



Evaluation of Capacity, Quality and Decision-making in Sub-national Tailoring of Malaria Interventions

Secretariat Management Response

GF/ ELO/2024/04 /02

30 July 2025

Geneva, Switzerland

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4 June 2025

1. Introduction

Introduction

Independent evaluation is a critical component of the Global Fund Partnership. Independent evaluation provides the opportunity to learn, further strengthen how the Global Fund works, and inform Board and Secretariat deliberations on important topics. In November 2022, the Board established a new independent evaluation and learning function¹ to ensure that evaluations are relevant, timely and of high quality, providing findings and recommendations that drive the Global Fund closer to achieving our goal of ending AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria as epidemics and achieving our Strategy². The function started operations in 2023.

An integral part of these evaluations is the Secretariat Management Response, which affords the Secretariat the opportunity to comment on the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations as well as outline the steps that will be taken forward in response to the evaluation.

The Global Fund highly values transparency and publishes independent evaluation reports, alongside the commentary of the Independent Evaluation Panel (IEP) and the Management Response, according to the Evaluation Function Documents Procedure approved by the Strategy Committee.

In 2024, the Global Fund commissioned an independent evaluation of capacity, quality and decision-making in SNT of malaria interventions. The evaluation was performed by independent evaluators, managed by the Evaluation and Learning Office (ELO). The ELO's activities are overseen by the IEP. The objectives were to:

1. Assess the capacity, quality of data and decision-making in SNT of malaria interventions.
2. Assess how The Global Fund and other stakeholders have and can incentivize the use of sub-national data and financial optimization to maximize impact.
3. Examine the role of national and sub-national leadership, agency and capacity in implementing effective SNT, including the development of optimized national malaria strategic plans and funding applications to The Global Fund. The Secretariat welcomes the malaria SNT review and expresses appreciation for the strong collaboration with the new Evaluation and Learning Office (ELO) as well as for the significant amount of work conducted by the evaluators.

The Secretariat partially endorses the key findings and the high-level conclusions from the report and partially agrees with the recommendations. The Secretariat is providing these responses considering the anticipation of severe resource constraints that limit centrally driven activities. In addition, many of the recommendations, while sound, are the responsibility of others within the broader malaria partnership, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM).

In addition, this evaluation, finalized before January 2025, was conducted in a very different context to the one which global health faces currently. The current funding landscape for both The Global Fund and the malaria community has shaped the nature of the Secretariat's response and possible action.

Annex 1 to this document provides the Secretariat's response to the recommendations, including the level of acceptance and activities to be undertaken to address the recommendations. These responses are in line with the responsibilities of the Global Fund in the broader malaria partnership, and the reality of constrained resources post January 2025.

2. Observations on the findings and conclusions of the evaluation

Overall observations

While the Secretariat agrees with many of the recommendations, the fulfillment of the recommendations is often outside the mandate of the Secretariat. Broader dissemination of these recommendations and engagement of the entire malaria community, including WHO and RBM, could further some of the aims of these recommendations. Where the Secretariat found that the recommendations were not within the scope of The Global Fund, a partial acceptance was indicated, and the Secretariat outlined the steps that the Secretariat could take within its mandate.

The primary role of the Secretariat is to facilitate SNT through funding of critical activities that can strengthen SNT, as well as coordinating with normative bodies like WHO and RBM, to ensure that their recommendations are broadly disseminated and encourage their enactment. As such the Secretariat relies on these partnerships for issuing normative guidance and best practice-sharing within the broader partnership.

In addition, the Secretariat notes the need to directly address issues such as capacity building and training from a central level mechanism. Unfortunately, in this resource constrained environment, specific funding for special activities is severely limited and the Secretariat will have to rely on other partners, and activities that can be incorporated in country grants, to achieve many of the recommendations outlined in this report.

Malaria vaccines

The evaluation finds that, “with some exceptions, the malaria vaccine was not considered in the context of broader SNT malaria intervention targeting and tailoring decisions in GC7”, and notes that “this was due both to timing¹ and because funding sources and timelines for malaria vaccines are separate” (from other malaria interventions). As was included as part of the preliminary findings of this evaluation, although not incorporated in the final report, Mozambique’s Grant Cycle 7 (GC7) Funding Request states: “Overall, the vaccine falls somewhat low in terms of cost-effectiveness priorities relative to other interventions. However, given the segregation of funding from Gavi that is not fungible, there are currently no cost trade-offs for the country”. The Secretariat highlights the risk of similar challenges with the TB vaccine, which will have to be deployed in adolescents and adults in many non-Gavi-eligible high burden countries to reach the most at-risk populations.

