

Ecobank



The Global Fund / Karin Schenbrucker

The challenge

The Global Fund mobilizes more than US\$4 billion a year to support programs in more than 100 countries worldwide, with over 72% dedicated to programs in sub-Saharan Africa. Strong financial oversight and management capacity is critical for organizations receiving these grants.

Strengthening the financial management capacity of our implementing partners plays an important role in improving the impact efficiency and effectiveness of the Global Fund's investments in communities. This will allow more people to access quality health care and treatment.

The partnership

In 2014, the Global Fund partnered with Ecobank, a leading financial institution that operates in 35 countries in Africa. The partnership was renewed in 2016 for an additional three years. Ecobank has invested US\$6 million to date through financial and in-kind technical support to strengthen the implementation of health programs in countries where the Global Fund invests.

The partnership has focused on four pillars: cash contributions to support malaria programs in Mozambique and Nigeria; financial management training for the Global Fund's implementing partners; innovative financing solutions; and advocacy in support of the Global Fund's mission.

Ecobank Foundation has funded Humentum, a financial training company, to sharpen the financial management, accounting and reporting skills of the Global Fund's implementing partners with participants from 16 African countries (Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Côte D'Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, The Gambia, Togo and Zambia).

In addition, Ecobank is supporting the Global Fund and our partners to develop innovative solutions to financial challenges through cash management and mobile money mechanisms.

Ecobank has also shown great leadership in its visibility and advocacy to support of the Global Fund's mission. It has engaged its employees and customers on World

AIDS, TB, and Malaria Days. On World AIDS Day 2016, for example, CEO Ade Ayeyemi was tested for HIV and wrote to all employees on the importance of HIV prevention.

The impact

Ecobank has provided an important direct financial contribution to support the Global Fund's malaria programs in Mozambique (2017-2019) and Nigeria (2014-2016).

Since 2014, the partnership has leveraged Ecobank's financial expertise to provide innovative trainings to Global Fund grant implementers, targeting more than 20 countries.

The trainings have aimed to strengthen internal control mechanisms, reduce fiduciary and financial risks and enhance transparency in the use of grants. This has resulted in a noticeable impact on financial reporting and budget absorption. Representatives from 73 grant implementers have already benefited from this initiative, which has proven to be a best practice across the continent.

By improving in-country management systems, Ecobank and the Global Fund seek to maximize the performance of investments and support the sustainability of health programs. This will ultimately contribute to greater impact in the fight against HIV, tuberculosis and malaria, and ensure that more people have access to quality health care and treatment.

George Mensah-Asante

Managing Director,
Ecobank Liberia

"At Ecobank, we are convinced that health leaders need to be equipped with the right financial management skills. Our goal is to invest the skills and the resources of our employees and our organization to support Africa's transformation."



The Global Fund / Andrew Esiebo

Work meeting at the office of Damien Foundation in Ibadan, Nigeria, where staff receive training through Ecobank to improve financial management of Global Fund-supported programs.

Q&A with Carl Manlan, Chief Operating Officer, Ecobank Foundation

1 How did Ecobank's partnership with the Global Fund come about?

Both organizations recognized the value for a large-scale investor, such as the Global Fund, to partner with the largest pan-African bank, given the majority of Global Fund grants support programs in Africa. The partnership leverages Ecobank's core capabilities to strengthen the financial management skills of the Global Fund's implementing partners. From the onset, the focus has been on ensuring the funds allocated to countries are better utilized.

2 How has Ecobank strengthened the financial skills of the Global Fund's implementing partners?

The initial model focused on in-country engagement to resolve specific issues as reported in the progress updates from the countries. There were some limitations to the model which we addressed in the revised engagement. There were two significant changes to the training programs. First, Ecobank Academy became the custodian of

the curriculum. This change meant that Global Fund implementers had a specific training program blending financial management, leadership and strategy execution. Second, groups of 25 finance managers from different countries were trained where they were able to exchange experiences and build a network.

3 What are some of the lessons learned?

There are three key lessons:

- ▶ Blended learning enhances the role of the finance manager in becoming a leader in the implementation of a health program.
- ▶ It is highly valuable to share experiences from countries across the continent, as they face similar challenges yet require different contextual solutions.
- ▶ Adapting learning based on experiences of the previous group allows for a dynamic feedback process.

4 What has the partnership between the Global Fund and Ecobank achieved to date?

Over the years, we have witnessed how the core capabilities of a private sector company such as Ecobank can contribute to improving health outcomes in specific countries. The improvement in financial management skills has resulted in a better absorption of Global Fund grants.

5 If you had to choose one "success story" which would it be?

Working with Ecobank Academy to design a program for finance managers of health programs was a key success. The learning opportunity for colleagues in the bank was extremely important in designing and working with non-bankers.



The Global Fund / Karin Scherbrucker

Health worker Lesama Obadias Chiboze performs a malaria test on a child showing fever symptoms at the Primero de Maio Health Centre in Maputo City.

Mozambique continues to have a high burden of malaria affecting the poorest populations, especially in the rural areas.



Emem Samuel setting up mosquito net for the family at her house in Nduo-Eduo, Eket, Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. This use of net has prevented her family falling sick of malaria.

Adda Faye

Head of Program Finance,
the Global Fund

“In order to be successful in the fight against the three diseases it is important for the Global Fund to use financial management as an enabler for impact in global health.”

Carl Manlan

Chief Operating Officer,
Ecobank Foundation

“Transforming finance managers into leaders of change is the right way forward. Improving access to knowledge and learning opportunities will propel implementing partners to manage funds for even greater results for communities.”

STEP UP THE FIGHT

Ending the epidemics of HIV, TB and malaria by 2030 is within reach, but not yet firmly in our grasp. After years of remarkable progress, new threats such as stalled funding and growing drug resistance have pushed us off track. We now face a decisive moment. Do we step up the fight, or do we allow ourselves to slip back? The Global Fund's fundraising target for the next three-year cycle is at least US\$14 billion. The Global Fund is calling on the private sector to mobilize at least US\$1 billion. These funds will help save 16 million lives and cut the mortality rate from HIV, TB and malaria in half by 2023, while building stronger systems for health that will enable the achievement of universal health coverage. It is time to step up the fight.

About the Global Fund

The Global Fund is a partnership designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics. As an international organization, the Global Fund mobilizes and invests more than US\$4 billion a year to support programs run by local experts in more than 100 countries. In partnership with governments, civil society, technical agencies, the private sector and people affected by the diseases, we are challenging barriers and embracing innovation.