

COVID-19 Response Mechanism Guidance Note for CCMs

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What is this guidance for?

To provide Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) with practical advice on how to ensure an inclusive consultation process when developing C19RM requests for funding and to complement other development activities aligned with HIV, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria funding request(s) for the next funding cycle (GC7). This guidance note (Note) complements the [C19RM Guidelines](#) and [Technical Information Note](#) which cover the end-to-end processes for C19RM. This note also introduces additional funding resources that CCMs can access to develop inclusive C19RM applications and outlines the tools available to support enhanced engagement.

Additional CCM funding resources

In an evolving pandemic context, many countries are shifting their COVID-19 emergency response to longer term investments in systems for health and pandemic preparedness. C19RM will continue to support countries in their COVID-19 responses in case of new surges. Against this backdrop, the Global Fund continues to make available additional resources for CCMs intending to submit a C19RM funding request in 2023, for C19RM Portfolio Optimization.

In addition to CCM's existing annual funding, a request can be made for an increase of up to 25% of the CCM's¹ annual funding amount, to support increased engagement with civil society and communities and to ensure coordination with national COVID-19 response bodies and/or equivalent bodies for HIV, TB and malaria programs, resilient and sustainable systems for health (RSSH) and pandemic preparedness, including alignment with relevant national plans. This will allow CCMs to deliver a more robust civil society organization (CSO) engagement process and better connect

¹ Please note this support is available to CCMs and RCMs but not to Regional Organizations (ROs) at this time.

country dialogue to related processes and support increased community participation during C19RM funding request development,² in line with CSO and community feedback from previous rounds of C19RM funding. Details on how to access this funding can be found below.

Stakeholder engagement

All funding requests submitted to the Global Fund are screened for compliance with Eligibility Requirement 1 of the [Global Fund's CCM Policy](#).

- Eligibility Requirement 1 requires all CCMs to:
 1. Coordinate the development of all funding requests through transparent and documented processes that engage a broad range of stakeholders, including CCM members and non-members, in the solicitation and the review of activities to be included in the funding request; and
 2. Clearly document efforts to engage Key Populations in the development of funding requests.
- In April 2020, the Global Fund established C19RM to support countries as they respond to COVID-19, which clearly had a devastating impact on global health systems, jeopardizing the fight against HIV, TB and malaria and progress towards the 2030 goals for the three diseases.
- In March 2021, thanks to additional funding provided by donors, the Global Fund Board approved an extension of the C19RM with plans for increased funding applications from affected countries.
- In November 2022, the Global Fund Board further extended the utilization period of C19RM funds through 31 December 2025 to allow more time for effective implementation, to facilitate investment in the critical components of RSSH that underpin the COVID-19 response and strengthen pandemic preparedness. The Board did not change the mandate of C19RM, and thus the CCM's role in facilitating C19RM consultation and oversight remains.
- Although surveys and feedback suggest civil society and communities' participation has improved in C19RM funding request development, there is still a need for CCMs to be able to access additional dedicated C19RM funds to ensure strong community engagement around the development of C19RM funding requests. Due to the evolving nature of the pandemic, national COVID-19 coordinating bodies may have dissolved, so the relevant bodies for RSSH and pandemic preparedness should be involved in the relevant country dialogue process. Country dialogue needs to ensure complementarity and alignment between GC7, C19RM and other sources of funding.
- As countries are invited to apply for further C19RM funding it is important that CCMs ensure:
 1. Maximum engagement with all stakeholders on the CCM, particularly with civil society members;

² C19RM Funding Request development includes development of initial C19RM requests and C19RM portfolio optimization requests.

2. They actively reach out to non-CCM members, such as community populations severely impacted by the pandemic; and
3. There is effective alignment and coordination with the national COVID-19 response bodies, equivalent bodies for HIV, TB and malaria programs, RSSH and pandemic preparedness (as relevant) and with other bilateral and multilateral partners supporting in the country.