2026 and 2027 present a critical opportunity for collaboration between the Global Fund and Gavi, when countries plan their malaria interventions for Grant Cycle 8 (GC8) and Gavi 6.0. In the current context, with the threat of malaria resurgence and immense gaps in malaria funding, the Secretariat believes that enabling countries to prioritize scarce funds is critical to ensure value for money and to save lives. The Global Fund is committed to enhanced collaboration with Gavi, with the aim to enable countries to prioritize and plan the optimal mix of malaria interventions within limited available resources and based on country-owned plans, and to minimize burden and complexity for countries.

¹ 26 out of the 30 countries in the evaluation’s sample are eligible for both Gavi and Global Fund malaria support. Of these 26 countries, 15 applied to Gavi for malaria vaccine introduction in 2022 or 2023, before submitting their Global Fund GC7 Funding Request (FR). Two countries submitted their applications to Gavi and the Global Fund around the same time. Two other countries applied to both organizations in the same year (2023), with the Global Fund FR submitted a few months before the Gavi application. The seven remaining countries submitted their Global Fund FR in 2023, and applied for Gavi malaria vaccine support in 2024, or still have to apply for vaccine introduction. The first application window for Gavi malaria vaccine support opened at the end of 2022 <https://www.gavi.org/news/media-room/gavi-opens-applications-malaria-vaccine-rollout-support>

3. Conclusions

The Secretariat can only partially agree to the majority of the recommendations with one recommendation fully accepted and one recommendation rejected. While the Secretariat agrees with the spirit of these recommendations, the scope of the recommendations reaches beyond the mandate of The Global Fund. The Secretariat has embraced actions and activities within its role that can add to partnership, country, and global movements toward the fulfilment of these recommendations. The Secretariat welcomes further dialogue with key technical partners, PRs and countries, and we are fully committed to using the power of The Secretariat to enhance SNT for malaria within the realities of the current funding landscape. The Secretariat's observations above provide particular attention to the collaboration between The Global Fund and Gavi, given the Secretariat's position that robust SNT should include all tools, including where relevant during the stratification of interventions. However, countries are faced with challenges in optimizing all interventions, including the vaccine, in the prioritization and optimization process during the NSP development process, as part of SNT, due to differences in funding cycles, separate funding streams and often immature collaboration between EPI and malaria programs, as the evaluation notes. The Global Fund is committed to enhanced collaboration with Gavi to save lives and maximize value for money in the context of scarce available resources. A more ambitious integration with Gavi on malaria would support the strengthening of national strategic plans, enable funding requests based on robust sub-national tailoring that includes the vaccine, coordinated implementation and cost-effective use of limited available resources.

Annex 1: Detailed Secretariat Response to Recommendations

Recommendation 1		Type*	Response**	Responsible***
<p>Strengthen the inclusion of country program perspectives in global consultative processes at malaria policy, strategy, and planning meetings.</p> <p><i>For the Secretariat:</i> Develop and institutionalize a constructive input mechanism (e.g., a confidential qualitative survey) for anonymous national program input on strategy and policy issues, as well as country/partner engagement issues, in advance of, e.g., MPAG or WHO TWG meetings, with contributions to be shared and discussed at the meetings.</p>		Critical	Partially	WHO and RBM
Justification for “partially accepted” and “rejected” (for critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	While we appreciate and agree with the recommendation that countries have a stronger voice in policy and strategy, this is the primary role of WHO and MPAG who regularly invite malaria endemic programs to participate. We can work with the WHO and RBM to determine ways in which country feedback, both on their specific grants, and compilations of country responses, can be collected and anonymized for action by the WHO.			
Description of intended impact (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical <u>and</u>	The intended impact of working with the WHO and RBM to determine feedback mechanisms would be to raise collective concerns to WHO so that they can determine if clarification and/or consultation is necessary. Currently there is a briefing of WHO/RBM by the TRP to inform WHO on what challenges they see after Window 1. This is disseminated to the joint working group before Window 2 and 3 – once or twice			

important recommendations)	in process. RBM CRSPC could take up the transmission of concerns from countries both at this time and previous to Window 1.	
Activities or initiatives required to achieve the intended impact (including those already planned, under way or completed) (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical and important recommendations)	The malaria team will meet with RBM CRSPC and WHO leadership, review and discuss current mechanisms for feedback, and determine if processes need to be put in place to collect and present country feedback to the WHO.	Secretariat, CRSPC and TRP leadership

