

# Operational Update

## GC7, funding for systems for health and pandemic preparedness and other updates

**Date published:** 10 February 2023

**Date updated:** 20 February 2023

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Dear colleagues,

We hope you had a good start to 2023 and look forward to continuing our work together this year.

To support countries in coordination and alignment of funding applications, we are describing in this Operational Update how the Global Fund can support you to minimize the extra work when accessing funding from C19RM through Portfolio Optimization Wave 2 and [the new Pandemic Fund](#). This will allow you to maximize alignment and synergies across your pandemic preparedness investments.

Please note that important aspects of the Pandemic Fund process remain to be clarified. To inform how the Global Fund will work with the Pandemic Fund to support countries, we are requesting that you indicate your interest in working with the Global Fund as an “Implementing Entity” (co-investor) for the Pandemic Fund. This is particularly important given the overlapping areas of investment of both organizations and due to the fact that the

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extent and nature of countries' interest will inform future decisions by both the Global Fund and the Pandemic Fund. To help guide your decisions, we would like to share below an update on each funding source.

**C19RM.** Portfolio Optimization Wave 1 awarded US\$547 million to 40 countries. We are now launching Wave 2 to award an additional US\$320 million. Priority will be given to countries that: (1) did not get funding during Wave 1; (2) have a compelling need to strengthen critical health systems components contributing to pandemic preparedness; and (3) have limited opportunities to reinvest C19RM awards already provided.

**New Pandemic Fund.** In addition, countries have the opportunity to access a portion of the total available of approximately US\$300 million in new funding, in collaboration with the Global Fund, which has been designated as one of the Pandemic Fund's "Implementing Entities". Note that this terminology does not mean the Global Fund will act as an implementer – it will play the role it normally does. This Operational Update describes how countries can choose to apply for Pandemic Fund resources in collaboration with the Global Fund and the related advantages of this. Countries can also choose to work with any approved Implementing Entity.

**GC7 information sessions.** During the week of 27 February, the Global Fund will be hosting new information sessions to support applicants in the preparation of quality applications for GC7 Windows 1 (20 March) and 2 (30 May) with guidance on how to maximize the complementarity of GC7 funding requests and those for additional funding from C19RM and the Pandemic Fund.

Thank you for your continued support in the fight against the three diseases, your efforts in strengthening systems for health and preparing for new pandemics.

Best regards,

The Global Fund

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## Supporting GC7 Windows 1 and 2

The following information sessions are being held for applicants of GC7 and C19RM PO wave 2:

- **Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health and Pandemic Preparedness** – Tuesday 28 February, 14:00-15:00 (Geneva time)
- **COVID-19 Response Mechanism – Portfolio Optimization Wave 2** - Tuesday 28 February, 15:00-16:00 (Geneva time)
- **Malaria** – Thursday 2 March, 14:00-15:15 (Geneva time)
- **TB** – Monday 6 March, 14:00-15:15 (Geneva time)
- **HIV** – Tuesday 7 March, 14:00-15:15 (Geneva time)

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## New funding to strengthen health systems and pandemic preparedness

Please review this information and contact your Fund Portfolio Manager at the Global Fund to discuss the different processes.

### COVID-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM)

Countries that evolved or are evolving their COVID-19 pandemic response into longer term investments to strengthen systems for health and pandemic preparedness can consider applying for C19RM Portfolio Optimization Wave 2, a process that allows countries to receive additional C19RM funds and align investments with revised priorities. Eligible Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) have received letters with instructions on how to apply for funding.

Wave 1 of C19RM Portfolio Optimization took place between August 2022 and January 2023 and eligible countries are in the process of receiving confirmation of awards, totaling US\$547 million. Wave 2 will start in March 2023 with approximately US\$320 million available.

