costs that had been charged to the program, having identified, among other findings, that (i) a set of documents related to the engagement of consultants were fabricated, and (ii) payment to Padakhep Printing, a sister company, for advocacy materials was in excess of fair market value and followed a procurement process which was not carried out at arm's length.<sup>29</sup>

32. Furthermore, the A. Wahab report noted that PMUK had not given the auditor access to (i) PMUK's financial information beyond the transactions identified by SCUSA; (ii) PMUK's procurement-related documentation for purchases that were within A. Wahab's Terms of Reference, but fell beyond the scope of SCUSA's original audit which preceded A. Wahab's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Memorandum dated 21 March 2011 from Artashes Mirzoyan to Jonathan Brown. Subject: "Notification of financial management irregularities and "disallowable" expenses at SR level under Bangladesh Round 2 RCC HIV grant: Bangladesh".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> 21 March 2011 memorandum, supra n.20

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Response of Padakhep Management Regarding Internal Audit Follow-up Report 22 February 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> PMUK's response on SCUSA's Financial Monitoring Report (issue date of the Report 3 May 2010) dated 12 May 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> SCUSA Sub recipient monitoring review report, 3 May 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Padakhep Review Vendor Visit Report, 28 April 2010. Vendor: OTOBI, Additional Findings Package 907

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> 28 April 2010 Padakhep Report, supra n.25

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> BDT 842,952

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> BDT 2,191,750

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> These findings had earlier been reported by SCUSA as well.

engagement; and (iii) key documents needed to confirm the existence of employment contracts and whether the salaries charged to the program were solely for the performance of duties related to Global Fund financed programs.<sup>30</sup> The report went on to state:<sup>31</sup>

"Management of PMUK would give better impression on organization's (sic) control environment if it could demonstrate more openness during this review exercise. Management's constant refusal to provide information on NCCBL bank- related transactions and denying authorization to confirm bank statement (sic) with the bank indicates that there could be serious anomaly (sic) in NCCBL bank related transactions. This also makes management's commitment towards transparency questionable."

A. Wahab's report included the following recommendation<sup>32</sup>:

33. "In our opinion, initiatives should be taken to further investigate PMUK transactions through NCCBL bank with particular focus on confirming that the bank statements provided to auditors in the past are checked and verified with the bank to make sure that they were genuine."

34. PMUK challenged A. Wahab's findings and complained about A. Wahab auditors' unprofessional manner during their visit as well as about not being given an opportunity to formally respond to the report.<sup>33</sup> A. Wahab and SCUSA both denied the assertions made by PMUK.<sup>34</sup>

## V. OIG EFFORTS

35. In May 2011, the OIG commenced a routine program audit in Bangladesh of various PRs and SRs who have been, or remain, implementers of Global Fund supported programs. PMUK was selected as one of those SRs to be subjected to audit. As SCUSA had provided the Global Fund Secretariat with the various audit reports, who then forwarded these to the OIG, the Audit Team was on notice of the patterns of irregularities and obstruction occurring at PMUK prior to initiation of the audit. Indeed, upon conducting its initial review, the OIG audit team identified additional red flags at an early stage of its sampling of several high-value transactions at PMUK under 907 package and 904 package activities. As a result, the matter was referred to the OIG's Investigations Unit, who initiated an investigation of PMUK.

36. As part of the OIG investigation, two missions were conducted in May and July 2011. The first mission focused on gathering relevant supporting documents on a sample of transactions for further analysis. Due to the large number of vouchers and transactions, a threshold of US\$1,000 was placed upon the transactions identified for collection, unless additional circumstances existed which warranted obtaining transactions below this threshold (e.g., evidence of procurement splitting, multiple payments to single vendor, suspicious elements visible on the face of documents etc.). The second mission, which took place in July 2011, focused on recovering original bank account transactional records (account statements

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> A Wahab and Co report dated 7 November 2010

 $<sup>^{31}</sup>$  A Wahab and Co report dated 7 November 2010, page 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> A Wahab and Co report dated 7 November 2010, page 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Email correspondence between PMUK, SCUSA and A. Wahab, December 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Email correspondence between PMUK, SCUSA and A. Wahab, December 2010.

and cancelled cheques) from NCC Bank and on interviewing key PMUK staff and multiple vendors who had been identified through the analysis of PMUK's procurement documentation.

## A. INTERFERENCE WITH OIG EFFORTS TO OBTAIN NCC BANK STATEMENTS AND OTHER GLOBAL FUND RECORDS

37. As part of its review, the OIG requested that PMUK assist the OIG in obtaining copies of statements for Global Fund-financed bank accounts directly from the banks, specifically from NCC Bank, in relation to which the A. Wahab auditors had experienced difficulty. Again, as A. Wahab auditors had experienced earlier, the OIG also witnessed systemic efforts by PMUK to prevent the OIG from obtaining the genuine bank statements from NCC Bank. The details of these efforts are outlined below:

38. On 26 May 2011, the OIG placed a request with PMUK's senior management to provide the OIG with the authorization to collect the NCC Bank statements pertaining to the Global Fund-financed activities directly from the bank. On 29 May 2011, the OIG was provided with an authorization letter signed by a PMUK official<sup>35</sup> requesting NCC Bank to provide the OIG with access to said accounts.<sup>36</sup>

39. Upon presenting the authorization letter to the bank on 30 May 2011, a representative of NCC Bank informed the OIG that requested information could not be provided before 1 June 2011 as the IT person with access to relevant information was not in the office on that day. On 1 June 2011, when the OIG called NCC Bank to enquire about the readiness of PMUK's bank statements, NCC Bank's official<sup>37</sup> informed the OIG that PMUK had revoked its approval for the OIG to access the bank information. The NCC Bank official further stated he could only show the letter of revocation to the OIG on 2 June 2011 between the hours of 11:00 and 12:00 at the bank's offices. The bank official, who asserted protection of client's interest, refused to provide the OIG with both the copy of PMUK's revocation letter and the contact information for his supervisor.<sup>38</sup>

40. On the same day, the OIG followed up with a visit to a senior PMUK official<sup>39</sup> to enquire about the denial of access to bank statements. However, the PMUK official said that he was unable to meet with the OIG until later in the evening.<sup>40</sup> Consequently, the OIG was not able to obtain the records on that day.

