Technical Assistance for Community Engagement
General overview and guidelines for application

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The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is committed to supporting the meaningful engagement of communities most affected by HIV, tuberculosis (TB), and malaria in Global Fund and related national processes throughout the funding cycle. Engaging communities in an inclusive and meaningful way is crucial to ensuring that Global Fund investments are evidence- and rights-based, and gender and age responsive. The Global Fund Board has approved the Community Engagement Strategic Initiative (CE SI) for implementation from January 2024 to December 2026. These guidelines describe the technical assistance available as part of the CE SI.

Who can apply for CE SI technical assistance?

The following stakeholders from countries eligible for Global Fund funding as well as from countries included in multicountry grants can apply for technical assistance:

- Networks and organizations led by key or vulnerable populations in the context of HIV or TB.[1]
- Youth-led networks and organizations.
- Women-led networks and organizations.
- Networks and organizations led by people living with HIV, TB survivors, or communities most affected by malaria.[2]
- Civil society networks and organizations closely working with one/several of the groups mentioned above.

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[1] By following these links you can find more information on the definition of HIV key populations and TB key and vulnerable populations.
[2] By following these links you can find more information on the definition of high-risk and underserved populations in the context of malaria (page 19).

Applications from Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) and Regional Coordination Mechanisms (RCMs) will be considered **only** if they are developed and submitted in collaboration with one of the above stakeholders.

What type of technical assistance can be requested?

Technical assistance can be requested at any stage of the Global Fund funding cycle: funding request development, grant-making, grant implementation and oversight, including reprogramming. In addition, technical assistance can be requested to support engagement in the development of National Strategic Plans (NSPs) or similar key processes.

Within this broader framework, CE SI technical assistance requests should focus on issues related to human rights, gender, equity, key populations, community responses and systems strengthening and related areas.

The short-term nature of technical assistance foresees that community experts can be deployed for approximately 30 days over a period of up to three months.

CE SI technical assistance is available in **three** main areas of work:

(1) Situational analysis and needs assessments

- CRG-related assessments to generate strategic information for better decision-making

Example: A youth-led organization received technical assistance to conduct a HIV gender assessment specific to adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), after their CCM representative told them that the Global Fund Principal Recipients (PRs) were failing to meet their targets on HIV prevention among AGYW. The assessment generated critical insights into the gender- and age-related barriers to HIV prevention services that AGYW were facing. The youth-led organization and their CCM representative were supported to use the assessment results to advocate for Global Fund grant reprogramming towards gender-transformative approaches in order to improve uptake of services by AGYW.

- Program review to ensure community perspectives inform service delivery improvements

Example: Following an audit by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), there was an agreed management action for the Global Fund Secretariat to work with the Ministry of Health and civil society partners to develop an Operational Plan, with measures to improve the utilization rate of long-lasting insecticide net (LLIN) following the next mass campaign distribution. Civil society organizations working on malaria were supported to interview program beneficiaries in the villages to understand their barriers to net use and make recommendations for the next campaign.

(2) Engagement in country dialogue processes

- Community consultations to inform priorities for inclusion in national policies, guidelines and plans

Example: The National network of people living with HIV received technical assistance to convene consultations with its members as part of the mid-term review of the HIV National Strategic Plan (NSP). They were supported to identify issues and gaps with implementation to date, in order to inform the review process. They were also supported to develop a 'Priorities Charter' containing the interventions and activities they wanted to see included in the next NSP.

- Community consultations to identify and coordinate priorities for inclusion in funding requests

Example: Nine months prior to submission of an integrated HIV, TB and malaria funding request, a consortium of community-led networks and organizations requested technical assistance to help identify and systematize community priorities to inform the mandatory "CSO and Community priority annex" of the funding request. A consultant was hired to develop a concept and facilitate community dialogues with HIV key populations, TB survivors and TB key populations, as well as CSOs working on malaria. Representatives of each community group held a meeting, identified and prioritized interventions and shared the final list with CCM representatives and the writing team.

