# Evaluation of Community Engagement (CE) in the Global Fund Grant Cycle

17 March 2025

# Terms of Reference (ToR)

# 1. Introduction

1. These terms of reference (ToR) is for an independent evaluation to assess which combination of interventions, processes and factors have led to meaningful community engagement (CE) across the grant cycle (comprising of the three stages: Funding Request, Grant Making, and Grant Implementation).

2. The evaluation is part of the Global Fund Board-approved Multi-Year Evaluation Calendar for the 2023-2028 Strategy Period. It will be managed by the Evaluation and Learning Office (ELO) of the Global Fund under the oversight of the Global Fund Independent Evaluation Panel (IEP). This ToR outlines the background, purpose, audience, and use of the evaluation, objective and key evaluation questions, methodological considerations, timeline and deliverables, and the technical requirements the prospective evaluation team should meet.

# 2. Background

3. The Global Fund is a worldwide partnership to defeat HIV, TB, and Malaria (HTM) and ensure a healthier, safer, more equitable future for all. The Global Fund raises and invests more than US$5 billion a year to fight the deadliest infectious diseases, challenge the injustice that fuels them, and strengthen health systems and pandemic preparedness in more than 100 of the hardest-hit countries. As reported in the most recent Global Fund Results Report[1], since 2002, the Global Fund partnership has saved 65 million lives and has reduced the combined death rate from the three diseases by 61 percent in the countries in which it invests.

**Brief timeline of community engagement at the Global Fund**

4. In the current Global Fund 2023-2028 Strategy, "Maximizing the Engagement and Leadership of most Affected Communities to Leave No One Behind" is one of the three Mutually Reinforcing Contributory Objectives. Community Engagement (CE) is acknowledged as supporting communities to engage in decisions that impact their lives and as a factor that drives improvements in effectiveness of health interventions. The active participation of local communities, being intimately familiar with their unique needs and challenges, allows for more effective identification and mitigation of systemic barriers to HTM outcomes. The term communities is defined as people living with and/or most affected by HIV, TB and malaria. This definition of communities includes key and vulnerable populations.

5. Strengthening meaningful CE aims to ensure that investments are evidence-driven, uphold human rights, consider age and gender disparities, and foster long-term sustainability. As these epidemics increasingly affect key and vulnerable populations that are often underserved by formal healthcare systems, bolstering their engagement in the grant cycle

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[1] https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/results/

is considered essential for optimizing grant design, promoting accountability and additionally for improving design and delivery of CE projects.

6. The thematic discussion "Communities at the Centre" in November 2022 (48th Board Meeting) elaborated that by Global Fund Strategy mid-point (2025) the ambition is to see progress in three areas: 1) Demonstrable enhancements in community engagement and leadership across grant cycle; 2) Improved Global Fund policies, process and approaches informed by evidence; 3) Clear roles, responsibilities, and accountability in the Secretariat and across the whole Global Fund Partnership. While the CE has evolved and several assessment and evaluations conducted, there is no specific baseline available that would allow for a straightforward comparison between objectives and achievements more generally.

7. As mentioned above, the establishment of CE at the Global Fund predated the current strategy. An important step was the introduction of the Country Dialogue in 2014 and meaningful participation of key and vulnerable populations was also referenced in the previous Global Fund 2017-2022 Strategy.  The Country Dialogue instituted the opportunity for community stakeholders and civil society to engage in the Funding Request development process more formally, thereby enabling community actors to articulate priorities and needs. In addition, this enabled the Global Fund to respond to actual and changing needs of those most affected by HTM and supported relevant decisions made by Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCM).

8. The first Special Initiative with a focus on community engagement was launched in 2014 and subsequently approved as a Strategic Initiative (SI) for the implementation periods 2017-20 (Grant Cycle 5 (GC5)), 2021-23 (GC6) and 2024-26 (GC7). The GC5 SI was launched with a budget of USD 17.5 million. During this period, a SI Coordination Mechanism (including external partners) was established and continues to be implemented as part of the GC7 SI. The initial SI evolved further and was extended for GC6 (USD 17.5 million) and GC7 (USD 14 million).

9. In addition, the Global Fund launched an initiative to strengthen CCMs (a pilot in 2018-2019, and the main CCM Evolution SI in GC6) and which included the promotion of meaningful and inclusive community representation on CCMs. The corresponding performance framework of the SI is providing evidence and insights related to CE across several dimensions.

10. In 2020, the Covid pandemic disrupted the work of the Global Fund and led to new and adaptive ways of working which provided opportunities for enhanced CE:  C19RM, the C19 Accelerator, and the CE SI created openings for Technical Assistance and decision-making to be localized.    The Global Fund responded to the pandemic by adopting rapid processes and flexibilities. The C19RM experience provided lessons learned and insights that created opportunities to improve CE processes and approaches. Several audits by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of C19RM led to a reconsideration of the C19RM process including adding new elements designed to capture community priorities and increase ownership and dialogue.  The audits highlighted that these changes were positive and constructive leading to their adaptation into the current HTM funding process.