41. On 2 June 2011, the OIG again visited NCC Bank at the proposed time between 11:00 and 12:00. Here, another senior NCC Bank official<sup>41</sup> told the OIG that he was unaware of any developments regarding PMUK's bank statements and informed the OIG that the senior bank official who previously informed the OIG that access had been revoked<sup>42</sup> was away. He then made a call, and left a message. Within a few minutes, the OIG representative received a call

<sup>40</sup> OIG internal note by auditors

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> PMUK Executive Director

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Authorization Letter from PMUK to NCC Bank, 28 May 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> VP and Branch Manager

<sup>38</sup> OIG internal note by auditors

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Individual A

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Deputy Branch Manager

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> VP and Branch Manager

from a PMUK official<sup>43</sup> asking the OIG representative to meet at the PMUK official's office between 16:30 and 17:30 that day to discuss the issue of OIG's access to PMUK's bank statements, and asked the OIG representative to leave the NCC Bank.<sup>44</sup> The OIG had no choice but to accede to the demand.

42. At the meeting between the OIG and the PMUK official that same day,<sup>45</sup> the PMUK official stated that confusion among NCC Bank's management was the reason behind the OIG's difficulties in accessing PMUK's statements at the NCC Bank and that the PMUK official would arrange that the NCC Bank provide the information to the OIG no later than on 6 June 2011.

43. On 4 June 2011, the OIG had another meeting with a senior PMUK official<sup>46</sup> at PMUK's offices to obtain additional Global Fund records maintained on electronic media. Here, again, the OIG witnessed explicit efforts to frustrate the investigation. Upon requesting and receiving the permission of a senior PMUK official to obtain the records, the investigators began to seek out the relevant staff, only to be told that they had gone to lunch and were not available in the building. A visit, however, to the administration office uncovered that the staff were in fact present, and appeared flustered and otherwise occupied. The OIG was initially denied access to this office, but upon insisting upon the right of entry, the OIG witnessed a relevant staff member running and locking himself in another room. Again, PMUK staff requested the OIG to leave the area, but the OIG refused.

44. After some time, OIG team members were given permission to begin to retrieve the requested records, however the head OIG investigator was asked to speak again with the senior PMUK official. Here, the official alleged that the OIG had not complied with an earlier agreement to begin work only after office hours. This, however, had not been agreed to at any earlier meeting, and the OIG informed the PMUK official of this. During the OIG leadership's meeting with the senior official, PMUK staff again ordered the OIG team members to leave the room where record collection was ongoing. As the OIG team leader returned to this room upon hearing this news, it witnessed a PMUK staff member leaving the office with some of the relevant records. The OIG recovered these records immediately.<sup>47</sup> Ultimately, the OIG collected the records and returned them two days later.

45. The OIG effort to obtain original bank statements from NCC Bank continued: On 6 June 2011, an OIG representative called a PMUK official<sup>48</sup> to enquire on the status of accessing bank statements at NCC Bank. The PMUK official informed the OIG representative about having written a letter to the OIG on this issue as well as about PMUK's concerns over the OIG's audit procedures. The PMUK official highlighted that these concerns needed to be discussed prior to any access by the OIG to PMUK's accounts directly through the NCC Bank. Indeed, when another OIG representative called a senior NCC official, <sup>49</sup> he informed him that NCC Bank could not help the OIG with this matter.

- <sup>45</sup> Executive Director
- <sup>46</sup> Executive Director

<sup>48</sup> Executive Director

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Executive Director

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> OIG internal note by auditors

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Post-Mission Report, Bangladesh, 13 June 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> VP and Branch Manager

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46. On 6 June 2011, the OIG received a letter of complaint from PMUK in an email copied to a number of parties including the Health Secretary of MOHFW of GoB and SCUSA officials, alleging the inappropriate manner in which the OIG collected relevant records at PMUK's premises and arguing that the access sought by the OIG at NCC Bank was beyond what PMUK was legally bound to provide to the OIG.<sup>50</sup> On 15 June 2011, the Global Fund responded refuting the allegations and requesting that PMUK provide the OIG with immediate access to Global Fund grant-related accounts at NCC Bank.<sup>51</sup> SCUSA followed up with a letter demanding the same of PMUK on 16 June 2011.<sup>52</sup>

47. On 18 June 2011, a PMUK official wrote to the OIG mentioning receipt of both SCUSA's letter from 16 June 2011 and the Global Fund's letter to MOHFW. He expressed willingness to resolve the issue regarding the OIG's inability to access PMUK's bank statements directly from NCC Bank.<sup>53</sup>

48. On 19 June 2011, the OIG met with the PMUK official<sup>54</sup> and obtained the bank statements pertaining to Global Fund financed activities from the NCC Bank on the same day. Upon obtaining the genuine bank statements from NCC bank, it immediately became apparent that the statements did not match alleged copies of the same, which PMUK had provided to SCUSA as part of its reporting requirements over the years, and which PMUK had submitted as evidence of proper expenditures to the OIG. A detailed discussion of the OIG's findings follows.

