

October 2, 2023

Richard R. Verma
Deputy Secretary for Resources and Management
U.S. Department of State
Board member, Pandemic Fund

Eric O. Meyer
Deputy Assistant Secretary
U.S. Department of the Treasury
Alternate board member, Pandemic Fund

Dear Mr. Verma and Mr. Meyer,

We are U.S.-based global health advocates writing to urge expanded collaboration and strategic coordination between the Pandemic Fund and the Global Fund. We believe such collaboration is essential to establishing a holistic and integrated approach to pandemic preparedness and response.

As you know, the Global Fund is the largest multilateral funder of grants for health systems strengthening and pandemic preparedness worldwide and it is estimated that at least a third of its investments help support health security.¹ In addition, it is estimated that over 85% of investments needed to build country-level capacities in health security, globally, over the next three years are in countries eligible for Global Fund support.² Longstanding U.S. leadership and support for the Global Fund has made a transformational impact against the existing pandemics, provided a powerful platform for responding to COVID-19, and is laying a foundation for strong pandemic preparedness.

However, the Global Fund did not participate in the Pandemic Fund's first call for proposals as the organizations were not able to align their operational modalities. This is unfortunate given the considerable overlap of preparedness priority areas for the Pandemic Fund and Global Fund; the resulting need for low- and middle-income countries to apply to two entities for preparedness resources; and the challenges posed to strategic coordination of preparedness investments. This is also a missed opportunity as the Global Fund would have administered Pandemic Fund resources at a zero overhead charge which would enable more funding to be used by countries for impactful preparedness programming.

We do appreciate that the Global Fund and the Pandemic Fund are working together to deconflict and strategically coordinate funding in the near term for Pandemic Fund round one and Global Fund pandemic preparedness funding.

Fighting existing pandemics, strengthening health systems and meeting current health needs is the best way to prepare for future pandemics. The Global Fund provides an excellent model for pandemic

¹ Boyce, MR, et al, Global Fund contributions to health security in ten countries, 2014–20: mapping synergies between vertical disease programmes and capacities for preventing, detecting, and responding to public health emergencies, *The Lancet*, February 2021, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(20\)30420-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(20)30420-4/fulltext)

² Eaneff, S, Financing global health security: estimating the costs of pandemic preparedness in Global Fund eligible countries, *BMJ Global Health*, January 2023, <https://gh.bmj.com/content/8/1/e008960>

preparedness based on its track record of results in supporting health services, multistakeholder engagement, focus on human rights and the needs of key populations, co-financing policies and technical review capacity, among others.

When first designing the Pandemic Fund last year, its board and leadership emphasized that it would be an additive new mechanism, filling gaps to complement existing work, serving as an integrator, and maintaining the flexibility to work through a variety of institutions. We welcome these principles. Unfortunately, the misalignment with the Global Fund -- as the largest pre-existing stream of pandemic preparedness financing -- indicates that the operational model is not yet fit for purpose. We are eager to work together to better align the Pandemic Fund with longstanding U.S. investments in high-impact institutions like Gavi and the Global Fund.

We therefore request you to utilize your position as U.S. representatives on the Pandemic Fund board urge the Pandemic Fund to work with partners to design operational modalities that integrate effectively with existing global health institutions like the Global Fund and Gavi. In particular, we urge the Pandemic Fund to:

- Adjust its application process to allow for longer and rolling application windows on predictable timelines to enable alignment with Implementing Entity cycles.
- Greatly increase advance coordination and collaboration between the Pandemic Fund, Implementing Entities, countries and regional partners to maximize synergies and impact. This is particularly essential when a call for proposals includes a strategic focus that overlaps directly with an existing stream of funding (as the first call for proposals did with the Global Fund) – to ensure that any operational obstacles are resolved in advance.
- Improve the alignment of information requests for proposals with formats already routinely provided by countries to Implementing Entities and other funders to minimize workload on applicant countries. Better aligned templates and reporting requirements would dramatically decrease burden on countries, increase collaboration, and decrease unnecessary overhead costs.
- Do more to ensure engagement of multiple stakeholders, including civil society, in decision making around funding applications and program implementation. Ensure that Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanisms are engaged in program development, as a powerful existing multistakeholder platform.

We believe these reforms will lead to a better coordinated, more strategic and impactful approach to meeting pandemic preparedness needs and will enable key global health financing agencies, including the Global Fund and Gavi, to collaborate effectively with the Pandemic Fund.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Friends of the Global Fight Against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
ONE Campaign
RESULTS

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