11. Corresponding to the new Mutually Reinforcing Contributory Objective "Maximizing the Engagement and Leadership of Most Affected Communities to Leave No One Behind" of the Global Fund 2023-2028 Strategy, the Global Fund introduced Key Performance Indicator (KPI) C1. The KPI measures the degree of community engagement across three key stages of the Global Fund grant cycle (Funding Request, Grant Making, Grant Implementation). It assesses the effectiveness of the Global Fund in supporting and realizing community engagement.

12. The KPI C1 is based on a survey of all countries receiving Global Fund allocation in the respective period. The survey assesses the satisfaction of communities with engagement across the three stages of the grant cycle. The Community, Rights and Gender team of the Global Fund Secretariat (CRG) administered the survey for the first time between December 2023 and January 2024 and the responses are currently being analyzed. The present round of KPI C1 survey was administered in 79 countries7). Responses were received from individuals in 64 countries and 15 countries did not record responses. The total number of responses was 1,194 (average of 18 per country). The response rate is not reported. The preliminary result, based on survey responses from countries that submitted Funding Request in Windows 1 to 3, was a satisfaction score of 68% in engagement in this stage of the grant cycle against a target of 75%.

**Interventions and processes in the current Strategy**

13. There are several entry-points for CE across the grant cycle (GC). Below is a summary of key elements which is, however, not exhaustive and will be completed during the inception phase.

14. Prior to the development of the Funding Request (FR), communities are expected to be engaged in development of national strategies for HTM, coordination of community action and identification of joint priorities. For the GC, three minimum expectations for community engagement have been formulated at the Global Fund.  These expectations are projected to increase transparency, accountability, and opportunities for community engagement:

•Minimum Expectation 1: The funding request development must include transparent and inclusive consultations with populations most impacted by HIV, TB and malaria, across gender and age. This process will result in a document called "Annex of funding priorities of civil society and communities most affected by HIV, TB and malaria".

•Minimum Expectation 2: To further their involvement in oversight, community and civil society representatives in the CCMs must have timely access to information on the status of grant negotiations and any changes to the grant.

•Minimum Expectation 3: Community and civil society representatives in the CCM have timely access to information on program implementation.

15. All coordinating mechanisms should comply with each of the below eligibility requirements, as outlined in the CCM Policy.  Requirements #4 and 5 explicitly refer to communities and non-governmental members, others more indirectly when referencing transparency and inclusiveness:

Requirement 1: Carry out a transparent and inclusive funding application development process.

Requirement 2: Facilitate an open and transparent Principal Recipient selection process.

Requirement 3: Submit and follow an oversight plan for all Global Fund approved financing.

Requirement 4: Show evidence of membership of affected communities in the coordinating mechanism.

Requirement 5: Ensure representation of nongovernmental members in the coordinating mechanism through transparent and documented processes developed by each constituency.

Requirement 6: Adopt and enforce a code of conduct, and conflict of interest policy.

16. Specific support and interventions provided by the Global Fund are:
- Providing peer-led short-term Technical Assistance (TA) to ensure that communities are meaningfully engaged in Global Fund processes.
- Long-term capacity building of Key and Vulnerable Population networks supporting communities (1) to engage safely and effectively, (2) advocate for increased investment and more rights-based and gender responsive programs, and (3) adapt and use evidence-based implementation tools and guidance.
- Regional communication and coordination platforms to strengthen communication and coordination to ensure that communities are (1) utilizing quality information and communication, (2) participating in decision-making processes, and (3) accessing coordinated and harmonized TA and support.

17. Civic space is a critical external factor affecting progress and achievements of CE at national level.  This is especially relevant for marginalized, excluded, and criminalized populations as well as community-led organizations. There is a general concern that civic space and freedoms of assembly, association and expression are under threat, and behavior of vulnerable groups is criminalized in some countries. Such developments risk undermining CE progress, the sustainability of achievements and may even put the safety and security of community members at risk. It is therefore suggested that civic space be considered as one potential external factor during the evaluation, acknowledging, however, that the Global Fund has limited agency to influence. Civic Space will be assessed primarily utilizing secondary data at national level, though differentiated by topic/issue. In addition, the evaluation will solicit the perceptions and experiences regarding civic space during primary data collection.

18. Some of the challenges, related to CE, shared in consultations with ELO during the scoping phase are:
- Community and civil society engagement during FR stage may not consistently translate into engagement during grant-making, nor necessarily into community priorities being reflected in the final grant design or their engagement in grant oversight during implementation.
- Limited engagement during grant-making may delay the start of effective oversight by the CCM (including communities and civil society) during the first year of implementation.

