

# **Breaking Down Barriers to Health Services in Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal and Tunisia; a program to strengthen youth leadership in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria**

## **Call for Applications**

**Are you a young activist in Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal or Tunisia, with an interest in driving social change and reducing human rights-related barriers to health services? If you are, this exciting new program may be for you!**

Too often, young people – especially those belonging to key and vulnerable populations – are those who have the least access to health services due to stigma, discrimination, and criminalization. Breaking down these human rights-related barriers to health services demands that young people in all their diversity are empowered to lead the call for change.

However, youth are often denied access to the right platforms and are rarely meaningfully involved in the decisions that affect their lives. Building on the Global Fund's ongoing Breaking Down Barriers initiative, the Global Fund and Thomson Reuters Foundation (TRF) aim to change this through building bridges between civil society organizations (CSOs) – particularly those that are led by and for affected communities – and the media to ensure young activists are equipped and empowered to speak out.

**This December, the Global Fund and Thomson Reuters Foundation are launching the first francophone cohort of a program for CSOs and journalists based in Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal and Tunisia. The program will support representatives of CSOs, and their networks, in their efforts to remove human rights-related barriers to health services through enhanced communication and media engagement skills, while also supporting journalists to report on these issues with accuracy and authority.**

**The program begins with a five-day in-person course in December 2024, followed by a series of engagement opportunities running until the end of 2026.**

For more information on the program and how to apply, please see below.

## **1. Background**

Since 2019, [The Global Fund and Thomson Reuters Foundation](#) have been working together to amplify the voices of marginalized groups as they demand equitable access to health services. Despite the progress made, changing discriminatory laws and policies and eliminating stigma remain formidable challenges. Building on the partnership with TRF, the Global Fund is now seeking to enhance and support the vital role played by youth and young leaders in improving human rights, gender equality and equity in health services for the most vulnerable in society.

Between 2024 and 2026, TRF and the Global Fund will support young civil society leaders and journalists based in countries covered by the Global Fund's Breaking Down Barriers initiative who aspire to a step change in public narratives on human rights, and to build more just and equal societies. TRF and the Global Fund see the media and civil society as playing crucial roles in this critical work:

- **The role of communities and civil society organizations:** Working on the frontlines of social change, communities and civil society organizations (CSOs) are crucial partners in advocating for marginalized and vulnerable groups, providing services, and mobilizing communities. Through their direct work with marginalized and vulnerable people, CSOs often have deep knowledge of their needs, and expertise in empowering these communities to demand better health services. CSOs conduct research, raise awareness about health disparities, and lobby governments and other stakeholders for policy change to promote equitable access to health services. By amplifying the voices of marginalized groups and advocating for their rights, CSOs contribute significantly to efforts to improve health outcomes for all members of society.
- **The role of journalists:** Journalists have a vital and powerful role to play in addressing barriers to health services for marginalized groups by raising awareness of disparities, conducting investigative reporting to uncover systemic issues, highlighting successful solutions, and informing the public. Through high-quality and accurate reporting journalists can inform public perception and policy direction, and ultimately drive positive change towards equitable access to health services for all.

## 2. The Program

The program begins with a five-day in-person course in December 2024, followed by a series of engagement opportunities running until the end of 2026. It offers long-term, targeted support to young civil society leaders and young journalists to drive real change in attitudes, practices, and policy.

Program participants will have the opportunity to progress through the following stages:

- a) Onboarding onto the program through one-to-one conversations with the Global Fund and/or Thomson Reuters Foundation staff.

- b) Participation in TRF’s innovative dual-track training course in Dakar, Senegal, during 2-6 December, 2024 **(in person, compulsory)**
- The five-day course will be delivered through a blend of in-person modules, group work, expert guest sessions, exercises and individual assignments.
  - The CSO and journalism training tracks will proceed in separate training rooms, with joint sessions built into the agenda to bring the two tracks together. These joint sessions will offer opportunities for practicing skills with professional peers, learning more about one another’s work, and networking.
  - The training will be run in French.
  - Participants should be prepared to develop a succinct, engaging, informative 90-second presentation on a key initiative, and confidently handle any questions. They will have the opportunity to deliver their presentations to journalists at a joint meeting, where the journalists will have the opportunity to interview them.
- c) Access to direct one-to-one mentorship to pursue an agreed communications objective. Places on the mentoring scheme will be awarded through a competitive process, and proposals must focus on the topic of human rights and health. Small grants will be awarded to applicants whose proposals are successful.
- d) The opportunity to access legal support. For CSOs, support will be available through signing up to TrustLaw– the world’s largest pro-bono legal service. Through TrustLaw, TRF will support CSOs to harness the pro-bono expertise of lawyers to support research and capacity-building needs. Documents required to register for TrustLaw include, but are not limited to (a) organization registration documents, (b) articles of association, (c) recent annual report, (d) recent financial statements
- e) Participation in an alumni network of young activists and young journalists. Alumni will have opportunities to come together at key milestones throughout the duration of the program (2024-2026). These opportunities may include alumni events and days of particular relevance, such as World AIDS Day or other regional events.
- f) Access to further support opportunities – be it further training, TrustLaw support, or one-to-one mentorship opportunities