- Engagement planning to strengthen the participation of communities in Global Fund processes

Example: Comments from the Global Fund's Technical Review Panel (TRP) flagged a critical gap in the lack of a community engagement strategy for transgender people, with no road map for grant implementation. As part of the TRP responses, technical assistance was provided in response to a joint request of local transgender organizations to develop a plan of how transgender community members can be strengthened to support community-led service delivery interventions.

- Caucusing and collective strategizing for coordinated community-led advocacy

Example: A network of TB activists was supported to hold a community dialogue on the sustainability of TB services, after the country's transition readiness assessment highlighted limited domestic funding for community-based TB screening activities. Members of the CCM who represent TB communities were invited. The aim was to develop a shared vision among civil society groups on how the Global Fund transition is developing in their country, what the challenges and opportunities are. The dialogue resulted in an 'Advocacy Agenda' outlining concrete budget advocacy and budget monitoring activities.

(3) Supporting design and implementation arrangements

- Mapping of civil society and community organizations and activities to strengthen community systems and responses

Example: As part of the country's transition grant, a social contracting mechanism was set up by the Government to ensure the continuation of community-led HIV and TB services beyond the Global Fund transition. A national umbrella civil society organization received technical assistance to conduct a mapping of the civil society and community organizations in the country. They were supported to create a database and directory of all organizations, the populations they serve, and the types of HIV and TB services they provide. The mapping will be used by the civil society network to circulate calls for proposals from the Government's new financing mechanism.

- Refining or validating tools that support community engagement in Global Fund-related processes

Example: Technical assistance was provided to a regional migrant association to adapt an existing community-led monitoring scorecard for HIV, to make it suitable for TB and malaria as well. The association used the updated scorecard tool to monitor the accessibility of TB and malaria medicines for internally displaced people and refugees who receive services through a multi-country Global Fund grant.

- Workshop to strengthen knowledge of civil society and community groups on the Global Fund

Example: After many years of being ineligible for Global Fund funding, the country became eligible for a malaria allocation again due to a spike in its epidemic. Technical support was provided to a national civil society organization to hold a workshop for other organizations working on malaria at community-level, to build their knowledge on the Global Fund so they could engage in the funding request development and in the implementation of the forthcoming malaria grant.

CE SI technical assistance does **not** support:

- CCM strengthening (e.g., training of CCM members in their roles and responsibilities).
- Long-term capacity development of civil society networks and organizations (e.g., organizational development support to become a Global Fund recipient).
- Development of stand-alone tools that lack a focus on community engagement.
- Funding request writing.

Who provides CE SI technical assistance?

Nineteen (19) community and civil society TA providers have been pre-qualified as technical assistance providers for the 2024-2026 implementation period. These organizations were selected through an open and competitive tender process, to ensure providers have a strong track record and relevant expertise in relation to human rights, gender, equity, key populations, and community systems and responses. Technical assistance providers are selected in line with the specific requirements of each technical assistance request.

How to apply for CE SI technical assistance?

The first step of the **application** process is to fill in the CE SI technical assistance request form. The form includes information about the requesting organization(s), the proposed tasks and expected results of the technical assistance assignment. Applicants must contact the Learning Hub in their region for assistance in reviewing the request prior to submission to the Global Fund. Here you can find an example of a high-quality request.

The completed request form needs to be submitted to ceta@theglobalfund.org.

Requests will be assessed for eligibility by the Global Fund Secretariat. This assessment involves the Community, Rights and Gender Department and Global Fund County Teams. The following criteria will be applied during the **eligibility check**:

- Eligibility of requesting organization(s).
- Appropriate partnerships with civil society and communities (e.g., request well-coordinated with CCM representatives, submission as consortium).
- Involvement of the Learning Hub in developing the request (see Contacts);
- Strategic link to Global Fund-related processes.
- Expected result(s) are clearly articulated.
- Opportunity for strengthening engagement of one or more communities in Global Fund and related processes.
- Strategic fit with one of three CE SI areas for technical assistance.