- Following the submission of the FR and grant signature, information is not consistently shared with community and civil society stakeholders by CCMs, Principal Recipients, and Global Fund Country Teams.

# 3. Purpose and Objectives

19. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to assess which combination of interventions, processes and factors have led to meaningful community engagement during the grant cycle. The findings and recommendations are expected are expected to generate organizational level learning, inform Grant Cycle 8 (GC8) preparations, enhance CE processes and interventions as well as inform deliberations that can support and strengthen meaningful community engagement.

20. During the KPI Framework development for the current Strategy, it was acknowledged that KPI C1 will provide an important but limited snapshot of satisfaction levels among community members and that an evaluation would be able to provide rich and contextual insights and evidence into what constitutes meaningful CE processes and achievements. Hence, recognizing the criticality of CE for the achievement of the Strategy of the Global Fund, an independent evaluation was included in the Board approved Multi-year Evaluation Calendar as part of the M&E Framework for the 2023-2028 Strategy.

21. The design of the evaluation is underpinned by an outcome-focused approach with "meaningful community engagement" as the outcome. The outcome measure will be differentiated by Grant Cycle stage. Consultations with Global Fund Secretariat as part of the scoping phase indicate that community engagement is significantly differentiated by Grant Cycle stage and that outcomes associated with CE vary across the cycle. For this evaluation, the term outcome is conceived as immediate outcome resulting from Global Fund interventions and processes.[2] Both outcome and differentiation of outcome across Grant Cycle stage are key ingredients of a Theory of Change (ToC) that will be developed retrospectively in the inception phase (see also paragraph #34).

22. The Global Fund Strategy 2017-2022 explains that meaningful engagement is recognized as a necessary step towards increasing investments in evidence-based and rights-based programming which deliver greater impact on the responses to the three diseases, and which strengthen local accountability." (p.31). At a more operational level, the Global Fund interprets meaningful community engagement as where the role of communities is consistently and continuously acknowledged in decision making and processes, and where communities' unique expertise, perspectives and lived experiences are sought and valued.[3] For the purpose of this evaluation, it is suggested to conceptualize "meaningful community engagement" by combining Global Fund indicators associated with CE as a "CE

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[2] The concept of "immediate outcome" for this evaluation is similar to the use of the term in the Results-Based Management approach of Global Affairs Canada and which distinguishes between immediate, intermediate and ultimate outcomes. The latter often being considered impact: https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/funding-financement/results_based_management-gestion_axee_resultats-guide.aspx?lang=eng#b51

[3] This definition was adapted by the CRG team from Spieldenner, Andrew; French, Martin; Ray, Venita; Minalga, Brian; Sardina, Cristine; Suttle, Robert; Castro-Bojorquez, Marco; Lewis, Octavia; and Sprague, Laurel (2022).

Index".4 It is emphasized that such an index serves as a springboard for the evaluation process and is not intended to be a conclusive or reductionist definition of CE at the Global Fund. The index is comprised of a range of indicators that capture key characteristics and elements of the Grant Cycle.

23. Based on the purpose of the evaluation, the objectives are:

   1. Assessment of the effectiveness and adequacy of community engagement processes and interventions.[5]
   2. Identification of internal and external factors and the extent to which each category enable and/or /hinder meaningful community engagement.

24. The main audience and users of the evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations are the Global Fund Secretariat teams that drive and support CE as well as country stakeholders (i.e. CCM representatives), community-led organizations as well as organizations with similar mandate and objectives. In addition, Governance Bodies and technical and bilateral partners are important audiences for this evaluation as findings and recommendations may suggest different ways of working across the Global Fund partnership. This will require that the evaluation process and communication of findings are tailored to the needs of this diverse audience.

25. Acknowledging the history and evolution of CE at the Global Fund, the starting point is 2021 and the evaluation will cover the 3.5-year period until mid-2024. This will allow for the inclusion of the adaptations to the Covid pandemic, GC6 and preparations for GC7, the CE SI (GC6) as well as changes emanating from the CCM Evolution initiative.

26. In 2024, ELO is also commissioning an evaluation on Community Responses and System Strengthening (CRSS). The main point of differentiation is that the CRSS evaluation will primarily assess the challenges and success factors in community systems strengthening that enable HTM program effectiveness, quality, and efficiency as well as the contribution of community-led responses in ensuring access to health services. The decision to separate out the two evaluations has been made through careful and consultative dialogue and decision-making. Where there has been deemed to be a potential risk of overlap relevant elements of the evaluation have been removed from the scope of one of the evaluations. The CRSS evaluation includes in its scope as of May 24th the following elements that are not included in CE: (1) community-led monitoring (CLM) to enable communities to oversee and report on the quality and effectiveness of health services; (2) community-led research and advocacy to support communities to conduct research and advocate for their health needs and rights; (3) community capacity building and leadership development to strengthen the abilities of community members to lead and manage health initiatives.