What does Engagement on C19RM mean?

The **objective** is to ensure there is a robust CCM-led consultative process around development of the funding request which results in an application representing the views of those most affected by the pandemic. The C19RM funding request should be aligned with and be complementary to the national COVID-19 response and pandemic preparedness plans and must actively consider community interventions. Furthermore, this process should make use of synergies to mitigate the impact on HIV, TB and malaria, and strengthening systems for health.

Three **(3) key types of stakeholders** need to be actively engaged in the dialogue around the C19RM funding request development process. Each requires a different engagement approach from the CCM to facilitate their effective participation and take full advantage of their input.



All three elements are essential to meet the minimum standards determined by the Global Fund.

Civil Society

Inclusive civil society engagement is about the degree of involvement and dialogue during the application process with all stakeholders, including those with less power or visibility, who are impacted by a disease and affected by plans to respond to the pandemic or to prepare for future ones. Many of these stakeholders have been traditionally excluded from decision making and there are real opportunities for CCMs to help address some of the inequities communities face as a result of the COVID-19 and other potential pandemics.

CCMs have a duty **to raise the voice of CS members** and expand consultation beyond traditional communities affected by HIV, TB and malaria, to reach other disadvantaged persons, such as the elderly, people with disabilities and those at risk from Gender-based violence (GBV).

Considerations for the funding request and Implementation arrangements

- (a) Data from communities will be needed to inform the C19RM funding request, which must detail how funding will be used to respond to the impact of COVID-19 or (prepare for future pandemics) on Key Populations, GBV, and human rights issues and should ideally list explicitly which populations are most and disproportionately impacted.
- (b) CCMs should explore how to provide support to Principal Recipients (PRs) to ensure that PRs have in place the civil society or Community-based-implementers as service providers that are best placed **to respond to the urgent needs of communities.**³
- (c) Additionally, a list of concrete examples of **Community Rights and Gender-related activities** to respond to the impact of COVID-19 (and prepare for future pandemics) can be found [here](#) and can be used as a tool to help generate new ideas in CCM discussions.
- (d) All consultations must be documented and included in the C19RM funding request submission (as detailed in the application guidance), including capturing a list of civil society members' suggestions for funding, even if these are not prioritized in the final, submitted budget. This information will be used by the Global Fund to assess applications and to give a fuller picture of community engagement and needs.
- (e) Finally, the design should demonstrate complementarity with civil society representatives' input into GC7 funding requests.

For further guidance, please refer to the <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/covid-19/response-mechanism/> and also the [Community Engagement Toolbox](#) developed by the Regional Communication and Coordination Platforms.

Coordination with COVID-19 National Response and other relevant Coordinators

Effective engagement and coordination with National Response Coordinators and mechanisms is mandatory for C19RM funding requests. National COVID-19 Response Coordinating Bodies are required to endorse the funding request, but in many countries this body has been dissolved. In such cases, relevant bodies for RSSH and pandemic preparedness can endorse the request.

These bodies take different forms in different countries and it is the responsibility of the CCM to identify and link with them at an early stage, and continue to leverage their expertise for both ongoing C19RM investments, and GC7 consultations. Government and partner constituencies on CCMs must play a central role in facilitating these interactions and make sure CCMs are aware of what coordination bodies exist, who the key contacts on these are, how these work in practice and what plans have been developed or are being developed. Funding requests should show alignment of objectives and activities with wider national plans, avoiding duplication of effort, addressing gaps in preparedness and response efforts, to maximize availability and efficient allocation of resources, and support strengthening of health and community systems. The end result should be a strong funding request well aligned with other planned activities and priorities in-country and a strong ongoing dialogue on these, during implementation, between the CCM and other coordinating bodies.

³ As a priority, current grant implementation arrangements should remain for C19RM funding. Please see the [C19RM 2021 Guidance](#) for more information on implementation arrangements.