49. It also bears mention that the OIG interviewed senior PMUK management who oversaw the grant funds throughout the period at issue. In interviews, PMUK management denied knowledge of the schemes, and did not identify any additional individuals involved in management of Global Fund money. This, considered in the context of the continued efforts to frustrate the OIG's ability to gather bank statements and Global-Fund related records, further demonstrates a lack of good faith on the part of PMUK to cooperate with the OIG or address the misconduct in its organization.

## VI. INVESTIGATIVE ANALYSIS

50. The OIG investigation has determined that, from the first months that PMUK received Global Fund financing in November 2004, up to, through and including December 2009, PMUK diverted at least US\$1,894,426<sup>55</sup> or 52%, of the US\$3,625,428<sup>56</sup> of Global Fund grant funds disbursed to PMUK in its role as an SR under the HIV/AIDs program in this time period to non-program purposes. In addition, PMUK undertook significant effort to conceal the diversion by fraudulently maintaining and submitting to SCUSA a set of fictitious and manufactured books and records to justify withdrawals that never actually took place. These fabricated books and records included, at least: (i) falsified bank statements; (ii) fictitious accounting journals maintained for recording the false program expenditures and activities in detail; (iii) falsified

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Letter sent by email was signed by the Executive Director of PMUK, Mr. Iqbal Ahammed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Email from the Fund Portfolio Manager to Secretary of MOHFW and Country Director of SCUSA, 15 June 2011

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> PMUK'S email to OIG on 18 June 2011

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Email from Executive Director to OIG auditor on 18 June 2011

<sup>54</sup> Executive Director

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> BDT 127,429,347. Based on blended/actual rates: see Table of Minimum Loss, infra paragraph 81
<sup>56</sup> BDT 244,601,839. See Table of Minimum Loss, infra paragraph 81

bids and invoices for the purported purchase of services and goods by third party vendors that did not in fact occur, and (iv) fictitious copies of cheques allegedly prepared for vendors that were never actually issued or presented for payment.

51. While the diversion scheme was well-concealed, with fabricated documentation that was generally complete and mutually consistent, red flags, or indicators of fraud, did exist. For example, unusual typographical and arithmetic errors appeared on the fake bank statements provided by PMUK. Vendors who allegedly provided goods and services under the program also confirmed in several instances that the bids, invoices, and cheques bearing their companies' names were not authentic, that the vendors never provided the services/goods, and that they never received the funds.

## A. DIVERSION OF FUNDS AND CONCEALMENT OF THE SCHEME

52. As part of its regular grant management process, SCUSA required PMUK to report on a regular basis on the technical and financial aspects of its Global Fund projects. PMUK was to provide reports on a quarterly and monthly basis<sup>57</sup> and either submit, or make available for review, supporting documentation for any receipt or expenditure of grant funds. As part of its reporting documentation, PMUK regularly submitted sections of what were allegedly copies of true and legitimate bank statements, reflecting the deposits and withdrawals on the Global Fund-financed accounts.<sup>58</sup>

53. Since SCUSA obtained all documents including bank statements directly from PMUK, SCUSA reviewers and auditors viewed a set of consistent documents that purported to reflect program-related expenses. On the one hand, supporting documentation indicated actual program expenses, such as vendor invoices for goods or services and copies of cheques issued to these vendors. On the other hand, the bank statements reflected these same expenses as withdrawals from the program bank account. A set of accounting "cheque books" also reflected this same universe of expenses/withdrawals, and further purported to confirm the flow of money for program purposes.

54. It was not until the OIG was able to obtain copies of the program's bank statements directly from NCC Bank that it became clear that the universe of documents— bank statement copies, accounting journals, bids and invoices, and cheques—did not accurately reflect the majority of withdrawals that were contained in the genuine bank account statements. It was clear that documents had been created to support the appearance of purported legitimate program expenses that did not in fact occur.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> SCUSA's Revised Protocol for Disbursement of Funds to Padakhep, 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> NCC Bank statements for account number 0010505054 as provided by PMUK to SCUSA within 904 (Round 2) and RCC financial reports; NCC Bank statements for account number 0011598005 as provided by PMUK to SCUSA within 904 (Round 6) financial reports; and NCC Bank statements for account number 0011586007 as provided by PMUK to SCUSA within 907 (Round 6) financial reports.

## **1. PMUK FORGED BANK STATEMENTS**

<sup>55.</sup> PMUK held multiple bank accounts for the Global Fund-financed programs it oversaw. Between November 2004 and December 2009, it held its funds with NCC Bank, and after this date, it moved its accounts to Dutch Bangla Bank (DBB Bank).<sup>59</sup> The OIG found that, PMUK concealed the genuine bank statements maintained at NCC Bank, and instead created and produced its own versions of these statements, which were in fact fictitious. The OIG did not find evidence of this practice in relation to DBB Bank accounts.

56. Below is a table of all Global Fund-financed PMUK bank accounts under packages 904 and 907 for the HIV/AIDS program. Note that in the case of NCC Bank, PMUK often reported different account numbers on its forged bank statements than the NCC Bank actually used. The OIG was able to establish that the accounts were the same on the basis that (i) the deposits matched, (ii) NCC Bank officials confirmed this, and (iii) there were formal records that the account number for the same account changed, but PMUK continued to use the old number in its forged statements.