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[4] Examples of three indicators for illustration: Does the non-state sector (Private Sector / Civil Society / Academia) account for at least 40% of the Coordinating Mechanism seats? [For the purposes of the evaluation "non-state" sector is defined according to the working definition of Country Coordination Mechanism Hub: "Non-state actors within CCMs are comprised of representatives of National NGOs, CBOs, people living with three diseases, key affected populations, private sector, academic and non-governmental institutions"]. Are non-state members actively engaged in all key committees (oversight, executive, ethics)? Does the Oversight Committee [of CCM] include Key and vulnerable populations / People living with the disease(s) representative(s)? The indicators and data associated with indicators are generated through CCMs and the business owner associated with this data is CCM Hub. The proposal to construct an index based these indicators is supported by CCM Hub and CRG Primary User (Business Owner of the CE Evaluation).

[5] Adequacy is understood here as "sufficient for the purpose".

# 4. Areas of Inquiry and Key Evaluation Questions

27. The key evaluation questions that will guide this evaluation have been informed by consultations with Global Fund Secretariat and Strategy Committee members and are listed below. The questions will be fine-tuned, as deemed appropriate, during the inception phase to ensure relevance and utilization of the exercise once the evaluation team is onboard in further consultation with a broad set of stakeholders and in close collaboration with ELO.

Table 1: Evaluation Objectives, Areas of Inquiry and Key Evaluation Questions.

| Evaluation Objectives, or Criteria or Themes | Indicative Evaluation Questions |
|---|---|
| 1. Assessment of the effectiveness and adequacy of community engagement processes and interventions. | How effective are the interventions and processes of the Global Fund in achieving or contributing to meaningful community engagement during the GC? |
| | Are the interventions and processes of the Global Fund adequate in achieving or contributing to meaningful community engagement and are they appropriately tailored to differentiation across key Grant Cycles? |
| | What is their relevance and reach/coverage within available resources of the Global Fund?[6] |
| | How and to what extent do the interventions of the Global Fund build on and complement each other? |
| | How and to what extent do the interventions of the Global Fund support community expertise and knowledge (which are expected objectives of Technical Assistance)? |
| 2. Identification of internal and external factors and the extent to which they enable and/or /hinder meaningful community engagement | • What is the extent to which coordination and alignment among Global Fund Secretariat entities is effective and adequate? If necessary, how could Global Fund strengthen coordination and alignment? |
| | • What is the level of coherence across the Global Fund Partnership regarding how CE is supported? If necessary, how could Global Fund strengthen coherence?[7] |
| | • What role does civic space play in affecting Global Fund CE interventions and results?[8] |

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[6] Reach and coverage will include challenges such as reaching mobile populations such as IDPs, refugees, nomadic or mobile herders etc. as well as working in countries characterized by COE (Challenging Operating Environment).

[7] Having a common understanding and coordinated approach that clarifies roles and responsibilities and that has joint accountabilities was presented to the 48th Board meeting as part of a step change in how the partnership approaches community engagement.

[8] The evaluation will apply accepted, credible, and relevant secondary data sources to capture civic space.

| | • What are the risks associated with shrinking civic space and can they be mitigated by the Global Fund? |
|---|---|

28. It is important to emphasize that the impact of CE on addressing the three diseases, on service delivery at national or local level or on behavioral changes at individual level is not within the scope of this evaluation. Neither will the evaluation include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness of CE.

29. The evaluation will not explicitly incorporate C19RM in its scope as an Area of Inquiry. However, the Global Fund response to C19 and the adaptations realized by community groups and Global Fund are elements of the evolution of CE and will be reflected. Previous evaluations and assessments have indicated that the response to C19 was associated with (i) increased flexibility of design, response, and implementation; (ii) improved responsiveness in implementation; (iii) increased reliance on competencies, skills, knowledge, expertise of communities; (iv) supported bottom-up community-led prioritization.

30. The Areas of Inquiry and KEQ will be revised and finalized during the inception phase and informed by findings from recent Global Fund evaluations, previous reports by the Technical Evaluation Reference Group, relevant audit/advisory reports from the Office of Inspector General (OIG), and available external documentation and research such as the recently (April 22nd, 2024) shared RISE report and several mid-term and endline reports by CRG. Additional key reference documents are the evaluation of Community Rights & Gender Strategic Initiative 2017 – 2019 and the final evaluation of the GC6 Community Engagement Strategic Initiative, both commissioned by CRG. A reference list is provided at the end of this document. Findings and recommendations of selected evaluations have been summarized and will inform the inception phase. Please see a section that summarizes key evaluations towards the end of the ToR following the List of Acronyms and Abbreviations section. The section is entitled "Summary of Results of Selected Evaluations".