**Countries that did not apply or did not receive funding for Wave 1** will be given priority if they apply for Wave 2 Portfolio Optimization funds. These countries can also indicate whether they would like their Wave 2 funding request to be considered for inclusion in a potential Global Fund proposal to the Pandemic Fund. By doing this, countries may be able to access more funds than are available through C19RM alone while encouraging streamlined application and management of these investments. Countries may also send a direct expression of interest to the new Pandemic Fund indicating that they would like to participate with the Global Fund as an “Implementing Entity”.

Wave 2 awards will be subject to meeting C19RM criteria, and the specific priorities for Wave 2 Portfolio Optimization, including comprehensive disease surveillance and early warning, laboratory systems and human resources, and public health and community workforce capacity, which are also focus areas of the Pandemic Fund.

As the Pandemic Fund is new, their awards will be subject to still-to-be defined requirements of the Pandemic Fund and the Global Fund Board.

**Countries that were awarded funding during Wave 1** can still apply for funding for Wave 2 but should note that they will not be prioritized with Global Fund resources. However, they can apply to C19RM PO wave 2 to be considered for additional funding through a potential Global Fund proposal to the Pandemic Fund. By doing this, countries may be able to access more funds than are available through C19RM alone and with more streamlined applications and alignment of investments in pandemic preparedness. Countries may also send a direct expression of interest to the new Pandemic Fund indicating that they would like to participate with the Global Fund as an “Implementing Entity”.

Wave 2 awards will be subject to meeting C19RM criteria, and the specific priorities for Wave 2 Portfolio Optimization. As the Pandemic Fund is new, their awards will be subject to still-to-be defined requirements of the Pandemic Fund and the Global Fund Board.

**Unfunded demand.** Applicants to C19RM are encouraged to be ambitious in their requests to the Global Fund, as unfunded demand will be registered for future opportunities.

**Alignment with GC7 funding requests.** Applicants to C19RM are encouraged to demonstrate alignment and complementarity of C19RM Wave 2 funding requests with their GC7 funding requests, in order to maximize the combined impact on strengthening pandemic preparedness and RSSH.

**C19RM Reinvestments.** Applicants for Wave 2 funding will need to demonstrate optimal utilization of current approved C19RM funds, including reinvestment where appropriate

**Eligible investments include reinforcing or strengthening systems for health.** Applicants should note that in reviewing Wave 2 funding requests the Global Fund will put strong focus on strengthening Community Health workers (CHWs) system, laboratory systems, and surveillance systems, including: systems for CHWs and community-based organizations, with linkage to broader human resources for health, integrated laboratory systems and diagnostic networks; early warning surveillance and response systems; medical oxygen and respiratory care systems; infection prevention and control programs; supply chain systems; and the roll out of novel therapeutics to scale up test and treat programs in case of future COVID-19 surges.

**Technical guidance.** Updates to the C19RM Technical Information Note(s) and C19RM Guidelines will be posted on the Global Fund website during February 2023. This includes

eligibilities, priorities, and key messages for each priority area, complementarity with the RSSH Information Note and other relevant Global Fund guidance.

**Review criteria.** The Global Fund and relevant external reviewers will assess and prioritize high quality and complete funding requests with a strong rationale, taking account of factors including: the quality of the C19RM funding request analyzed for technical merit and potential for impact; the country's funding needs; strengths of implementation arrangements, operational feasibility for successful execution, funding already awarded under C19RM and its use; reinvestments made towards systems for health and pandemic preparedness; complementarity with existing and GC7 Global Fund funding; and alignment with other sources of funding and other partners investments.

**Required documentation.** C19RM funding requests will be submitted with necessary supporting documents, including budget, performance framework and funding landscape, as well as national plans, as applicable. Application materials will be published on the Global Fund website during February 2023. Applicants can indicate in the C19RM form if they are interested in applying to the Pandemic Fund, by ticking the relevant box.