Round	Package	Bank Name	Account Title	Account Number (Valid)	Dates Used	Account Number (Fake)
R-2	904	National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd.	Save the Children USA Fund	#0400082 #0010505054 #0325000313	Nov-04 to Sep-05 Dec-05 to Dec-07 Jan-08 to Nov-09	#0400082 #0010505054 #0010505054
R-6	904	National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd.	GF-904-R6, Scalling Up	#0325000975	Feb-08 to Dec-09	#0011598005
R-6	907	National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd.	IDU-GFATM-Round 6	#0325000948	Jan-08 to Dec-09	#0011586007
R-2	904	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	HIV/AIDS, GF 904 (R-2)	#01481200752	Nov-09 to Oct-10	
R-6	904	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	HIV/AIDS, GF 904 (R-6)	#01481200764	Nov-09 to present	
RCC	904	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	GFATM 904 HIV-AIDS RCC	#01481201006	Apr-10 to Jan-11	
R-6	907	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	GF-907	#01481200776	Oct-09 to Jan-11	
RCC	907	Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	GFATM 907 HIV-AIDS RCC	#01481201018	Apr-10 to present	

Addresses:

National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd. Dhanmondi Branch, Quality Center, 744, Sat Masjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd. Ring Road Branch, BAitul Aman Tower (1<sup>st</sup> Floor), 840-841, Ring Road, Adabor, Dhaka-1207

57. Over a period of 5 years, beginning at the grants' inception, PMUK systematically produced falsified bank statements and provided these false statements to SCUSA in order to create the appearance that Global Fund grant expenditures were supported by documentation. A comparison of the bank statement versions provided by PMUK against the versions produced by NCC Bank shows that the two were not the same.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> PMUK was required to change banks as part of the requirements under the RCC.

As the image below shows, the statements differed in layout and the style of the document headers; there were inconsistencies in the dates and amounts of the withdrawals between the statements; and there were different values for account balances of allegedly identical time periods.



#### NCC Bank-provided statement (top) vs. PMUK statement provided to SCUSA (bottom)

Investigations Report No.: GF-OIG-11-025 Issue Date: 5 July 2012 58. The OIG showed the versions of the bank statement provided by PMUK to senior NCC Bank staff to obtain their assessment of the statements' authenticity. The NCC Bank officials confirmed that the PMUK-provided statements were not issued by NCC Bank, and are indeed illegitimate.<sup>60</sup>

59. From close inspection of the false bank statements, it is possible to see indications of falsity, demonstrating on its face that the bank may not have produced the statements. Most importantly, the PMUK-produced statements contained arithmetic errors. In addition, there were spelling and formatting errors:

Error	Fabricated PMUK-	Produced Ba	ank Statement	61
Addition Error: 12/10/2006 Balance Credit should be 20,005,775,23	BALANCE CREDIT 12/10/2006 OUTWARD CLEARING BALANCE CREDIT	BDT BDT	12/10/2006	5,905,775.23 14,100.000.00 20,255,775.23
Misspelling: "Brought Forward" as "BROUGTH FORWARD"	DATE D 13/09/2006 BALANCE E	ESCRIPTION BROUGTH FORWAR	ACCOUNT No. : 0 0 REFERENCE D - CREDIT BDT	105 
Date Formatting Error: Date is formatted differently twice on same line	BALANCE CREDIT 12/11/2006 INWARD CLEARING BALANCE CREDIT	BDI 5861476 BDT	12/112006	4,076,385.23 42,750.00 DR 4,033,635.23

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> ROC: Manager of NCC Dhanmondi Branch, OIG Interoffice Memo 1 August 2011.
<sup>61</sup> 2006-10-12 Padakhep Oct Dec 2006.pdf, page 5.

60. The following statement from October 2005, for example, includes a clearly erroneous transaction date of 2003, rather than 2005:

		HOLD		DHANMONDI		
HOUSE ADABA DHAK	KHEP MANABIK UNAYAN KANDRA 1864, ROADHO, BAITUL AMAN HOUSING SC R.MO-PUR CHAKA	CIETY		400082 BDT 0 Page 1 10 October 2005		
Date	Description	Value Date	Debit	Credit	Balar	ice
1-Ju1-2005	BALANCE C/F	÷			ě	38,551.00
12-Ju1-2005	CASH CHEQUE NO 2233913	12-JUL	130,000.00			08,551.00
0-Ju1-2005	CASH CHEQUE NO 2233914	30-JUL	210,000.00			98,551.0
31-Ju1-2005	ADVICE	31-JUL	182,500.00			16,051.0
1-Ju1-2005	CASH CHEQUE NO 2233915	31-Jul	96,500.00			19,551.0
4-Aug-2005	CASH CHEQUE NO 2233916	04-AUG	237,500.00			82,051.0
-Aug-2005	CHQ DEPOSIT	04-AUG	-	8,800,000.00	8,8	82,051.0
7-Aug-2003	CLEARING INWARD CHEQUE NO	7-AUG	300,000.00		8,5	82,051.00
4-Aug-2005	CLEARING INWARD, CHEQUE NO	14-AUG	331,021.00		B, 2	51,030.00
	2233918	1 Paralest in Address of				
31-Aug-2005	ADVICE	31-AUG	182,500.00	Statement for	- July	8,530.00
31-Aug-2005	CASH CHEQUE NO 2233919	31 AUG	100,000.00			8,530.00
4-Sep-2005	CASH CHEQUE NO 2233920	4-Sep	100,000.00	through Septe	mber	8,530.00
5-Sep-2005	CASH CHEQUE NO 2540761	5-Sep	30,000.00	2005, but wit	th a	8,530.0
5-Sep-2005	CASH CHEQUE NO 2540762	25-Sep	200,000.00			8,530.0
8-Sep-2005	ADVICE	28-Sep	207,500.00	transaction occ	urring	1.030.00
	Debits: No. of items:	13 Amount		on "7-Aug-20	03"	
	Credits: No. of items:	01 Amount	L			

#### Errors in False PMUK Statement Provided to SCUSA in October 2005

National Credit & Commerce Bank Limited

### 2. PMUK FORGED ACCOUNTING JOURNALS

61. To maintain consistency between the false bank statements and the supporting documentation, and in furtherance of the scheme, PMUK created, produced and utilized an extensive and elaborate universe of false supporting documentation to further support the purported legitimacy of the fabricated bank statements. To begin, PMUK produced falsified accounting journals to conceal the actual nature of its expenditures. These accounting journals reflected the transactions reported in the forged statements, most of which did not appear in the genuine NCC bank statements.