# 5. Methodological Considerations

31. The evaluation employs an outcome-focused approach. The evaluation design and approach are grounded in and structured by Grant Cycle stages and will be informed by the ToC which will be established during the inception phase. The evaluation is expected to give thought to the following evaluation design elements:

   a. Considering the contributary nature of CE within the Global Fund Strategy

   b. Reflection of the significant heterogeneity and diversity among countries, grants, and population groups. Communities and civil societies are not monolithic, may be fragmented and even characterized by conflict.

c. Insights generated through evaluation activities that involve direct engagement with communities particularly those communities that are most affected and excluded are particularly valuable and relevant within the boundaries of this evaluation.

d. Meaningful community engagement can be achieved on different pathways and can be realized through several configurations of interventions, processes, and factors. Such pathways and configurations are expected to be explored, described, and analyzed.

e. Identifying useful and feasible ways to involve community groups, representatives, or associations in certain phases of the evaluations process (for example inception, data collection and analysis, interpretation, and dissemination phases) and to solicit their opinion in a safe and secure manner. Opportunities to engage with PLHIV, TB survivor and malaria community networks are of specific interest.

f. Considering gender and human rights dimensions in the selection of methods and tools, data collection and analysis as well as stakeholder mapping.

g. Formulation of learning opportunities and products as well as actionable recommendations within the purview of the Global Fund.

32. The suggested approach and design elements are method-neutral, i.e., they do not impose the use of particular methods or tools. Nevertheless, it is expected that the methodology and tools reflect, and are informed by, the listed design elements and that qualitative and quantitative methods and tools are applied. Furthermore, it is critical that any proposed combination of methods and tools clearly outlines how they will complement each other and allow exploring the interplay of CE interventions, processes, and factors. Data and information will have to be triangulated, and the strength of the evidence reviewed to ensure robust and comprehensive evaluation findings and recommendations. The specific data collection and analysis methods and tools will be confirmed during the inception phase.

33. The "CE Index" described in paragraph 17 informs a case-based approach (case=country) to compare and contrast two groups: A) successful/exemplary CE and B) limited progress. The Global Fund designation of Challenging Operating Environment (COE) will also be considered when selecting cases, as well as a small number of additional criteria (e.g., country portfolio categories, region, language). Advancing CE in COE has been observed as specifically challenging and hence, it is important to reflect this in the sampling approach. The intention is to select four to six countries per group. However, the number of countries per group may be larger if methodological requirements necessitate this. Country insights and information will mostly be collected virtually, though direct data collection in a small number of countries is an option if relevant and useful.

34. During the inception phase the Supplier will be expected to consult with the Secretariat and other key stakeholders, including community representatives on the CCM, community-led organizations and/or PLHIV, TB survivor and malaria community networks. Furthermore, the Supplier is expected to conduct a desk review of critical documents, reports, audits, and

evaluations to further conceptualize the outcome "meaningful community engagement", specify internal and external factors (e.g. civic space), elaborate the Areas of Inquiry and KEQ as well as review case sampling criteria and selection. The design should acknowledge and reflect that conditions such as civic space are context specific, situational, shifting and dynamic. This phase will also include further analysis of KPI C1 satisfaction survey data to explore different perceptions across heterogeneous community groups to inform the evaluation design.

35. It is important to note that there is currently no specific ToC for CE available. The current CE SI, however, does include a ToC which articulates four outcomes. Since implementation started in 2024 (until 2026), the evaluation can consider the design and plan of the SI, but implementation and progress is outside the scope of this evaluation. Nevertheless, the process of developing a ToC for this evaluation will leverage key elements of the most recent CE SI, acknowledging that CE at the Global Fund encompasses a broader mandate and remit than the SI only. Furthermore, the organization-wide ToC developed within the SR2023 evaluation included CE as a "key assumption to drive results from Global Fund strategic levers", though was not positioned as an explicit driver of change. A ToC for this evaluation will be developed retrospectively by the Supplier in collaboration with ELO and in consultation with CRG. The ToC will frame and inform the evaluation process. The ToC will be informed by a non-linear approach, i.e. reflect multiple pathways that can lead to meaningful CE, and the contributory role of CE in Global Fund. It will also integrate the three listed GC stages. It is important to emphasize that the LoE invested in developing a ToC as part of the inception phase has to be commensurate with the utility of the ToC for Global Fund during and after the evaluation.

36. The inception phase will also include a stakeholder mapping exercise to prepare for data collection and analysis and to ensure soliciting the views of multiple stakeholders. The stakeholder mapping will ensure the inclusion of most affected and/or marginalized community groups, and which is a central principle of CE at the Global Fund.