CCMs are uniquely positioned in-country to work with the national response and to help ensure civil society voices can influence these and move the country towards achieving SDG 3. CCMs need to document how they have engaged with national response mechanisms in their C19RM funding request and how the proposed interventions are aligned with national COVID-19 response or wider pandemic preparedness plans.

Guidelines and tools on supporting effective civil society and community representation in national decision making processes and platforms are available in the [Community Engagement Toolbox](#).

Dialogue with Other Bilateral and Multilateral Funders

Dialogue and engagement with **bilateral partners and multilateral agencies** in-country is important to ensure transparency and alignment on COVID-19, systems for health strengthening and pandemic preparedness investments. These partners are often able to build powerful links connecting CCMs to in-country health coordinating bodies and multisectoral platforms, which has been critical during the COVID-19 pandemic. Partners also often have links with key and vulnerable populations which can strengthen efforts to ensure the needs of these are identified and interventions to address them included in C19RM funding requests.

For further information please refer to our [guidance note on Technical and Development Partners](#).

What does successful engagement on C19RM look like?

Successful engagement ensures that all CCM members (100%) have consulted with and brought relevant views and priorities of their constituencies into planning and decisions on funding priorities and program design. This should include the views and priorities of groups specifically impacted by COVID-19 who may not have been previously represented on the CCM. Constituencies must also have received timely information on how the application process is developing, the priorities being included and have had the ability to meaningfully input. This should ideally include having at least three days to review the final version of the funding request before it is submitted to the Global Fund.

What resources are available?

- **CCM funding resources:** At least 15% of the regular CCM budget is intended to be allocated to support civil society participation. Potential engagement activities to strengthen civil society input can be found in this [COVID-19 Guidance Note: Community, Rights and Gender](#).
- In the context of the Global Fund decision to extend the C19RM implementation period to 31 December 2025, access to and use of supplementary funds by CCMs is also extended. Additional resources of up to 25% of a CCM's 2023 funding amount are available and will be awarded based on tailored CCM needs and absorption of the previous resources disbursed.
- **This uplift in CCM funding** is primarily for activities supporting inclusive civil society and community engagement in the dialogue around C19RM funding request development; increased

alignment and coordination with national preparedness and response plans and mechanisms; and increased dialogue with partners to ensure alignment of investments and activities. It is also to support ongoing dialogue, engagement, oversight and coordination with these stakeholders during implementation of the planned activities once funded. If agreed, an additional payment will be disbursed to CCMs to be used until the end of 2025 and will be in addition to regular annual CCM funds. This can only be added where there is an existing or planned signed CCM funding agreement.

- **Eligible activities** include: the addition of one Human Resource in the CCM Secretariat to support C19RM-related engagement/coordination; short term consultancy fees for the same or for facilitators or coordinators; and consultation costs (covering meetings, communications, IT equipment etc.). As with all funding requests, Global Fund funds cannot be used to pay consultants to write the C19RM funding request. A draft **Terms of Reference for a CCM Secretariat Engagement and Coordination Officer** post are included in Annex 1 of this document. For further details, please refer to Annex 2.
- Funds will be included in CCM's Costed Workplans under two lines 'Human resources' and 'consultation costs'. All use of funds will be reported on through regular CCM Funding annual reporting and may be subject to Local Fund Agent verification.

Accessing the Additional CCM Funding Resources

Step 1: CCMs request additional funds (up to a maximum of 25% of their annual CCM funding allocation) through an email to the CCM Hub, (from the CCM Secretariat, copying the CCM Leadership and the relevant Global Fund Portfolio Manager (FPM)) signalling whether their country plans to make an application to the C19RM funding or whether there is an existing grant to oversee, and detailing the additional support requested and costings.

Step 2: The CCM Hub will review and approve the additional amount requested, taking into account the annual allocation of the CCM, activities proposed and a qualitative needs assessment, in close communication with the FPM and the CCM Secretariat.