Recommendation 2		Type*	Response**	Responsible***
<p>Reinforce national and sub-national program ownership of sub-nationally tailored strategic plans by supporting local capacity building and south-south collaboration, learning, and examples.</p> <p><i>For CTs:</i> Work with national programs to map the capacity of local (and regional) research institutions and, if appropriate, develop a plan for increased engagement.</p> <p><i>For CTs and regional managers:</i> Highlight country-led national and sub-national innovation and novel implementation approaches to the malaria technical team for consideration, engagement with global stakeholders and dissemination.</p>		Critical	Partially	Secretariat and RBM
Justification for “partially accepted” and “rejected” (for critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	<p>Short-term TA provision will not necessarily sustainably build capacity and transfer skills. A more sustainable approach, which would enable us to reach a critical mass of beneficiaries, could be to work through regional and/or local academic institutions rather than investing in short-term TA. Such an approach would however require ‘central level’ funding to cover the costs of regional or local institutions. National stakeholder training costs can be covered by grant funding.</p> <p>While the Secretariat has been moving forward in creating forums for country ownership and capacity building of national programs and research institutions, these resources are unfortunately no longer available. RBM CRSPC, through their TA dashboard, also provides TA to NSPs where other sources are not available, although the funds for this TA may be limited in the next years. TAP malaria can create a</p>			

	mechanism for the Secretariat, through CTs and Malaria Advisors to highlight best practices in creation of SNT plans and NSPs and provide this information to RBM CRSPC so that, through its various committees and working groups, it can facilitate sharing of these best practices.	
Description of intended impact (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	The intended impact of Secretariat country best practice examples would be to increase country participation in sharing forums such as webinars, annual meetings and newsletters.	
Activities or initiatives required to achieve the intended impact (including those already planned, under way or completed) (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical and important recommendations)	Using the SNT maturity model presented, the Secretariat can articulate the best practices coming out of country leadership in SNT and present these to relevant RBM bodies for incorporation and dissemination.	Secretariat and RBM

Recommendation 3		Type*	Response**	Responsible***
<p>Encourage national investment in sub-national leadership and capacity, and in sub-national data systems, analytic capacity, and data use through new indicators and a strengthened RSSH information note.</p> <p><i>For the Programmatic Monitoring Department (PMD):</i> We suggest two new module indicators: Under the Finance module (as a coverage indicator): % of the national budget assigned to sub-national activities. Under M&E: % districts (admin-3) units producing quarterly analytical reports of programmatic and surveillance data.</p> <p>We also suggest strengthening the RSSH information note to encourage country investment in sub-national data systems and people. Highlight options to invest in expanding all the following: (a) training in management and supervision, (b) use of mDHIS2 (mobile platforms), (c) transitions from paper-based to digital reporting, (d) data quality audits at the district (or lower) level, and routine entomological surveillance with low-cost AI tools that make monitoring accessible at community level</p>		Critical	Partially Accepted	Secretariat
Justification for “partially accepted” and “rejected” (for critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	<p>The Secretariat does not agree to the need to include these two indicators, as the first (tracking financial investment at subnational level) can be tracked through national budgeting and spending. The Secretariat advises instead strengthening the financial systems to be able to track both subnational budgeting and M&E activities using systematic tagging of activities. Regarding the second proposed indicator, there is already a similar modular framework indicator, “M&E 6.1: percentage of districts that produce at least semi-annual analytical reports.” Furthermore, data analysis and use at subnational level is currently tracked through one of our KPIs and the M&E system profile.</p> <p>Where possible subnational data validation meetings at district and health facility levels, to analyze data quality and program performance, to interpret the results to guide actions for data quality and program implementation improvement could be used to monitor SNT implementation at the local level and guide course correction.</p>			