62. PMUK was also required as part of its duties and responsibilities as a Sub-Recipient of Global Fund grants to maintain a record of accounts to track the funds spent and received by a specific program. The OIG found that PMUK maintained accounting journals, which recorded the debits and credits to specific accounts. One column recorded petty cash transactions, and the other, the transactions from the bank account. These accounting journals were used to reconcile withdrawals or credits from the program bank account to specific transaction-based supporting documentation called vouchers.

63. PMUK provided the OIG with a series of accounting journals whose entries matched the entries on the PMUK-provided forged bank statements. A comparison of the entries in the accounting journals against the entries in the bank statements provided by NCC, however, demonstrates that the accounting journal entries did not reflect the genuine withdrawals from the actual account. Thus, PMUK maintained accounting journals that were written to match the false withdrawals and therefore to further conceal the actual inflows and outflows of Grant funds from the program account.

64. Below, an accounting journal page and the corresponding genuine and fraudulent bank statements are shown. Some transactions, such as for BDT 61,700, (US\$921) described in the accounting journal as "officer's club account for rent of a workshop," cheque #5362310, appear on both the genuine and false bank statements.<sup>62</sup>

However, the BDT 35,000 (US\$522) transaction which is described in the accounting journal as: "drawing for cash", cheque #5362311, appears only on the false bank statement but does not appear on the genuine bank statement. This withdrawal is therefore illegitimate.<sup>63</sup>

#### Fraudulent PMUK-produced bank statement



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> Given that the transaction appears on both the genuine bank statement and the fraudulent statement, the OIG has not included this amount in its calculation of loss.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> This amount constitutes a never-withdrawn amount created to conceal real withdrawals, which are the loss.

65. Note also that the false withdrawal of BDT 35,000 from the example above is further recorded in the accounting journal as a withdrawal of cash from the bank account (right page of below image which represents withdrawals) that was deposited to petty cash (left page, below image which represents deposits), and then subsequently withdrawn in a series of payments from petty cash purportedly for travel expenses (right side of image). Since the BDT 35,000 had never actually been withdrawn as cash from the genuine account, and deposited in petty cash as shown in the accounting journal, it is more probable than not that these expenditures from petty cash were also false and never occurred.



66. It merits mention that every page (see image above for example) of the fictitious accounting journals was stamped and signed by a senior official at PMUK. Stamping and signing communicates a message of authenticity of a document and its contents. These signatures and stamps changed over the years, and images of these are provided below:

PMUK officials' stamps and signatures which appeared on the fraudulent accounting journals



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67. Based on a comparison of the accounting journals against the NCC bank statements,<sup>64</sup> it is possible to determine that PMUK began manufacturing fictitious books and records—and diverting Global Fund monies—at the time it assumed its role as SR. In the image below, the genuine bank statement records an original deposit of BDT 1,000 (US\$15), which was likely used to open the bank account on 9 November 2004. The first Global-Fund financed deposit of BDT 12,000,000 (US\$179,104), from SCUSA, appears on 28 November 2004. The accounting journal accompanying these early days demonstrates that PMUK made its first withdrawals on 9 January 2005—five payments of BDT 961,940 (US\$14,357) each to five SSRs. The genuine bank statement reflects these payments as well. The accounting journal then goes on to record a withdrawal of BDT 852,759 (US\$12,728) on the same day. This withdrawal, however, does not appear on the genuine NCCproduced bank statement. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude this is a false entry and a falsified withdrawal. This act occurred in January 2005, as part of the initial transactions in the program.

#### Genuine NCC-Bank statement, first transactions in 2004-2005



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> The OIG was not provided with a copy of the PMUK-produced forged bank statement for this month.

### 3. PMUK FABRICATED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

68. PMUK also produced a set of fake supporting documentation to further attempt to provide the appearance of legitimacy to the fictitious bank statements and accounting journals that were created to disguise the diversions. Among the false supporting documentation were fake vendor bids and invoices, as well as copies of cheques allegedly issued to vendors. These supporting documents were intended to justify expenses for purported goods and services, including purchases of medical and health supplies, printing related stock, equipment, and fittings. However, these expenses in fact did not exist and were not incurred.

69. In this regard, PMUK had on file and in its possession, and provided to the OIG, a set of documents allegedly evidencing purchases of services or goods in furtherance of program purposes. These included documents recording alleged competitive procurement process (i.e., three allegedly competing bids from three different vendors), the rendering of services or delivery of goods (i.e., an invoice from the selected vendor), and the payment for the goods or services (i.e., a copy of a cheque, allegedly issued to the vendor).

70. The OIG collected a sample set of document bids, invoices, and cheques<sup>65</sup> relating to procurements of goods and services dated between September 2006 – April 2011. The OIG identified 30 cases, totaling US\$249,600, for this period in which the payments for goods and services did not actually appear on the genuine statements collected at NCC Bank. Rather, these expenses appeared only on the fabricated bank statements, pertaining to Rounds 2 and 6, packages 904 and 907.

