

Program Continuation Request Instructions

These instructions guide applicants through the Program Continuation Request. This document aims to assist applicants in determining if the Program Continuation approach is adequate in order to access the 2017-2019 Global Fund allocation. The completed request will be validated by the Technical Review Panel (TRP)¹.

The request should be read by all stakeholders engaged in its development. The Program Continuation Request is comprised of an Applicant Self-assessment. Its completion should draw on an inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue process and should be guided by a national health strategy, a national disease strategic plan or investment cases.

For questions, please refer to accesstofunding@theglobalfund.org

¹ **List of reference documents for applicants:**
[The Global Fund Strategy 2017-2022: Investing to End Epidemics](#)
[Strategic Investment Guidance from Technical Partners](#)
[Global Fund Gender Equality and SOGI Strategies](#)
[Global Fund Information Notes for each component](#)
[Global Fund Key Populations Action Plan](#)
[The Global Fund Sustainability, Transition and Co-Financing Policy](#)
[Strategic Investment Guidance from Technical Partners](#)

PART I: GETTING STARTED

Introduction

These instructions are designed to support the preparation of the Program Continuation Request for the 2017-19 allocation cycle and, where needed, they include links to relevant guidance and policy documents.

Differentiated application and review processes

The Global Fund has introduced a new approach in applying for funding, called the “Differentiated Application Process”. The objective is to allow for flexible and tailored funding requests that are “right-sized” to match the needs and context of a country. The differentiation of the application process also aims to ensure greater time is spent implementing grants to save lives. The three differentiated approaches to accessing funding are:

1. Program Continuation,
2. Tailored review (Challenging Operating Environments; Transition; National Strategy Pilots; or Material Reprogramming), and
3. Full review.

The country allocation amount and proposed application approach are communicated to applicants in their allocation letters.

Note:

- All funding requests and resulting grants must comply with and follow the application focus² and co-financing requirements set forth in the Sustainability, Transition and Co-financing Policy.³
- Documentation necessary for grant signature will remain as per Global Fund requirements including Budget, Performance Framework, List of Health Products and any other relevant documents expected to be developed during grant negotiation process. None of these documents are required with the Program Continuation Request.

For more information on the differentiated application approaches, please see the Applicant’s Handbook and the Operational Policy Note on Access to Funding and Grant Making.

Purpose of the Program Continuation Request

The Program Continuation approach enables implementation of the Global Fund grant for an additional three years under essentially the same assumptions of the current grant if: **no material changes⁴ have occurred in the scope and scale of the strategic focus, technical soundness and potential for impact** of the investments in a disease program; and, there is no immediate need for material change.

The request put forward will be subject to validation by the TRP based on the continued relevance of strategic focus and technical soundness, and whether the program objectives have potential to achieve highest impact with available resources.

² Including ensuring interventions that respond to key and vulnerable populations, human rights and gender-related barriers and vulnerabilities for all countries, regardless of income level.

³ [Sustainability, Transition and Co-Financing Policy](#), GF/B35/04

⁴ Please refer to the Global Fund Operational Policy Note on [Reprogramming during Grant Implementation](#) and Annex 1 of the Program Continuation Request.

It is important to note that reprogramming of Global Fund grants can take place at any time throughout the grant cycle to ensure that the program is on track to deliver results and achieve highest impact. Applicants are therefore encouraged to identify opportunities for programmatic adjustments during grant making and grant implementation as appropriate to achieve greater strategic focus and greater impact, rather than only during the application phase.

Should changes requiring material reprogramming occur after grant signing, applicants should immediately notify the Global Fund Secretariat. All cases of reprogramming that are confirmed as material by the Secretariat's Grant Approvals Committee (GAC) will be referred to the TRP for review.⁵

In the section on "*Projected need for a material change leading to a grant reprogramming*", applicants are requested to indicate key timing for the program and NSP evaluations/reviews, surveys outcomes, or any other relevant information that may inform the potential need for a material reprogramming from now until the expected end of the new grant(s).

Structure of the Program Continuation Request

Program Continuation Request is composed of three parts:

1. Program Continuation Request Cover Letter;
2. Applicant Self-Assessment to Inform Program Continuation;
3. Annex 1: Checklist to confirm inclusiveness of key and vulnerable populations in the process of developing Program Continuation request.

These three parts are interrelated and must be submitted jointly (incomplete submission will be returned for a revised submission).