37. Evaluation activities that involve direct engagement with excluded and most affected communities, People Living with HIV (PLHIV), TB survivors and malaria communities are considered an important component of the process. Nonetheless, inclusion of excluded communities should be balanced with pragmatic considerations associated with the boundaries of evaluation in relation to time and resources. Furthermore, methodologies will be grounded in the acknowledgement that communities are heterogeneous, diverse, fragmented and at times conflictual.

# 6. Evaluation Phases

38. The Evaluation is expected to be conducted over nine months and is divided into three main phases (approximate duration in brackets):

39. **Inception Phase (four weeks)**

- Following the contracting of the Supplier, ELO will organize a comprehensive onboarding of the Supplier and provide and/or facilitate access to relevant documents and data, including any relevant evaluations and audits.

- During this time the Supplier will consult with key Secretariat staff as well as selected key stakeholders. The Supplier will also be introduced to members of the IEP. The onboarding will likely be conducted virtually, though if feasible, the Evaluation Team Lead might travel to Geneva during this time.

- Following, the Supplier will refine and adapt their initial technical proposal to finalize the evaluation design, modify evaluation questions if needed, outline the methodology in an evaluation framework against the evaluation objectives and questions, and define the data and information needs. The Supplier will deliver a ToC that is structured according to GC. The ToC will be developed in collaboration with CRG, ELO and other key stakeholders.

- The Supplier will submit an Evaluation Workplan after two weeks and a comprehensive Inception Report after a total of four weeks. The Inception Report will include a ToC. ELO will facilitate access to requested Global Fund data and information.

40. **Data Collection and Analysis Phase (12 weeks)**
- Suppliers proceed with the independent collection and analysis of data and information as described in the Inception Report. The Evaluation Team Lead and ELO will hold regular meetings to review progress, facilitate the process if necessary and/or address any concerns.

- In addition, this phase will include learning and review touchpoints between the evaluation team, key stakeholders, and ELO to present and discuss preliminary findings.

41. **Reporting Phase (eight weeks)**

- The Evaluation Team Lead will submit a draft Final Evaluation Report at the start of this phase. The report will be reviewed by ELO and selected stakeholders and feedback provided to the Evaluation Team Lead.

- Following, workshop/meeting with key stakeholders will be organized by ELO (co-chaired by ELO and IEP). The Supplier will present the final analysis and draft recommendations for discussion and validation. It is expected that at least the Evaluation Team Lead will come in person for this event to the Global Fund Secretariat.

- The Evaluation Team Lead submits the Final Evaluation Report as well as an evaluation brief, considering the results of the aforementioned meeting/workshop.

- Once the final report has been accepted by ELO, the Supplier submits an Evaluation Brief and a Summative Slide Deck as the final deliverables (see following section).

# 7. Deliverables and Expected Timelines

42. The following deliverables and expected timeline are planned. ELO will provide templates and/or guidance for all deliverables at the start of the inception phase:

Table 2: Evaluation Deliverables and Due Dates

| Deliverable | Due Date |
|---|---|
| Evaluation Workplan | Mid-August 2024 |
| Inception Report | Late-August 2024 |
| Preliminary Findings Presentation | Early November 2024 (ten weeks into data collection) |
| Draft Final Evaluation Report | Late November 2024 |
| Final Analysis and Recommendations Presentation | Mid-January 2025 |
| Final Evaluation Report | Late February 2025 |
| Evaluation Brief and Summative Slide Deck | End-March 2025 |

# 8. Skills and Experience Required from the Evaluation Team

43. The Supplier's Evaluation Team will comprise a mix of experts with a balance of relevant expertise and knowledge in the following areas. In the technical proposal the Evaluation Team description should also include level of effort allocated to each team member. It is vital that organizations bidding for the evaluation are aware of expectations associated with the final evaluation report. Hence, it is suggested to review the Quality Assurance Framework when developing the technical proposal.

**Essential:**

- Advanced knowledge of and experience with complex public health organizations and programs.
- Advanced knowledge and understanding of and experience with community engagement approaches of global financing institutions.
- Familiarity with and significant experience in conducting evaluations applying the referenced evaluation approach.
- Knowledge and experience in applying case-based and configurational methodologies.
- Extensive experience with appropriate evaluation design and methods, both quantitative and qualitative including relevant research analysis skills, handling large data sets, triangulating, and synthesizing diverse information.
- Experience in evaluation/assessment/advisory on organizational and institutional change.
- In-country experience of public health programs (design and /or evaluation) and multi-stakeholder country processes

- Appropriate, responsive, and timely administrative support to the evaluation process.
- Meaningful inclusion of civil society organizations and community groups are an essential and necessary element of the team.
- Gender balance and gender qualifications in the evaluation team.
- Demonstrable record of working in a participatory manner with communities most affected by the three diseases.
- Meaningful inclusion of civil society organizations and community groups contributing to the design, analysis, interpretation, and generation of evaluation findings.
- One or more members of the Evaluation Team personally identify with the communities most affected by the three diseases.
- Political analysis skills that provide scope to fully articulate the political dynamics and contextual factors that underpin CE processes.