71. Upon contacting the vendors and bidders whose business names appeared on these procurement documents, there were several incidents in which the vendors were unable to verify the authenticity of the documents:<sup>66</sup>

- In the case of two purchases of equipment from CARE & Fair for a total of US\$9,970,<sup>67</sup> the CARE & Fair's representative confirmed that it had provided several of the items listed in the invoice to PMUK, but not all. The representative further stated that the bid, challan (delivery receipt), bill, money receipt, and work order were all false and that he never received the full amount of money. Competing vendors also confirmed that the bids bearing their company's name were also not authentic.
- In the case of a US\$1,690<sup>68</sup> equipment purchase from Green Power, the Green Power representative confirmed that whereas it had submitted a bid, it had not received the work order, provided the items, or received the cheque payment. The invoice, cheque, and money receipt were all fake.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> See supra para. 33 regarding sample selection methodology used. The OIG conducted vendor verifications before it was able to obtain the genuine bank statements from the NCC Bank.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> The OIG was unable to reach all vendors as some were not reachable or had ceased being in existence. Also, some vendors confirmed that the documents bearing their vendor logos were authentic.

 $<sup>^{67}</sup>$  BDT 396,354 and BDT 271,610

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> BDT 113,230

• In the case of 4 printing purchases from vendor Purabi totaling US\$76,413,<sup>69</sup> a representative of this vendor informed the OIG that all the documents bearing the vendor's name were not authentic, that no such printing services were rendered, and that the vendor had never received payment.<sup>70</sup>

72. Attached to the procurement documents in PMUK's files were copies of cheques that had allegedly been issued to the vendors. As the comparison of the fictitious documents/purported "statements" with the genuine bank statements below demonstrates, it is more probable than not that real cheques, issued by NCC Bank, were used and populated with false information for purposes of creating false supporting documentation. However these cheques were never provided to the vendor, and thus never presented to the Bank for payment. In the image below, whereas the forged bank statement registered that cheques #5362311-15 were presented to the bank for payment within a week of one another, the genuine bank statement provided by NCC Bank did not register these cheques at all, illustrating that they were never in fact presented for payment. Rather, the cheques were used as means to further the perception of program expenditures that, in reality, were not in fact occurring.

# Genuine NCC Bank-provided statement statement

#### Fictitious PMUK-produced bank

NUMBER TRESSEE CASH \$66000005		2110 ROBERT (0.100	
THE COME TO CONTRACT OLS I Hand CONSISTENCE	61,700,00	2168.000R 0010	
15/36/2018 29/26/2018 GASH 000000088		Assess IENERSOCA CANE Natio	nal Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd.
		TAND OF EALISEARDER OF C	and Commerce Bank Ltd.
DALANTE DESCRIPTION CLG DESCRIPTION	71,900,90	STRAFFISCOR COLC BANK PITTATA	াল ক্রেডিট এন্ড কমার্স ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
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100K/008 10052008 TRANSFER 000000000	1,42,690.35	387255028 0810	
1138/2004 1105/2008 CLG-Insend 2005/81130	34,200.90	4,555 ROCK OUTC ISUNUIXE WHILE DOWN	5062304 (50500000 00 00 00 00 00 00
1105703 TRANSFER 915050009		277540 HIGH SOCH COLD MARKED (NOR WINNAME)	BUT GATLART AND
1716-2018 1705-2008 ATM Free \$434030002	50.90	7.345300R 4810 BLAKE ORDY	5362309 18/07/2008 190,080.00 pm
1010-2018 1010-2016 TRANSFER 0011538005		A STORE OF A STORE STORE STORE STORE ATTACKNESS	SINCEST PARADOM SALES OF THE
1916/2018 19/9/1708 020-Inuard 0008181129	2,500.99	4,44,815 BLCE MICE MICE MICE MICE MICE MICE MICE MI	827 6,290,437,56
2366/368 25/5600E 0.6 Insed 2005/5758E	10,000,00	4.34.449.50 R 0010 R002 R002 R103WK	\$34,2112 2005/3008 70,000.06 DH
23(05/2016 OLG-Insert 2005457539	10,000,00	4,34,449,800R 0010 MANJONN ORGANISKANK	SUCCESS AND ADDRESS AND ADDRES
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13/06/7558 Ct.C-insert 0205457532	10,000.00	4,04,449,550,570, 0010 BHLAND CLEMENT	1342110 256912008 61.700.dp pm
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		the fraudulent one-	
		they were never	
		genuinely cashed.	

73. Below is an image of a cheque that was never registered as having been presented for payment in the genuine NCC-presented bank statements. As the image shows, two senior

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> BDT 1,140,986; BDT 2,327,812; BDT 1,460,672; and BDT 190,189

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> As these expenditures appeared also to have been fabricated in the forged bank statements, they are not separately counted as loss.

PMUK officials stamped and signed the cheque, and a "paid" stamp was also added to further register that it had been handed to the vendor, CARE & Fair, when this did not actually occur.

Sample: Cheque located within PMUK vouchers not identified on the genuine bank statements

Date\_30.03 ational Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd DHANMONDI BRANCH Branch or bearer Taka 5 80 AL AHAMMED M. SHDDIOUF President acculive Director Manabik Unnavan Kendra Shavet Krides aid

## 4. PMUK WITHDREW GRANT FUNDS FOR UNKNOWN PURPOSES

74. By maintaining a set of forged bank statements, books and records, PMUK was able to disguise their withdrawals of program funds. These diversions amounted to at least US\$1,894,426<sup>71</sup> or 52%, of the US\$3,625,428<sup>72</sup> disbursed into the actual NCC bank accounts. As none of the documentation provided by PMUK related to these withdrawals, the withdrawals were effectively made for unauthorized purposes, and are yet unknown.