### **Technical Assistance resources for funding applications.**

**Deadline.** Countries need to apply for Portfolio Optimization Wave 2 by 12 May. This deadline will enable application to the Pandemic Fund before their May 19<sup>th</sup> deadline. We encourage countries intending to submit GC7 funding requests for TRP Window 1 to submit their C19RM Portfolio Optimization requests in Wave 2 by 20 March to enable TRP to see the total expression of needs.

## **The New Pandemic Fund**

The [new Pandemic Fund](#), hosted by the World Bank, has been recently launched a to support pandemic preparedness efforts in countries that the Global Fund supports. The first call for approximately US\$300 million seeks proposals by May 19<sup>th</sup> and will focus on three areas: comprehensive disease surveillance and early warning, laboratory systems and human resources, public health and community workforce capacity, which are also C19RM strategic priorities.

As countries are already using C19RM to fund longer-term Pandemic Preparedness and Response and RSSH needs, which encompass the specific focus areas of the Pandemic Fund, we encourage countries to be ambitious in their C19RM Wave 2 funding requests and to consider working with the Global Fund to apply for additional funding from the Pandemic Fund.

Countries can express interest for Pandemic Fund funding in collaboration with the Global Fund in two ways. First, countries can indicate interest in securing funding from the Pandemic Fund via the Global Fund as part of their application to C19RM Portfolio

Optimization Wave 2. This means countries will only need to submit one funding request, and any investments that cannot be funded through C19RM can be considered for funding via the Pandemic Fund. Alternatively, countries can express interest [directly to the Pandemic Fund and note the Global Fund as an Implementing Entity](#). Since there is significant overlap in the investment areas supported by C19RM and the Pandemic Fund, we encourage countries to take an integrated approach to determining their priorities and developing funding requests. Countries can also choose to access the new Pandemic Fund in collaboration with any of the other approved Implementing Entities.

However, countries should note that requests to the Pandemic Fund will be subject to the Pandemic Fund's own requirements, review and approval, so a successful application cannot be guaranteed. Moreover, the basis on which the Global Fund is able and willing to act as an "Implementing Entity" has yet to be determined by the Global Fund Board and will be determined, in large part, by the extent to which the Pandemic Fund's requirements can be accommodated within existing Global Fund processes and without compromising key principles. Yet, by indicating that they would like their C19RM PO Wave 2 funding request to be considered for funding via the Pandemic Fund, countries can avoid the extra workload from submitting separate funding requests and can maximize the synergies between investments funded via the different sources.

Proposals to the Pandemic Fund will need to ensure linkages to the International Health Regulations (2005) and other internationally endorsed legal frameworks, and place emphasis on projects that catalyze additional financing, incentivize countries to increase their own efforts, and promote coordination with key PPR and RSSH stakeholders. This includes definition of operational planning priorities based on WHO International Health Regulations (IHRs), joint external assessments (JEE), and national action plans for health security (NAPHS), or related PPR operational plans.

See more information on the Pandemic Fund in the [Expression of Interest](#) document.

**Deadline.** Countries can send an Expression of Interest form directly to the Pandemic Fund by 24 February and can indicate interest in applying to the Pandemic Fund through a C19RM funding request by 12 May.

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## Grant-making in GC7

Starting in April 2023, the grant-making process will kick off as in-country partners and Global Fund Country Teams begin to translate funding requests into quality grants. One main objective is that grants are ready to start on the first day of implementation.

To support in-country partners, the Global Fund is holding the following information sessions:

- **Introduction to grant-making** – Tuesday, 21 March from 14:00-16:30 (Geneva time). The objective of this session is to explain the grant-making process and key considerations for Grant Cycle 7.
- **Completing grant-making** – Thursday, 23 March from 14:00-16:30 (Geneva time). The objective of this session is to provide detailed guidance to PRs, LFAs and CCM Secretariats (and any other stakeholders who are directly involved) on how to complete grant-making.

The sessions will be simultaneously interpreted in French and Spanish. Participants will also be able to ask questions on grant-making during a Q&A. Additional Q&A sessions will be scheduled in the following weeks (dates and times will be shared in advance). Invitations will be shared in the coming weeks.