**Highly Desirable:**

- Familiarity with the Global Fund at Secretariat level and with grant design and implementation at country level.
- Full language proficiency in English and French. Other language proficiency in the team.

# 9. List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AGYW | Adolescent Girls and Young Women |
| C19 | COVID-19 |
| C19RM | COVID-19 Response Mechanism |
| CCM | Country Coordination Mechanism |
| CE | Community Engagement |
| CLR | Community-led Responses |
| CoE | Challenging Operating Environment |
| CRG | Community Rights and Gender Department |
| CRSS | Community Responses and System Strengthening |
| ELO | Evaluation and Learning Office |
| FR | Funding Request |
| GC | Grant Cycle |
| HTM | HIV, TB and Malaria |
| IEP | Independent Evaluation Panel |
| KEQ | Key Evaluation Question |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicator |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| NFM | The Global Fund's New Funding Model |
| OECD/DAC | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee |
| OHCHR | United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| OIG | Office of the Inspector General |
| PLHIV | People Living with HIV |
| PCE | Prospective Country Evaluations |
| RISE | Representation, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equity |
| RBM | Results-based Management |
| SI | Strategic Initiative |
| SO | Global Fund Strategic Objective |
| SR2023 | Strategic Review (2023) |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| TERG | Technical Evaluation Reference Group |
| ToC | Theory of Change |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| USD | United States Dollar |

# 10. Annexes

# Annex 1: Summary of Results of Selected Evaluations

41. This section presents the results and recommendations of relevant previous evaluations. The section refers to four documents: (A) Thematic Evaluation on Community Engagement and Community-led Responses Secretariat-led with TERG oversight (CE-CLR); (B) Global Forum on MSM & HIV report of an Independent Multi-country Review of Community Engagement in Grant Making & Implementation Processes: Lessons Learned, Key principles and ways forward; (C) Community Rights & Gender Strategic Initiative 2017 – 2019: Independent Evaluation; (D) The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria: Strategic Review 2023 (SR2023).

42. Health Management Support Team. (2023). Thematic Evaluation on Community Engagement and Community-led Responses Secretariat-led with TERG oversight (CE-CLR). https://archive.theglobalfund.org/media/13140/archive_terg-community-engagement-community-led-responses_report_en.pdf .

43. The evaluation focused on the operationalization of Global Fund's support to community engagement (CE) and community-led responses (CLR) through country grants, multi-country grants, and SIs.

44. The key findings and conclusions are organized into: (i) strategic and secretariat level; (ii) country level. They include:

### i. Strategic and Secretariat level:

- There is a lack of a shared understanding of community contributions to the Global Fund's mission.
- Community contributions are under-recognized.
- The partnership model is under-utilized.
- Risk and processes trump the role of communities and undermine nuanced understanding and approaches which are mindful of complexity.
- Funding cycles do not sufficiently incentivize efforts to achieve sustainability and long-term change.
- The gender focus is under-developed.

### ii. Country Level:

- Grant architecture is not conducive to consistently elevating diverse community voices.
- An enabling environment is the key to successful Community Engagement
- Country ownership is often perceived as being synonymous with and is conflated with government ownership.

**Recommendations**

45. Recommendations relevant to the CE evaluation are presented below. Recommendations are organized into temporal categories: (i) quick wins (for roll out in NFM4); (ii) Medium

term (for roll out in NFM5); (iii) Long term (to be achieved in 2023 – 2028). This summary only presents recommendations associated with "Quick wins for roll out in NFM4)" given that these recommendations are of immediate relevance to this evaluation.

**Quick Wins (for roll out in NFM4):**

- Ensure community supported activities are linked to the Global Fund's overarching Theory of Change for the 2023-2028 strategy to guide the institutionalization of a community-centered, human rights promoting, and gender-transformative culture.
- The Secretariat, in consultation with key partners, should continue to develop a KPI that captures community contribution to Global Fund results for the new strategy 2023-2028, and also ensure that qualitative measures are in place to track progress towards long-term changes in capacities, enabling environments, sustainability and systems.
- Build minimum community engagement standards into consolidated guidance for each stage of the grant cycle to ensure the meaningful engagement and leadership of most affected communities, with an emphasis on rights, gender and equity considerations.