While no additional documentation is required at the time of the submission of the Program Continuation Request, applicants can attach relevant documents if they consider it advantageous to the application⁶.

Submitting the Program Continuation Request

Further to the application and review modality communicated to applicants in their allocation letters, applicants selected for Program Continuation will receive appropriate documentation for submission of the Program Continuation Request. Upon completing the Program Continuation Request applicants will submit the application package (including Annex 1), submit via email to your Fund Portfolio Manager and copy the Access to Funding Department (acesstofunding@theglobalfund.org)⁷.

a) Joint programming and joint submissions

One Program Continuation Request per disease component should be submitted. For countries with a high TB/HIV co-infection burden⁸ one joint Program Continuation Request should be submitted, in line with Global Fund policy and normative guidance on collaborative activities. This option is also extended to other countries who have chosen to streamline grants based on operational considerations. In this regard, the Global Fund will still expect joint programming to continue during grant making, including investments in effective coordination at service delivery systems, as applicable, policy development and processes

b) Scope and word limits for the Applicant Self-Assessment

The Global Fund wishes to help ensure the Program Continuation Request is as concise and relevant as possible, and provides essential information for TRP validation and decision-making. Responses to

⁵ Please refer to the Global Fund Operational Policy Note on [Reprogramming during Grant Implementation](#) and Annex 1 of this document.

⁶ Relevant documentation may include National Strategic Plans (NSP), Program Review Reports, etc.

⁷ The availability of this option will be communicated to the Applicant at later stage.

⁸ Countries with a high co-infection burden of tuberculosis and HIV include: Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Congo, Congo (Democratic Republic), Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania (United Republic), Thailand, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

each question should be brief and should clearly demonstrate how the current investments are in line with achieving maximum impact. To avoid lengthy repetition of information available elsewhere, reference to supporting documents and evidence is strongly encouraged, as appropriate, building on existing national and portfolio information. In this regard, word limitations per response provide an opportunity for streamlining and refocusing the applicant's response on key information and should be respected, using the standard Arial Font and 11 size. Applications exceeding proposed limits may be returned for a revised submission. In case of joint submission (i.e. HIV/TB), the applicant can increase the length accordingly.

c) Timing of the Submission

There will be two windows to submit Program Continuation Request for TRP validation:

- Window 1: **20 March 2017** for grants ending on 30 June 2018 or before; and
- Window 4: **31 January 2018** for grants ending beyond 1 July 2018.

All grants resulting from the 2017-2019 allocation must be approved by the Board prior to the end of the allocation period (i.e. by 31 December 2019 for the 2017-2019 allocation period).⁹

d) Translation of Documents

The Global Fund accepts application documents in English, French, Russian and Spanish. The working language of the Secretariat and the Technical Review Panel (TRP) is English. The Global Fund will translate **Program Continuation Requests** submitted in French, Spanish or Russian.

PART II: COMPLETION OF THE REQUEST

Program Continuation Request Cover Letter

The "Program Continuation Request Cover Letter" is the communication through which the CCM informs the Global Fund of its choice about the application approach to access the 2017-2019 allocation. Applicants, based on the "Applicant Self-Assessment to Inform Program Continuation", can opt for Program Continuation approach or can decide to access new funding through a tailored or full approach.¹⁰

In case the applicant self-assessed that tailored or full review is more suitable than Program Continuation, it is not required of applicants to complete the self-assessment, but complete only "Program Continuation Cover Letter" to inform the Global Fund Secretariat. The relevant information for Tailored or Full Review will be then shared by the Country Team.

In accordance with the CCM Eligibility Requirements for all funding applications to the Global Fund, requests for Program Continuation are expected to follow an inclusive country dialogue within the CCM, including civil society partners, key and vulnerable populations¹¹, communities and other relevant stakeholders.¹²

⁹ GF/B35/05 Allocation Methodology 2017-2019

¹⁰ Please refer to Applicant Handbook for more details on differentiated approaches and contact your FPM for further details.

¹¹ Global Fund defines key and vulnerable populations as: women and girls, men who have sex with men, transgender persons, people who inject drugs, male and female and transgender sex workers and their clients, prisoners, refugees and migrants, people living with HIV, adolescents and young people, vulnerable children and orphans, and populations of humanitarian concern. In addition to these groups: internally displaced persons, indigenous persons, people living with TB and people working in settings that facilitate TB and malaria transmissions should also be considered as key and vulnerable populations.