	<p>In terms of local capacity building, see comment under recommendation 2, the Secretariat believes that the short-term TA approach will not result in the transfer of skills to a critical number of beneficiaries. The Secretariat notes that approaches that could involve regional and/or national academic institutions could be more sustainable.</p> <p>We agree that having a harmonized Secretariat response on data use will help us agree on the core and gaps in the surveillance response. While PMD has a maturity index that is developed to highlight key gaps, this could be further refined and joined with global efforts for M&E mapping. In the overall context of simplification and streamlining the Secretariat will determine the desirability and feasibility of adding systematic tags to the financial data and ensuring that CTs and countries review the M&E maturity index, along with RBM SME Gap tables to determine if funding aligns to the M&E needs for GC8 funding. While there is a push to include decentralized activities a systematic funded approach, this might not be possible given the need for TA and limited funding across the Partnership.</p>	
Description of intended impact (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	The intended impact of these activities would be to have clear information to guide M&E investments in GC8, as well as a mapping of the gap of investments in these systems for potential reprogramming.	
Activities or initiatives required to achieve the intended impact (including those already planned, under way or completed)	Harmonize the surveillance gap tables, that are filled out by countries during their funding request process, and the M&E maturity index. Ensure that these are provided to countries and CTs ahead of GC8 funding requests. Work with the finance department to what is possible that would enable the Secretariat to map key investments in M&E linked to the gap tables and maturity index.	Secretariat

(required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical and important recommendations)		
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Recommendation 4		Type*	Response* *	Responsible***
<p>Recognize and creatively incentivize SNT as a driver of domestic resource mobilization, including public-private or public-private-philanthropic partnerships</p> <p><i>For Country Teams:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold a best practice forum with countries highlighting those that have successfully engaged their private sector. 2. Landscape and document social marketing/private sector low-cost or shared-cost implementation models. <p><i>For the Private Sector Engagement Department (perhaps linked to CT landscaping effort) and if needed the Health Finance Department:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Consider the use of matching incentives (e.g., for private sector/NGO vector control companies) in funding requests. 4. Provide countries with matching grant TA to help prioritize and qualify investments for matching funds. 		Critical	Rejected	
Justification for “partially accepted” and “rejected” (for critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	Currently, grant TA and matching funds are not going to be available. The private sector is broad, so a range of models are needed, not just incentives. Outcome or results-based models, as well as digital-based models could be considered in grants. However, it is also important to consider the sustainability of models used - which is why incentives are not always the best option as performance changes when they are removed. TA in designing Private Sector engagement strategies would be helpful but would require a central funding mechanism, which is not possible at this time. Additionally, best practice forums are the responsibility of the RBM partnership and private partnerships will be incorporated into the activity in Recommendation 2.			
Description of intended impact (required for “accepted” and “partially	N/A			

accepted” critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)		
Activities or initiatives required to achieve the intended impact (including those already planned, under way or completed) (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical and important recommendations)	N/A	

Recommendation 5		Type*	Response*	Responsible**
<p>Support the generation of evidence on the effectiveness of new interventions and intervention layering strategies in varied contexts.</p> <p><i>For Malaria Team and Technical Advice and Partnerships to liaise with WHO on roadmaps and best practices for SNT to disseminate throughout the Global Fund: Maximize opportunities using reported and routine country data to assess impact of priority intervention mix scenarios and scenario shifts; consider greater use of interrupted time series analysis as a potential tool.</i></p> <p><i>For CT's, FR TA, and SNT TA: Support methodologically robust costing of interventions and intervention strategies. When assisting stakeholder countries with cost effectiveness/resource optimization calculations, communicate the multiple uncertainties in calculating cost effectiveness, including: (a) variability of true costs, (b) impact of market shaping on commodity costs, and (c) the evidence base for comparative intervention effectiveness.</i></p>		Critical	Partially accepted	Secretariat, RBM and WHO
Justification for “partially accepted” and “rejected” (for critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	Under the Programmatic Monitoring Department, an analytic plan will be developed for CTs to better use the reported indicator information. This analytic plan will be shared with WHO and RBM to incorporate into SNT, SME and Data Use guidance as well as to ensure best practice forum on the use of routine data and data triangulation. The Secretariat agrees that robust SNT should consider the malaria vaccine as one option during the stratification of interventions, and there remains a need for the generation of evidence to guide the consideration of cost-effectiveness of malaria tools and subsequent intervention layering, as well as technical guidance on the relative prioritization of vaccines compared to other malaria tools. The Secretariat also notes that prioritization and optimization of resources are critical. However, the guidance on conducting SNT, and the support system to provide it, are provided by WHO and the broader partnership, under RBM. The Secretariat is unlikely to have the central level funding to support workshops, TA and meetings to support these partners.			
Description of intended impact (required for	The development of an analytic plan and sharing of this plan with RBM and WHO, will ensure alignment and communication between CTs on key analytics for decision-making.			