Please note that the review of requests may take **several** weeks. Requesting organizations will be informed by email about the eligibility decision.
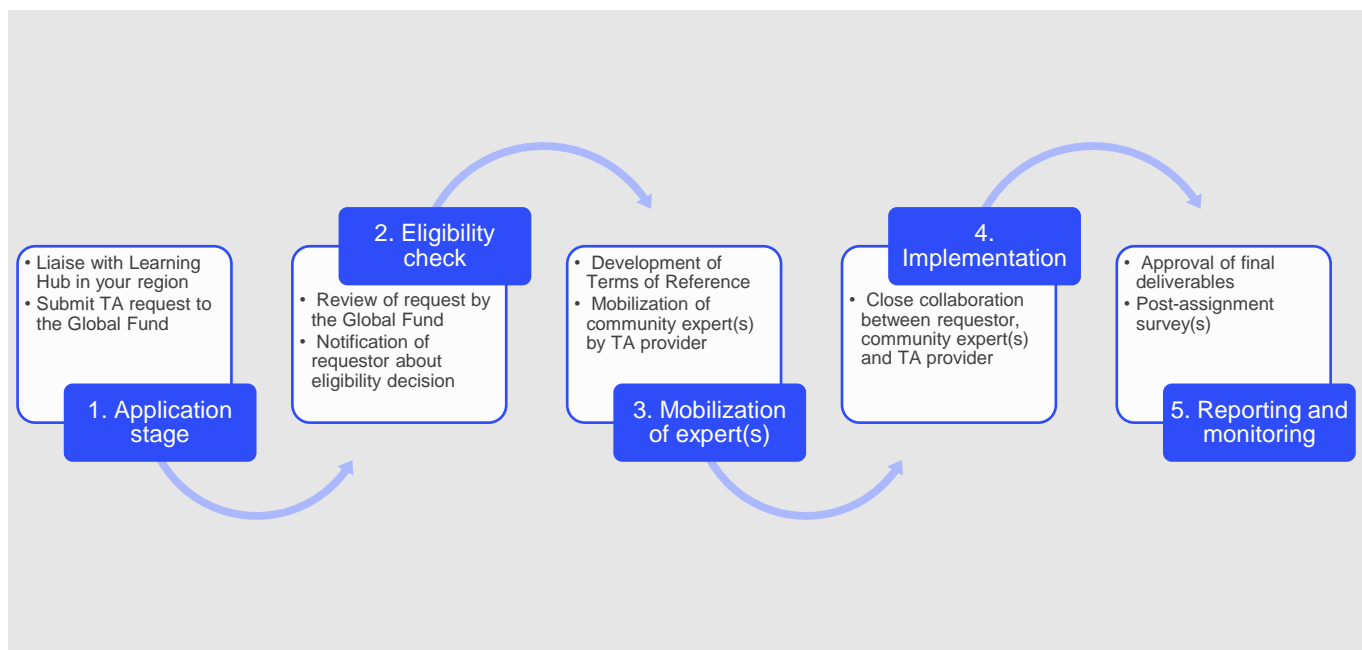
Figure 1: Overview of the technical assistance process.

Once a request has been approved, detailed terms of reference and a budget will be developed. This process may not only involve the requestor and the Global Fund but also the technical assistance provider. In parallel, the Global Fund identifies a suitable technical assistance provider which is tasked with **mobilizing community experts**. The peer-to peer nature of technical assistance means that, wherever possible, community experts are from the country or region where the assignment is implemented or are themselves from a community most affected by HIV, TB or malaria.

The time it takes for an eligible request to proceed to implementation depends on the complexity of the work and the availability of technical assistance providers and can take up to **three** months. The roles and responsibilities of the requestor, technical assistance provider and the Global Fund during **implementation** of technical assistance are outlined in more detail in the terms of reference. Upon completion of the assignment, the Global Fund reviews and approves the final deliverables.

The requesting organization(s) play(s) an important role in the **evaluation** of CE SI assignments. After completion of each assignment, the Global Fund requires requestors to complete a brief survey. Around 6-9 months after completion of the assignment, recipients of technical assistance are further required to participate in a brief interview conducted by the Learning Hub in their region to assess to what extent key deliverables of the assignment were used to influence Global Fund and related processes.

Contact

- Global Fund, CE SI Technical Assistance | ceta@theglobalfund.org