75. These withdrawals were made through cashed cheques and wire transfers. Of the small sample of cheques which the OIG was able to collect at NCC Bank, it appears that these cheques were either "bearer" cheques, lacking a payee name, or cheques made to PMUK in general. In both cases, anonymous persons could withdraw the funds. The remainder of the diversions were made through wire transfers to the PMUK corporate account.

76. None of the "hidden" withdrawals were supported by any documentation which PMUK provided as evidence of proper program-related use. Thus, as the withdrawals were evidently concealed, it is highly likely that the funds were not used for program purposes. This amount constitutes the OIG's calculation of minimum loss through diversion by PMUK.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> BDT 127,429,347. See Table of Minimum Loss, infra paragraph 81

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> BDT 244,601,839. See Table of Minimum Loss, infra paragraph 81

## **B. ACTIVITIES AFTER DECEMBER 2009**

77. The OIG also reviewed PMUK statements for its accounts after December 2009, which were maintained at a different bank, Dutch Bangla Bank. Here, evidence of bank statement fabrication was not found. However, 23 suspicious payments to vendors were identified, with a value of US\$85,545<sup>73</sup> during this same period. Losing bidders related to these procurements informed the OIG that the bids submitted in their names were false. The OIG attempted to substantiate these allegations but was unable to identify sufficient credible and substantive evidence that these procurements were falsified.

78. Given the absence of further corroborating evidence at this time, the OIG makes no finding regarding these transactions, and is not including these transactions in the calculation of minimum loss.

## VII. LOSSES TO THE GLOBAL FUND

79. Article 20 of the Global Fund's Standard Terms and Conditions (STCs) of the grant agreement establishes that the PR is liable for any loss or theft of cash or items purchased with grant funds:<sup>74</sup>

"... the Principal Recipient shall be solely liable for the loss or theft of any cash in the possession of the Principal Recipient or any of its agents or Sub-recipients and shall have no recourse to the Global Fund for any such loss or theft."

80. Given the legal provisions of the STCs of the grant agreement, the Global Fund has the right to require restitution and repayment of misappropriated grant funds on a number of bases. They include, but are not limited to the fact that the funds at issue constitute: (i) misappropriated, defrauded, and corrupt funds; (ii) funds unsupported by documentation;<sup>75</sup> and (iii) funds that have been wasted.<sup>76</sup>

81. Based upon the foregoing, the OIG's investigation has identified that fraud, mismanagement and unsupported expenditures identified in its investigation of PMUK resulted in losses to the Global Fund. The amount of loss incurred by the Global Fund is US\$1.89 million and is established as:

- The US\$3,625,428 amount, which is the total amount of Global Fund funds disbursed into PMUK's accounts held at NCC Bank from November 2004 until December 2009, during which time PMUK maintained doctored sets of documents including entirely falsified bank statements;
- Less US\$1,356,661, which constitutes the total amount of withdrawals PMUK recorded within its doctored set of records (forged bank statements, accounting journals, or supporting documents) which also appear on genuine

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> BDT 5,731,515

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Program Grant Agreements between Economic Relations division of the MoF of GoB and the Global Fund for Rounds 2 and 6, Grant Agreement between SCUSA and the Global Fund for the RCC grant.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Violation of Article 13 of the STCs of the grant agreement

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Violation of Article 9 of STCs of the grant agreement, which states: "The Principal Recipient shall ensure that all Grant funds are prudently managed and shall take all necessary action to ensure that Grant funds are used solely for Program purposes and consistent with the terms of this Agreement."

NCC bank statements and are presumed to be valid expenditures used for program purposes;

• Less \$ 374,341, which constitutes the transfers from the NCC bank accounts to the new DBB bank accounts.

	COMBINED			
Description	CNT	BDT	FX	USD
Total inflows from SCUSA to PMUK's bank accounts with NCC		244,601,839	67.4684	\$ 3,625,428
Less potentially legitimate grant-related transactions –				
(1) transactions appearing in both genuine and fake bank statements of NCC	397	91,531,758	67.4684	\$ 1,356,661
(2) transfers of grant funds to new Dutch-Bangla bank accounts	4	25,640,734	68.4957	\$ 374,341
Equals minimum loss to the Global Fund		127,429,347	67.2654	\$ 1,894,426

#### Table of Minimum Loss to Global Fund Resulting from PMUK Fraudulent Activities

82. Indeed, at this time it is unknown to what purposes the misappropriated US\$1.89 million in withdrawals were put. The totality of circumstances in this case—the fact that PMUK falsified and fabricated its books and records, and then took active steps to obstruct the discovery of the fraud—indicates that it is more likely than not that these funds were not used for program purposes. Indeed no evidence has been identified that the funds were used for program purposes. Regardless, and in the alternative, as PMUK has not presented the Global Fund or SCUSA with genuine documentation justifying these withdrawals, despite repeated requests to do so, the Global Fund may require recovery on the basis that these withdrawals were made in the absence of supporting documentation.<sup>77</sup>

83. It should be noted that, in determining loss due to fraud and other forms of misappropriation, the OIG adheres to a strict standard of credible and substantive evidence. As such, the OIG has not included in its calculation of loss those withdrawals which matched across the fraudulent and genuine bank statements but the OIG found to be tainted only by circumstantial evidence of fraud on the face of the supporting documentation relating to these withdrawals. The OIG was unable to pursue all investigative leads and indicators of fraud due to time and resource constraints. Given PMUK's conduct of creating false documents and efforts to hide and conceal the scheme, however, there exists a real and profound risk that the actual funds diverted from program purposes well exceeds the US\$1.89 million figure identified above. Thus, the OIG terms this amount "minimum loss."