“accepted” and “partially accepted” critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	
Activities or initiatives required to achieve the intended impact (including those already planned, under way or completed) (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical and important recommendations)	Development and sharing of the GF analytic plan. Secretariat

Recommendation 6		Type*	Response**	Responsible***
<p>Evaluate the long-term equity impacts of market shaping of costs. Offer countries strategic engagement in global market shaping in exchange for national funding commitments toward commodity purchases.</p> <p><i>For Supply Operations and the Market Shaping team:</i> Consider the potential for long-term equity impacts in determining market shaping. For example, if a tool (e.g., IRS, spatial emanators) will be needed in the long term to eliminate malaria, to manage insecticide resistance, or to dramatically reduce burden, there may be need to consider strategies to reduce prices in the present for future equity gains.</p> <p><i>For the Market Shaping Team:</i> Invite country program participation in the Market Shaping Strategy's Sourcing Strategic Review Meetings and/or other suitable high-level fora to improve attention to their perspectives, particularly on integrated vector management or tools needed to advance sub-national elimination priorities, provided new national commitments to health commodity purchasing are obtained. These could be initially modest but would be expected to grow over time</p>		Important	Partially accepted	The Secretariat
Justification for “partially accepted” and “rejected” (for critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	<p>The Global Fund no longer hosts Strategic Review Meetings, however the mentioned product types are included in product pipeline that is regularly shared with the Strategy Committee and Board with the latest version provided to the 53rd Board where it is stated that Global Fund and partners continue to monitor the product pipeline across grant cycles to inform and prioritize market shaping. Together with partners, the Global Fund assesses which products would benefit from market shaping tools according to the barriers to introduction or scaling, market dynamics and potential impact (prioritizing products with the greatest impact helps grant investments go further). The Strategy Committee and Board and their delegations are made up of all the key partners and implementers.</p> <p>We acknowledge that market shaping activities have global effects on product availability and that short-term decisions on cost and pricing may be different from long-term accessibility of products. Unfortunately,</p>			

	resources are limited to conduct a full market assessment. For products in the pipeline, Sourcing has partner meetings with suppliers and partners and could include countries to get their perspectives.	
Description of intended impact (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	Country perspectives in partner meeting would allow SO to incorporate these into SO activities and decisions.	
Activities or initiatives required to achieve the intended impact (including those already planned, under way or completed) (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical and important recommendations)	Plan with SO to review the findings of the report and determine a way to incorporate country perspectives	The Secretariat

Recommendation 7		Type*	Response**	Responsible***
<p>Better leverage external (non-Global Fund) investment in sub-national and community health systems.</p> <p><i>Through FR Structure, Guidance, and Strategic TA:</i> Improve clarity in NMSPs/FRs on the roles played by and funding received through all malaria-related investors, public and private, both within and outside the traditional malaria partnership, to better align limited Global Fund RSSH resources with the highest community and sub-national system strengthening priorities.</p> <p><i>For the Global Fund-Gavi-GFF:</i> Improve communications on and reporting of progress against the goals of this fast-evolving partnership to ensure better awareness and understanding across global and country stakeholders, with a focus on country-level implications, opportunities, and inputs.</p>		Important	Partially accepted	The Secretariat and RBM
Justification for “partially accepted” and “rejected” (for critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	<p>The RBM gap tables and the funding landscape tables do take into account sub-national and community health systems. HPMT (the Health Product Management Team) has a recommendation to provide more granularity in the budget and regular updating and making it available online. External partner tracking of commodities is difficult and, given the current landscape, important but this could better be placed within RBM. For the implementation of an integrated approach the Secretariat agrees with the importance of clear communications to countries, including on the continued collaboration between Gavi and the Global Fund to strengthen the impact of their collective investments in malaria. The options to strengthen ongoing collaboration are currently under discussion by the Gavi and Global Fund Boards. These discussions are informed by inputs from countries, including through the Secretariat’s malaria and country team direct engagements with countries, the insights provided by this</p>			