### 3. Expected Program Outcomes

Through the initial training course and subsequent engagement in the program (until end of 2026), participants will build their skills in journalism and communication. On completion of the program, participants are expected to have greater understanding of best practices, and increased confidence and motivation with regards to reporting or communicating on human rights issues relating to health services. Participants will also understand how to access legal support through the TRF TrustLaw network.

The longer-term program will provide course alumni with opportunities to engage in follow-up activities, including joint sessions to foster CSO-journalist interaction. TRF and the

Global Fund see this long-term approach as fundamental to fostering a productive network of CSOs and journalists equipped with the tools and knowledge to explain how efforts to reduce human rights-related barriers to health services must be an integral part of efforts to improve the health of everyone in society.

#### **4. Program Principles:**

The program is designed to be practical and interactive, and participants will work on real-world issues they face in their work, as well as hypothetical scenarios. Participants will be expected to contribute to discussions, and to share insights from their own experience.

We emphasize that all engagement opportunities over the course of the program, including the in-person training, are a safe environment, and that respect and fairness are crucial.

The Global Fund and Thomson Reuters Foundation expect:

- Participants to provide respectful, constructive, and meaningful contributions during and after the course.
- Civil society and journalist participants to forge networks and identify issues for appropriate reporting and content generation.
- All participants to engage with one another, share knowledge and experience of their work and examples of how they may have overcome challenges.
- Ongoing and active engagement in the program stages as described above.

#### **5. Cost of Participation**

The program is designed to support existing activities that you and your organization are already implementing. No additional costs are expected from participants.

The following costs associated with participating in the program, specifically for in-person events, will be covered by Thomson Reuters Foundation and the Global Fund:

- International and domestic flights (economy class)
- Visa costs, if applicable
- Accommodation costs for in-person events
- Other local transportation to/from course venue, including airport transfers
- Meals and refreshments and/or a daily per-diem to cover meals not provided during course hours.

TRF and the Global Fund will consider reimbursement of other reasonable costs which participants may expect to incur to enable participation in in-person events. Costs outside of those listed above must be discussed and agreed in advance.

#### **5. Who Can Apply**

To be eligible to participate in this program, CSO applicants must be:

- Employees or affiliates of a civil society organization that is either (a) youth-led, or (b) has youth-focused programming. The organization that you work for must:
  - Have an active relationship with a Global Fund grant, and/or work directly on reducing human rights-related barriers to HIV, TB and/or malaria.
  - Be eligible for TrustLaw membership – [criteria can be found here](#).
- Employed or actively involved in communications and/or advocacy related to HIV, TB and/or malaria.
- Involved in organizational projects or initiatives focused on the health and [human rights](#) of key, vulnerable or underserved populations in the context of HIV, TB or Malaria.
- Working in Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal or Tunisia.
- Able to demonstrate at least three years of relevant professional experience.
- 30 years of age or younger at the time of applying.
- Be fluent in French.
- Have a working knowledge of English in order to engage with TrustLaw. Where this is not possible, the applicant's sponsoring organization should have this capacity.
- Hold a valid passport and be able to travel to Dakar, Senegal, for the course dates shown.

Should your application be successful, you will be required to provide a letter of support from your manager or appropriate senior leader in the CSO you work for or are affiliated with. This letter should confirm your availability to travel and participate in the five-day training course, and as far as possible, should also include in-principle support for your subsequent engagement in future opportunities offered as part of the program, mostly through remote engagement.

[APPLY HERE](#) - *Responses in French or English will be accepted.*