For more information on grant-making and how to begin preparing, see [here](#).

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## **PSEAH: Safe Services in South Africa**

People will not seek out the services that they need if they do not feel safe when receiving those services. How can Global Fund-supported programs design and deliver services so as to best protect beneficiaries from the risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH)? Three recent workshops in South Africa brought together implementers and representatives of key and vulnerable populations to tackle this important but too-often-taboo subject.

In December 2022, the PSEAH Coordination Unit (PCU) of the Global Fund's Ethics Office organized a series of workshops to pilot a new tool that implementers can use to assess the level of risk of SEAH within their programs and determine ways to deliver services safely. Approximately 100 participants representing programs for adolescents and young people, people who use drugs and sex workers openly and frankly discussed what exactly constitutes sexual exploitation, or abuse, or harassment; power imbalances and vulnerabilities that increase risk of SEAH; the impact that SEAH has on the victim; and how such incidents should be handled.

The SEAH Risk Assessment and Mitigation Tool is an Excel spreadsheet that helps implementers outline their interventions and the key risks that may be associated with the way those interventions are delivered. The next step was to assess the current level of risk

for the interventions, to identify timebound measures for addressing the risk, and assign accountabilities for implementation.

The Global Fund is implementing measures for protection from SEAH (PSEAH) at all levels of the partnership. This work began in 2021 with the updated Codes of Conduct for Global Fund [staff](#), governance officials, CCM members, [implementers](#), and [suppliers](#) which stipulate the responsibilities of each to prevent and respond to incidents of SEAH. This was rapidly followed by the publication of the Child Protection Framework, and the [Operational Framework on PSEAH](#).

Through a robust risk assessment approach developed by the Global Fund, the Code of Conduct compliance as well as the PSEAH capacity of implementers will be assessed, and targeted risk-based capacity building support will be made available.

In the 2023–2025 funding cycle, PSEAH has been integrated in the relevant application materials, and all grant applicants are encouraged to undertake the SEAH risk assessment using the available [guidance note](#) and risk assessment tool, in order to initiate a dialogue about SEAH and to facilitate safer programming. Workshops, such as the ones held in South Africa, will be piloted further and rolled out over the course of the 2023-2025 allocation period. [More information](#).

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## Updated Resources for GC7

**1. Health Product Management Template.** The [Health Product Management Template](#) (HPMT) has been updated for this cycle and applicants are invited to review the [HPMT User Guidelines](#) and its [Annex](#) to complete it. Spanish and French versions of these documents will be available shortly. In addition, the C19RM Health Management Template has been updated and Principal Recipients that are using the C19RM HPMT template should ensure they download version 5 dated 5 January 2023, as available on the [Global Fund website](#) ([English](#) | [French](#) | [Spanish](#)).

### 2. Grant Budgeting

- **Guidelines for Grant Budgeting.** The Guidelines explain Global Fund’s funding principles, financial policies and procedures for efficient, transparent and accountable financial decision-making in grant budgeting and implementation. The structure now includes two documents:
  - The [Grant Funding Principles and Budgeting Guidelines](#) (versions in French and Spanish forthcoming on [this webpage](#)).



- The [Operational Guidance for Grant Budgeting](#) that will be made available on the [Financial Management webpage](#) shortly.

- **Instructions for Completing the Detailed Budget Template.** The Instructions provide a comprehensive overview for developing and reviewing programs supported by the Global Fund using the standardized Detailed Budget Template for the 2023–2025 allocation period ([English](#) | [Español](#) | [Français](#)).

**3. Community Health Webinar Series.** The third webinar of the #CommunityHealth@CountryLevel series will focus on “How to strengthen community systems” and will be held on Zoom on Wednesday, 22 February from 13:00 to 14:15 (Geneva time). More information and resources from previous sessions [here](#).

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