	evaluation, and country constituencies represented on the Joint Committee Working Group (JCWG), governance committees and Board.	
Description of intended impact (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	Working with RBM and HPMT to ensure there is granularity and visibility into gaps as well as continued discussions of integration with GAVI should ensure that sub-national and community systems are tracked and aligned as much as possible.	
Activities or initiatives required to achieve the intended impact (including those already planned, under way or completed) (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical and important recommendations)	Options for collaboration on malaria are currently being discussed at the level of the Global Fund and Gavi Board. If these discussions result in any new guidance, this will be communicated to countries and partners once deliberations have concluded, ahead of GC8. RBM is also currently undertaking a review of the malaria gap tables and The Secretariat will continue their on-going work with them to ensure that it adequately reflects the needs to ensure robust community and subnational systems	The Secretariat

Recommendation 8		Type*	Response**	Responsible***
<p>Apply the core principles of the Lusaka Agenda to the core malaria SNT partnership.</p> <p><i>For the Global Fund and Its Principal SNT Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Improve cross-partner the alignment, coordination and transparency of SNT core TA for GC8 preparation. (2) Improve access to longer-term SNT TA based on country priorities and focused on skills transfer and capacity building. (3) Support improvement of and better access to reliable, timely data on core SNT process, TA, and progress metrics. 		Important	Partially accepted	The Secretariat and GAVI
Justification for “partially accepted” and “rejected” (for critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	While much of the funding for TA comes from external sources (RBM, BMGF and others) there are qualified TA providers under Global Fund and direct grant resources can be used to pay for such TA. The M&E maturity index and SME Gap Table from RBM can be utilized as key resources for the CTs and countries to determine their TA needs and direct resources to in-country partners.			
Description of intended impact (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	The harmonization of the M&E maturity index and SME Gap table, as well as continued availability of pre-qualified TA providers in countries should facilitate directing TA to where it is needed the most.			
Activities or initiatives required to achieve the intended impact (including those already planned, under way or completed) (required for “accepted”	See actions under Recommendation 3			See actions under Recommendation 3

and “partially accepted” critical and important recommendations)		
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Recommendation 9		Type*	Response* *	Responsible***
<p>Streamline the FR to make the data and planning on which SNT planning is based more visible; support active integration of sub-national data on climate, the malaria vaccine, malaria-relevant health equity factors in SNT planning, and access to and quality of care</p> <p><i>For GC8 FR Guidance and FR TA:</i> Require the data on which sub-national targeting and tailoring for maximum impact are based to be included in FRs in a streamlined manner. Support and guide systematic integration in SNT stratification and intervention targeting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) quality of care and operational considerations; b) vaccine coverage data/projections; c) sub-national climate metrics; d) actionable, relevant health equity data (including CRG). <p>Develop guidance focused on importance of, and methods for, these data into SNT, and integrate into pre-GC8 TA.</p>		Important	Accepted	The Secretariat
Justification for “partially accepted” and “rejected” (for critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	<p>The Secretariat appreciates the evaluation's recommendations to streamline the funding request information requirements to Applicants. This recommendation aligns with the Secretariat's broader commitment to simplification of Global Fund end-to-end processes and FR/GM requirements to reduce the administrative burden for applicants and allow greater focus on impact and grant implementation. The Secretariat refers to the “Evaluation of the Global Fund Funding Request and Grant-Making Stages of the 2023-2025 Funding Cycle”, which assessed the design, operationalization, and implementation of the GC7 FR/GM processes to determine their effectiveness in producing quality grants aligned with the Global Fund Strategy (2023-2028). As noted in the Secretariat Management Response to that evaluation, the Secretariat is committed to significantly reduce the level of effort involved in applying for Global Fund funding, negotiating, designing and approving grants in GC8 and beyond.</p> <p>In the present report, the independent evaluators found that simplifying the Global Fund funding request information requirements could increase visibility of SNT planning data, potentially increasing its use in</p>			