**Baran, B., Messerschmidt, L., O'Connor ,M., Rafif, N.(2017). Global Forum on MSM & HIV: Independent Multi-country Review of Community Engagement in Grant Making & Implementation Processes: Lessons Learned, Key principles and ways forward. https://www.globalfundadvocatesnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/MSMGF-CLAC-Study-Full7.pdf .**

46. This independent review, commissioned by the Community, Rights and Gender (CRG) Department at the Global Fund Secretariat, shares findings, conclusions, and recommendations for enhancing the meaningful engagement of communities in all phases of Global Fund grants, with an emphasis on grant making and grant implementation. The review synthesizes lessons learned and good practices for how communities engage meaningfully and identifies key principles and strategic actions the Global Fund can take to ensure greater accountability between communities, Country Coordinating Mechanisms, other key stakeholders, and the Global Fund itself. Please review the full document in particular the Executive Summary for a more detailed presentation of key findings and recommendations.

**Parsons, D. (2020). Community Rights & Gender Strategic Initiative 2017 – 2019: Independent Evaluation. APMG Health. https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/9947/crg_2017-2019strategicinitiativeindependent_evaluation_en.pdf**

**Background**

47. This evaluation has been commissioned by the Community, Rights and Gender (CRG) Department of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund), to review the results of the US$15m investment from the 2017-2019 allocation period in the CRG Strategic Initiative.

48. The aim of the Final Evaluation is:
- To reflect on the overall return on the Phase 2 (2017-2019; $15m) investment in the CRG Strategic Initiative in terms of results, management processes and learnings in

supporting the meaningful engagement of communities/civil society in the Global Fund's funding model; and

- To make recommendations for Phase 3 (2020-2022) of the CRG Strategic Initiative and potentially beyond, within the context of achieving the objectives of the Global Fund Strategy.

The CRG Strategic Initiative's work is organized into three components:

- Component 1 – Short-term Technical Assistance (TA): Providing peer-led TA to ensure that communities are meaningfully engaged in Global Fund-related processes.
- Component 2 – Long-term capacity building: Networks are developing capacity to ensure that communities are (1) engaging safely and effectively, (2) advocating for increased investment and more rights-based and gender responsive programs, and (3) adapting and using evidence-based implementation tools and guidance.
- Component 3 – Regional Platforms are strengthening communication and coordination systems to ensure that communities are (1) utilizing quality information and communication, (2) participating in decision-making processes, and (3) accessing coordinated and harmonized TA and support.

**Findings**

49. Component 1 provided civil society and community organizations with demand-driven, peer-to-peer, short-term TA to improve community engagement in Global Fund-related processes. A total of US$6m is dedicated to short-term TA within the CRG Strategic Initiative, making this component 40% of the overall budget.

50. Between 15 March 2017 and 10 April, Component 1 received 212 requests for TA and 159 requests were deemed eligible, while 111 went on to delivery. TA was delivered across 69 countries, including 17 challenging operating environment countries, and including support for HIV, TB, HIV/TB, and malaria grants. A milestone of progress was the expansion of eligible TA to cover all phases of the grant cycle, including implementation and oversight, which accounted for 46.5% of all eligible requests. Demand for TA was greatly increased relative to the Special Initiative period, highlighting improved integration of Component 1 and Component 3, whereby Component 3 Regional Platforms played a significant role in supporting communities to submit TA requests.

51. Component 2 aimed to strengthen long-term capacity of community groups and networks to better support the meaningful engagement of their constituencies in Global Fund-related processes. A total of US$5m was dedicated to long-term capacity building within the CRG Strategic Initiative, making this component 33.3% of the overall CRG Strategic Initiative budget.

52. A notable expansion compared to the Special Initiative, under the Strategic Initiative the Component supported HIV, TB, and malaria communities, via grants to 14 grantees.

53. Component 3 supported civil society and community organizations to host regional communication and coordination Platforms to strengthen systems and information for meaningful community engagement in Global Fund-related processes.

54. Six Regional Platforms were active for the duration of the CRG Strategic Initiative. Platforms implemented a striking range of activities, touching on all elements of the extensive MEL framework. Highlights of achievement included the expansion of communications reach to a combined estimate of 32,500 constituents reached in sharing of strategic documents, implementation updates and other informational resources; as well as the support for the development of 112 unique TA requests (53% of all requests). Platforms also implemented targeted activities on the ground in 38 countries. This Component was consistently the most recognized and understood for its added value across a broad range of stakeholders surveyed for this evaluation, noting a marked improvement from the Special Initiative, under which there was a noted lack of understanding and appreciation of the role of Platforms.

55. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria: Strategic Review 2023 (SR2023).

56. The Supplier will receive access to SR2023 report when it is published. The Evaluation Function of Global Fund aims to publish the report in time for the Inception Phase of the evaluation.

# Annex 2: List of References

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