¹² The CCM may be requested by the Global Fund Secretariat to provide additional documentation to demonstrate that the request has been developed through consultative processes with meaningful engagement of key and vulnerable populations; and with transparent criteria for retaining the existing PR or selecting a new PR. In this case, if the documentation provided by the CCM results in the determination by the Global Fund Secretariat of non-compliance with eligibility requirements(s) 1 and/or 2, as applicable, the Secretariat reserves the right to delay grant signing until such requirements are duly complied with. Please refer to Annex 1 and [Guidelines and Requirements for Country Coordinating Mechanisms](#)

Applicant Self-Assessment to Inform Program Continuation

The Applicant Self-Assessment is the mechanism by which applicants provide their rationale for continuation of existing Global Fund-supported grants to deliver on program objectives and highest impact with the available resources. It provides a series of questions to verify whether the program can be implemented for the next three years under substantially the same goals, strategic objectives and similar programmatic interventions of the current program(s), for the given epidemiological context.

As part of the self-assessment for Program Continuation, opportunities for programmatic adjustments should be identified for reprogramming as appropriate, taking into account that the revision of Global Fund supported grants can take place at any time throughout the grant cycle to ensure that the program is on track to deliver results and achieve highest impact.

The self-assessment seeks to evaluate whether material changes¹³ have or have not occurred leading to a need to significantly revise the scope and scale of strategic focus, the technical approaches / the soundness and potential for impact of the investments in a disease program in line with normative guidance. Through the preparation of this self-assessment and using the information on hand, applicants can indicate whether the changes lead to propose a modification (s) to the current Global Fund investments. If the applicant confirms material change for any of the questions, explanation is required on whether these changes will have an immediate impact on the programming (i.e. require a Tailored or Standard review) or can be addressed at a later stage (i.e. through reprogramming during grant implementation).

Applicants are requested to be critical in doing this exercise to ensure maximum impact of the Global Fund investments and overall sustainability of the program(s).

Section 1: Epidemiological contextual updates

In this section, applicants are requested to describe whether changes in the country epidemiological context occurred during the current implementation period of the on-going grant, based on the available epidemiological data, (e.g. results of recent prevalence surveys) and whether modifications are required in the overall strategic approach and programmatic interventions.

Select “No” if: no significant changes in epidemiological context requiring changes in strategy has occurred and the overall epidemiological context remains unchanged based on the most recent updated information or if updated information is forthcoming.¹⁴ The applicant is requested to specify accordingly in the “Applicant rationale” section whether any programmatic adjustments to address changes in the epidemiological context have been made during the on-going implementation period, or are planned.

For example: Final or preliminary results of a key survey or study shows limited changes in trends in incidence, prevalence or disease transmission rates; coverage in general population or specific key and vulnerable populations are maintained or increased; limited increase/ reductions in MDR/XDR TB; limited geographic shifts in disease burden and hot spots. And these changes can be addressed within the on-going program, are geographically focused, and can be effectively addressed within the overall scope and scale without change in the strategy.

Select “Yes” if: significant changes in epidemiological context requiring changes in strategy has occurred. In cases where significant changes in epidemiological context are observed, applicants are requested to assess whether these changes are substantial and have an immediate effect on the programming of available funds. If there is need to modify the strategy, scope of investment, technical

¹³ Changes to scope and scale resulting to material changes in the overall strategic focus, technical soundness and potential for impact of investments in a disease program.

¹⁴ The applicant should also refer to the section on “*Projected need for a material change leading to a grant revision*” to specify upcoming program reviews and surveys that may inform potential changes in the epidemiological context.

approaches and programmatic mix of interventions to achieve anticipated impact, another application stream (i.e. tailored or full review) would be more suitable.

For example: When a survey shows significant changes in disease transmission and epidemiology that require a change in strategy (e.g. from malaria control to pre-elimination or vice-versa).

Section 2: National policies and strategies revisions and updates

In this section, applicants are requested to provide information if there were any changes within the national policy or strategy for the disease program. While currently valid national strategy documents serve as the basis to the request, applicants are encouraged to align with global disease strategies and priorities.

Select “No” if: no significant revisions / updates in national policies and strategies have occurred. If the overall national strategy and/or investment case informing the Global Fund supported programs in terms of strategic focus and technical soundness of the program remains consistent with the national policies and normative guidance, demonstrates value for money and is in line with the most recent TRP/GAC recommendations. The applicant is requested to specify accordingly in the “Applicant rationale” section whether any relevant programmatic adjustments to address revision/updates in national policies and strategies have been made during the on-going implementation period, or are planned.