84. The OIG considers PMUK's systemic and still-ongoing lack of cooperation vis-à-vis the PR, SCUSA, and the OIG to constitute a sufficiently strong aggravating factor such that the Global Fund could fairly demand significantly larger sum for repayment. Indeed, PMUK incorporated this entire amount of Global Fund money into its fraudulent scheme over a period of 5 years by including it in the books and records it fabricated to conceal diversion.

 $<sup>^{77}</sup>$  Violation of Article 13 that of the STCs of the grant agreement.

# VIII. RESPONSE TO OIG FINDINGS

85. Upon learning of the fraudulent scheme described above, the Global Fund Secretariat and the Principal Recipient in this case, SCUSA, both took swift action to protect Global Fund funds while the OIG investigation has been ongoing.

86. The OIG first debriefed SCUSA and the Secretariat verbally on its findings on 23 August 2011.

87. SCUSA terminated its contract with PMUK on 25 September 2011. It also advised the BWHC, a SCUSA SR under which PMUK functioned as SSR, to terminate its relationship with PMUK on 9 October 2011.

88. In response, PMUK aggressively opposed the termination. On 27 October, 2011, PMUK management sent a letter to the MOHFW alleging that "Save the Children USA, most illegally, unprofessionally and in-transparently terminated subgrants... of PMUK without issuance of any reasons and not following due process."<sup>78</sup> PMUK expressed refusal to honor the termination of the agreement, and ultimately brought a case in arbitration against SCUSA in which it alleged for wrongful termination and made claims of the equivalent of US\$14.23 million<sup>79</sup> in damages against SCUSA.

89. In relation to SCUSA's efforts to have PMUK terminated as an SSR under BWHC, on 15 October 2011, PMUK informed SCUSA that it "decline[s] to follow [SCUSA's] instructions and will abide by the contract."

90. Furthermore, PMUK refused SCUSA access to the elements of the program which SCUSA attempted to take over to ensure program continuity—Drop-In-Centers (DICs) and oversight of the SSRs under PMUK. After SCUSA made requests to PMUK to hand over the DICs and SSRs, on 11 January 2011, PMUK issued a letter to SCUSA refusing hand-over and "change of the status quo." It also threatened the SCUSA Country Director with expulsion from the country: "If you continue to behave the way you are which smells of an anti- Bangladeshi bias, we will take of (sic) the matter with the Government to have you declared Persona-non-grata." A copy of the letter is provided below:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Letter from PMUK to the Minister of MOHFW and CCM Chair, entitled: Application for Necessary Initiative for Justice against the Arbitrarily, Unilateral, & Abrupt Termination of Sub-Grants 84044879D and 84044879G by Save the Children Principal Recipient (PR) of the Global Fund.

 $<sup>^{79}</sup>$  This amount takes the sum total of the damages listed in the complaint and calculates the US\$ equivalent value by using the most current exchange rate of BDT 80: USD\$ 1.

#### Letter from PMUK to SCUSA



91. In late October and early November 2011, the Secretariat issued letters to the CCM,81 NASP,82 and other key donors83 calling for support for SCUSA's termination of PMUK. When the CCM did not issue a statement of support, the Secretariat again appealed to the CCM on 31 January 2012 to fully endorse SCUSA's decision to terminate the contract with PMUK. On 2 February 2012, the CCM met and put to a vote its support for SCUSA's termination. A conclusion of positive support for SCUSA was issued in the 72nd minutes of the CCM:84

"Following extensive participatory discussion, CCM endorsed the actions taken by Save the Children and the Save Children's plans to ensure continued services to those who had been served by the DICs directly managed by PMUK by taking over direct responsibility for these DICs."

92. At the time of issuance of this Interim Report, the dispute over the termination of PMUK is the subject of arbitral proceedings between PMUK and SCUSA.

## IX. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

93. The OIG recommends that all losses under the grants be recovered from PMUK, including at least the identified loss of US\$1,894,426, and for all further amounts that PMUK cannot justify were used in furtherance of grant programs and consistent with the grant agreement. In that regard, the full amount of the funds disbursed between 2004 and 2009 amounts to US\$3,625,428. To date, PMUK has not yet been able to justify proper use of these funds. The Global Fund's Legal and Compliance Unit have confirmed its agreement with an initial loss calculation of US\$1,894,426.

94. The OIG recommends that PMUK, its principals, and all entities managed by its principals, be debarred from receiving any Global Fund financing, going forward, including an entity in which the principals of PMUK currently also retain significant direct or beneficial ownership interests.

95. The OIG further recommends that the other donors funding PMUK in Bangladesh be notified of the result of this case and be provided with this report, including the identities of the principals.

96. The OIG recommends that the case be transferred to the appropriate national authorities in Bangladesh for further criminal and civil action, as deemed appropriate.

# X. ACRONYMS

BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanism
DBB	Dutch Bangla Bank
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DICs	Drop in Centers
FHI	Family Health International
FPM	Fund Portfolio Manager (Global Fund Secretariat)
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HR	Human Resources
ICDDR'B	International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	International Financial Institution
LFA	Local Fund Agent
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MOHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NASP	National AIDS/HIV Control Program
NCC	National Credit and Commerce Bank
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
PBF	Performance Based Funding
PMUK	Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra
PO	Purchase Order
PR	Principal Recipient
RCC	Rolling Continuation Channel
RoC	Record of Conversation
SCUSA	Save the Children USA
SR	Sub-Recipient
SSR	Sub Sub-Recipient
US\$	United States Dollars
VAT	Value Added Tax