



URGENT CALL FROM MONGOLIA

A New Global Fund Strategy Grounded in Realities:
Human-centered Response to End the Epidemics

Ulaanbaatar, 21 October 2021

Dear The Global Fund Chair of the Board and Executive Director; Donald Kaberuka and Peter Sands,

The Communities express immediate and strong concerns regarding the attention and investments for gay men, other men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people in the regional and national HIV response. For the 2023-2028 Global Fund Strategy, it is imperative that it is grounded on lived realities of key populations and their communities which is also responsive to emerging needs. **The Global Fund must ensure that its new strategy and operational plan prioritize investment and support for gay men, other MSM and transgender people and emphasize inclusion and non-discrimination against the community.**

The current prioritization and investments towards programs targeting gay men, other MSM and transgender people in Mongolia is inadequate, ran short of minimum level of coverage and scale-up in required services. This has undermined the ability of the Global Fund to achieve its current Strategic Objective on scaling up evidence-based interventions with a focus on key and vulnerable populations disproportionately affected by the three diseases (Strategic Objective 1).

To further contribute to the strategy development process, we would like to put forward some practical country-specific considerations in effort to maximize impact on the response to HIV among gay men, other MSM and transgender people at the country level. We held a consultation with our communities and, based on the 2023-2028 Strategy Framework as approved by The Global Fund Board, we listed below points of recommendations:

In order to 'Maximizing People-centered Integrated Systems for Health to Deliver Impact, Resilience and Sustainability', the Global Fund must:

- Coordinate the smooth transition to an increasingly digitized form of activities;
- Improve the online dissemination of sexual health and prevention information and publicity. The best practices from various countries could be shared among the communities elsewhere;
- Sophisticate the dual delivery of people-centered integrated systems for health including in person and online forms. Moreover, capacity building training is needed for SR and SSR organizations regarding the maintenance of quality of services in the event of unprecedented disasters;
- Determine and mitigate the constraints for people-centered integrated systems for health to ensure the highest quality of HIV care and improve assessment and reporting systems;
- Formulate global strategic guidelines for emergencies and disasters. In the event of major future disruptions like the pandemic, there is an unavoidable need to have a systemic, holistic, synchronized strategy for all stakeholders;



- Provide opportunities for development and expertise to specialists focusing on the special needs of transgender women. For example, training physicians, health workers, and psychologists need to be able to advise on hormonal drugs for transgender women.

In order to ‘Maximizing the Engagement and Leadership of Most Affected Communities to Leave No One Behind’, the Global Fund must:

- Increase the participation of high-risk communities and stakeholders in maintaining the low prevalence of HIV and ensure the sustainability of services;
- Enable coalition and promote meaningful cooperation between community-based NGOs in and out of the country;
- Expand access to services and activities in rural areas. In countries with vast territory but a sparse population, some rural communities tend to get left behind and under-represented on a national level;
- Provide connectivity and mobility to people during possible future lockdowns or other disruptions to social life;
- Promote volunteerism and conduct community-based dialogues as well as capacity building training. Implement programs focusing on leadership of most affected communities. This needs to have the goal of empowerment, strengthening and adequate education of the communities concerned.

In order to ‘Maximizing Health Equity, Gender Equality and Human Rights’, the Global Fund must:

- Promote advocacy work towards the legal environment to reduce the health, human rights, discrimination, and stigma of LGBTIQ+ people;
- Ensure the comprehensive, sensible, and accessible health care for sex workers. Sex work is prohibited by law, but prostitution still exists among transgender community;
- Initiate cooperation with the government authorities and other government agencies on sexual minority issues and HIV. This also needs to be done with close cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations with the coordination and technical assistance of the Global Fund;
- Formulate guidelines and mechanisms for the documentation of human rights abuses including but not limited to HIV medical care and STI prevention;
- Have a more inclusive and informative approach on intersex issues;
- Increase its focus on the health and human rights issues of transgender community.



We truly hope that this initiative will help shape the 2023-2028 Global Fund Strategy that not only puts the community at the heart of the response, and that resources will be put into the community as well.

Yours sincerely,

Myagmardorj Dorjgotov
Executive Director
Youth for Health Center NGO

Midnight Poonkasetwattana
Executive Director
APCOM



About Youth for Health Center NGO

Our mission is to provide HIV and STI prevention, diagnosis and linkage to further care services, counselling and support services to MSM and TG people; to contribute, to reduce social discrimination and, to maintain sustainability of HIV services.

Our objectives:

1. Ensuring involvement of MSM and TG people into HIV, AIDS and STI prevention program/sexual health and prevention information, condoms, and lubricants distribution through outreach activities;
2. Identifying HIV cases and linking them to necessary care services;
3. Reducing discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity and advocate decision makers through efforts to change their attitude towards sexual orientation and/or gender identity;
4. Ensuring sustainability of HIV services for key populations.

About APCOM

APCOM is an Asia Pacific regional organization based in Bangkok, Thailand. It represents and works with a network of individuals and community-based organizations across 35 countries in the region. We focus on improving the health, rights and wellbeing of gay men, other MSM and LGBTQI people across Asia and the Pacific region.

APCOM organization's technical expertise is embodied within the projects we have implemented. Through our experience and funding support from stakeholders, we bring diverse partners together to discuss and take actions on issues affecting the lives of vulnerable and marginalized key populations. Past and current projects included, but not limited to: JumpStart, WISDOM: Community Voices Strengthening, FINANCE Inc., Multi-Country South Asia Global Fund HIV Program (MSA), Sustainable HIV Financing in Transition (SHIFT), Enhancing MSM and Community Engagements with the Global Fund Processes, Sustainability of HIV Services for Key Population in Asia (SKPA).