For example: When investments need to reflect the changes due to adoption of new normative guidance by national policies or strategies for respective disease programs (e.g. short-term MDR TB treatment regimen, new formulations for pediatric TB treatment, HIV “treat all”) but these changes can be addressed within the on-going program, without changing the overall scope and program strategy, without requiring significant reprioritization of funding, reduction of targets or reducing investments in programs for key and vulnerable populations.

Select “Yes” if: significant changes in national policies and strategies have occurred. In cases where changes are observed, applicants are requested to assess whether these are substantial and have an immediate impact on the programming of available funds. If there is need to modify the strategy, scope of investment, technical approaches and programmatic mix of interventions to achieve anticipated impact, it follows that another application stream (i.e. tailored or full) would be more suitable.

For example: When investments need to address recent significant changes in legal, political and socio-economic environment (e.g. enforcement of “anti-homosexuality” law).

Section 3: Investing to maximize impact towards ending the epidemics

In this section, applicants are requested to assess whether continuation of Global Fund support for an additional three years under essentially the same goals, strategic objectives and similar programmatic interventions of the current grant(s) are considered strategically focused; if overall current programmatic approaches are considered technically sound; and whether programming of additional investments is anticipated to achieve highest impact during the 2017-2019 allocation period.

In addition, when preparing this self-assessment, applicants are requested to take into account contextual information and programmatic performance, financial absorptive capacity, program evaluations, and inputs from technical partners, etc.

Select “Yes” if: no significant changes are required in scope and scale of investments in order to maximize the impact. In the “Applicant rationale” section, applicants should indicate if the on-going program intervention continue to be strategically focused and program is on track to achieving results and impact. The applicants are also asked to provide information on how impact is being assessed and measured. The anticipated challenges should be listed together with planned mitigation measures. In addition, applicants are requested to make a brief case for the program to be continued based on the same goals, strategic objectives and ongoing key interventions.

For example: Well performing program, as measured by programmatic and financial results achieved during previous implementation periods – and does not require shift in strategy / refocusing interventions based on latest scientific evidence/guidance or national context or program operating environment. Furthermore, interventions continue to be effective and scale-up in line with progress in implementation over past years.

Select “No” if: significant changes are required in scope and scale of investments to maximize impact and it is considered that the program is not achieving results and impact. If there is need to modify the strategy, scope of investment, technical approaches and programmatic mix of interventions to achieve anticipated impact, it follows that another application stream (i.e. tailored or full) would be more suitable.

For example: When program is not achieving the impact and when available resources need to be reprioritized and refocused to highest transmission geographic areas, highest-impact interventions, key affected populations and communities such as: a) increase in targets will shift the balance between program activities; b) interventions need to be aligned with new or revised evidence-based, prioritized national strategies; c) increase of coverage/scope of interventions to accelerate progress towards goal of the program, global targets or SDGs.

Also **select “No” if:** the program shows limited programmatic result due to contextual factors: short-implementation period of the on-going grant, Challenging Operating Environment or if data is not available. In these cases the applicant is requested to provide additional details in “Applicant Rationale” section explaining the implication and proposed mitigation measures, if any.

Section 4: Alignment with 2017 – 2022 Global Fund Strategy Objectives 2 and 3

In this section, applicants are requested to assess whether adjustments are required in Global Fund supported programs to ensure appropriate focus on interventions in line with the 2017-2022 Global Fund Strategy¹⁵ (in particular to respond to key and vulnerable populations, reduction of human rights and gender-related barriers as well as ensure appropriate focus on investments in resilient and sustainable systems for health).

Objective 2 to Build Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health

Select “Yes” if: relevant, quality and effective Global Fund investments in RSSH to maximize impact are currently in place. If major changes are needed immediately, applicants should opt for another review modality (tailored or full review). If more minor changes are needed, describe how they can be addressed during grant-making and grant implementation.

For example: Limited changes to the grant are required to address health system strengthening needs, for example: to address integration of reproductive maternal neonatal and child health (RMNCAH) services; strengthening procurement and supply chain management (PSM) and health

¹⁵ Please refer to [The Global Fund Strategy 2017-2022: Investing to End Epidemics](#)

management information systems (HMIS); improving human resources for health (HR) interventions (for example related to supportive supervision and staff retention); and strengthening financial management for greater transparency and accountability/transparency.

Select “No” if: the current program does not include relevant, good quality and effective Global Fund investments in RSSH to maximize impact.