Step 3: The CCM will prepare an amended CCM Costed Workplan to forecast how the funds will be used, and the CCM Hub will prepare the related Implementation Letter to add funds to the CCM's funding agreement, for CCM leadership signature. On receipt of the signed Implementation Letter, the CCM Hub will disburse funds.

Step 4: After the disbursement has been received, the CCM will seek approval of any changes to the actual use of these funds through email communication between the CCM Secretariat and the FPM/CCM Hub and report to the CCM Hub on a regular basis on the implementation of the activities, which are subject to usual financial verification rules.

What other tools/support are available?

- **Country Dialogue:** The Global Fund has an e-learning course on country dialogue which explains what meaningful participation is, why it is important and what it can look like in practice. [Visit iLearn](#)⁴ to find out more.
- **Facilitating virtual guidance:** For specific guidance on additional ways to increase the possibilities for inclusive country dialogue, please refer to our [virtual inclusive dialogue guidance](#).⁵
- **CRG-Platforms:** Technical assistance to support CS and communities engage in C19RM can be accessed through the [Community, Rights and Gender Regional Platforms](#).
- **Resources related to CRG:** This [document](#)⁶ consolidates resources related to CRG and has recommendations to ensure a gender responsive and rights-based response during COVID-19.

⁴ <https://theglobalfund.csod.com/client/theglobalfund/default.aspx>

⁵ https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/9536/covid19_virtualinclusivedialogue_guidancenote_en.pdf

⁶ https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/9648/covid19_communityrightsgender_guidancenote_en.pdf

Annex 1: Use of C19RM uplift to CCMs for 2023 to 2025

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In reference to the Note above, the uplift in CCM funding is dedicated to the following activities:

- Support inclusive civil society and community engagement in the dialogue around C19RM Funding Request development.
- Increased alignment and coordination with national response plans and mechanisms.
- Increased dialogue with partners to ensure alignment of investments and activities.
- Support ongoing dialogue, engagement, oversight and coordination with these stakeholders during C19RM grant implementation.
- Support inclusion of pandemic preparedness and RSSH elements, as relevant, in the program design. Enhance synergies with HIV, TB and malaria country dialogue processes.

Funds can be used until the end of 2025.

This annex outlines the parameters that safeguard the continued usage of the supplementary funds.

- **Eligible activities.** Upon submission of a successful C19RM Funding Request, the Human Resource position referenced in this Note may be extended with an expanded scope to cover the ongoing engagement of overseeing C19RM grant implementation and performance, conditioned to an assessment by the CCM demonstrating satisfactory performance of that staff member/consultant. Additionally, consultation costs that **directly support the work** of the Engagement Officer will be considered (meetings, communications, IT equipment, and others).
- **Illustrative examples of eligible alignment activities.** (I) Leveraging expertise gathered during HIV, TB, malaria and RSSH program consultations, such as from laboratory networks, to inform C19RM funding requests and vice-versa. (II) Harnessing HIV, TB and malaria program(s) consultative groups to input into programmatic design. (III) Using implementer knowledge shared in HIV, TB and malaria programs country dialogue discussions to inform C19RM oversight approach, where interventions have the same overarching intention as GC7 grants, such as, early warning surveillance systems.
- **Funding approval process.** This is applicable when CCMs either have savings from the 2021 25% C19RM uplift⁷ or receive an additional uplift. The CCM will seek approval of the use of these funds through email communication between the CCM Secretariat and the Global Fund's FPM and the Global Fund's CCM Hub. The email must include identification of remaining C19RM cash balance (presented in a forecast versus actuals format). The implementation of the activities is subject to regular financial verification rules. Supporting documentation to be kept for verification purposes includes:
 - Financial reporting;
 - Recruitment process; and
 - Selected candidate's CV, salary, and period of work.

⁷ Savings from standard CCM funding budget could also be used if needed.