decision-making and strengthening funding requests as a result. The Secretariat shares the evaluators' view that greater use and visibility of SNT data can lead to substantial improvements, such as stronger programming, efficient allocation of resources, including domestic resources, and better understanding of decision-making in funding request development. The Secretariat notes that while streamlining funding request information requirements can contribute to strong SNT in the applications, such improvements also require strong country ownership and continuous engagement with the global malaria partnership to strengthen countries' ability to gather, store and analyze sub-national data and use this data for decision-making related to mixes and delivery of interventions.

The evaluation further recommended the Global Fund to require data on sub-national targeting and tailoring as part of funding request submission in a streamlined manner. The Secretariat notes that the GC7 application materials (i.e., funding request application form templates, instructions and applicant guidance) already encourage applicants, where relevant, to demonstrate the use of SNT strategies and plans where they have been conducted and/or planning for such efforts. The GC7 funding request template used as a default by High-Impact and Core portfolios² required applicants to reference the approach and evidence used to prioritize populations, barriers and geographies and the "the process of stratification and subnational tailoring used to determine the intervention mix" for malaria modules.³ In addition, the Malaria Information Note encourages countries to prioritize interventions based on sub-national data to achieve optimal intervention mixes that are cost-effective and affordable in the country context. While this has contributed to a significant improvement in the data and analytics that support targeting and tailoring decisions in GC7 funding requests, as acknowledged in the report, the Secretariat recognizes the evaluation's finding that it may not have resulted in consistent and clear articulation of SNT data and decision-making processes in all relevant funding requests.

² According to the [Global Fund's portfolio categorization criteria](#), High-Impact and Core portfolios are the largest portfolios with the highest disease burden.

³ In GC7, the [Full Review Funding Request Form](#) was used as a default by High-Impact and Core portfolios.

	<p>The Secretariat acknowledges the importance of ensuring that relevant funding requests are informed by quality SNT data and analytics. The Secretariat also recognizes the need for the TRP to have visibility of how such data was used in the funding request prioritization approach. While committed to simplifying the application materials overall for GC8, the Secretariat will consider targeted refinements to applicant guidance documents, notably the malaria Information Note,⁴ to better integrate into SNT data and planning relevant additional considerations. The GC8 guidance on climate and health will also include a guidance to better integrate relevant climate and environmental data into malaria programming and the need for integrating and using climate data into health information systems will be included in the GC8 modular framework handbook. The Secretariat agrees with the importance of considering malaria vaccines in SNT to inform and determine the optimal mix of malaria interventions. However, the Secretariat notes that Gavi and the Global Fund currently operate on different funding cycles, which complicates systematic consideration of the malaria vaccine in decision-making and the prioritization of malaria interventions. If Gavi and Global Fund cycles remain different, decisions on malaria interventions will continue to take place at different times. Through its collaboration with Gavi, the Global Fund Secretariat aims to identify opportunities for greater collaboration that enable countries to holistically plan and prioritize malaria interventions, based on country-owned plans and within available resources.</p>
Description of intended impact (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical <u>and</u> important recommendations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced articulation of SNT data and decision-making processes in relevant funding requests, leading to more effective review by the TRP and better implementation of tailored malaria interventions. • Improved visibility of data underlying intervention targeting decisions without adding complexity to the application process, allowing countries to better demonstrate evidence-based prioritization. • More holistic, data-driven approach to resource optimization across key dimensions (quality of care, climate considerations, vaccine integration, and health equity), supporting maximum impact within resource constraints.

⁴ [GC7 Malaria Information Note](#).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better alignment between funding requests and country NSPs, with clearer reflection of how sub-national data informs strategic decisions while maintaining the overall goal of simplifying the FR process. 	
Activities or initiatives required to achieve the intended impact (including those already planned, under way or completed) (required for “accepted” and “partially accepted” critical and important recommendations)	The cyclical review of FR/GM processes ahead of GC8 is ongoing. Changes to FR expectations approved by the Grant Life Cycle Steering Committee as part of this cyclical review will be operationalized and translated into applicant materials in time for the start of the next funding cycle. Target timing is end of July 2025.	The Secretariat