Objective 3 to Promote and Protect Human Rights and Gender Equality

Select “No” if: relevant, quality and effective Global Fund investments in Human Rights and Gender Equality and appropriate focus on interventions that respond to key and vulnerable populations are ensured.

For example: Limited changes are required to address community system strengthening needs, human rights- and gender-related barriers to services: increasingly involving communities in service delivery and monitoring proposing new actions to advance gender equality and human rights.

Select “Yes” if: the current program does not include relevant, quality and effective Global Fund investments in Human Rights and Gender Equality to maximize impact. If major changes are needed to improve alignment, applicants should indicate if these changes should be immediately addressed or can be addressed during grant-making and grant implementation.

Section 5: Effectiveness of implementation approaches

In principle, it is expected that applicants invited to access the 2017-2019 allocation through a streamlined application for Program Continuation are able to make appropriate investments and relevant changes to programmatic implementation in order to enhance program quality, effectiveness and efficiency.

Select “Yes” if: the current implementation arrangements are sufficiently effective to deliver on the program objectives and anticipated impact.

For example: a) if the CCM makes a decision to change/select new Principal Recipient/Sub-Recipient that will not have a significant impact on the program; b) the CCM decides to rationalize the implementation arrangements by reducing the number of grants to reach better coordination, oversight and integration of services.

Select “No” if: the current implementation arrangements needs a significant shift in order to ensure effectiveness in delivering on the program objectives. If changes are needed to improve the program’s efficiency, applicants should indicate if these changes should be immediately addressed and therefore opt for another review modality (tailored or full review) or can be addressed during the grant-making or grant implementation.

For example: The CCM decides to change program implementation arrangements with budgetary implications (greater than 30% change in funding) leading to cost overrun.

Section 6: Sustainability, Transition, and Co-Financing

Achieving lasting impact and long-term sustainability of health systems and national disease responses will require significant additional domestic financial commitments. In many cases, the Global Fund allocation may be far from sufficient to address the full cost of a technically sound program to end epidemics, and increased government commitments will be essential to fill the gaps.

Applicants are requested to provide an update on any changes in domestic or international financing that might have significant impact on the program's effectiveness and sustainability. In particular, briefly describe:

- Trends and actions for increasing government expenditure on health to meet universal health coverage goals and objectives.
- If government commitments for the 2014-16 allocation cycle have been fully realized?
- If government commitments for the 2017-19 allocation cycle meet minimum requirements to fully access the co-financing incentive?

For disease components where the 2017 – 2019 Global Fund allocation for the disease component is significantly lower as compared to the current grants' spending level, the applicant is requested to provide an explanation on how the scope of the program and relevant targets will be maintained over the implementation period of the funding request. Ensuring that there are specific alternate sources of funding to fill the gaps on account of decrease in Global Fund allocation are essential in order to proceed with program continuation.

In line with the Global Fund's Sustainability, Transition, and Co-Financing policy, disease programs in all upper middle income countries and all lower-middle countries with low or moderate disease burden are encouraged to integrate transition preparedness considerations into their funding requests. While these disease components may be many allocation cycles away from transition from Global Fund financing, preparing early is essential. For this reason, program continuation applications for these disease components are requested to:

- Explain how national authorities will progressively absorb key costs of national disease plans that are currently financed by the Global Fund, as well as a description of how these will be sustained beyond Global Fund financing;
- Explain how co-financing commitments will specifically address activities that increase transition preparedness, with a special focus on (but not limited to) capacity building and prevention, treatment, care and support for key and vulnerable populations, interventions that respond to human rights and gender related barriers, and challenges to effective procurement and supply chain management.
- If, applicable, describe how the government will work to attract and secure additional funding or new sources of finance to ensure sufficient support for key interventions.

The applicant will need to provide documentation to support the co-financing commitments during grant making (additional guidance will be provided by the Country Teams during the grant negotiation process).

Annex 1: Inclusiveness of engagement with key and vulnerable populations.

To assure inclusiveness of engagement with key and vulnerable populations in the decision and preparations of the Program Continuation Request, applicants must complete the checklist in Annex 1. Applicants are requested to place special emphasis on key and vulnerable populations that are targeted by the program but not represented in the CCM, if relevant.

Malaria programs where malaria-focused civil society and/or community organizations are not represented in the CCM are requested to indicate if civil society and community organizations engaged in responding to malaria, have been informed and consulted under the "Applicant rationale" section.