Women4GF Africa Workshop
Increasing and improving the Global Fund’s gender programming

Cape Town, 4-6 December 2013

Organised and facilitated by AIDS Strategy, Advocacy and Policy (ASAP)
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Acronyms and abbreviations

CCM = country coordinating mechanism
CSS = community systems strengthening
FPM = fund portfolio manager
GAC = Grant Approvals Committee
GES = Gender Equality Strategy
Global Fund = Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
MSM = men who have sex with men
NFM = new funding model
NGO = non-governmental organisation
NSP = national strategic plan
TB = tuberculosis
TRP = Technical Review Panel
UNAIDS = Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
1. Overview and Executive Summary

Although progress in the HIV response is encouraging, nearly 16 million women throughout the world globally are living with HIV. In sub-Saharan Africa, the region that is home to 25 million people living with the virus, three out of five adults and three out of four young people living with HIV are female.

Gender inequalities and harmful gender norms continue to contribute to HIV-related vulnerability. A recent review found that women who have experienced intimate partner violence are 50% more likely to be living with HIV. Worldwide, seven out of ten women live on less than a dollar a day and at least one in three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. AIDS continues to be the leading cause of death and disease for women of reproductive age. The inequalities women face further compound these vulnerabilities as they are often treated as second-class citizens. In their homes and communities, where their health care systems are overburdened, women have stepped in and are filling the gap—often with limited funding or validation of this important work.

Despite the substantial impact, the HIV prevention, treatment and care rights and needs of women in all their diversity rarely receive the attention and resources required. A recent UNAIDS report found that fewer than half of countries allocate funds for women’s organizations; most also do not integrate HIV and sexual and reproductive health services or scale up initiatives to engage men and boys in national responses. There are many reasons for this intolerable situation, one of which is that women are rarely present at decision-making tables. As a result, programming and budget decisions are predominately made by men, and gender budgeting and reporting is rare. Community-based women who are willing to participate and who are enthusiastic about influencing policy are often ignored and find it difficult to have their voices heard.

In 2008, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) adopted a Gender Equality Strategy (GES), which was designed to increase the scope and quality of programming that addresses gender inequality and the challenges women and girls face daily. Yet efforts have not moved forward due to poor implementation. The Global Fund’s new funding model (NFM) is an excellent opportunity for greater action. A key principle of the NFM is “investing for impact” to ensure that Global Fund support goes to where the epidemic is, and to programmes that can have the greatest impact on the three diseases. In sub-Saharan Africa, this mean that more programmes must reach women and girls, especially key affected women.

From 4-6 December 2013 in Cape Town, South Africa—immediately before the start of the 17th International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa (ICASA)—the Women4GF Africa advocates workshop was organized to mobilize stronger action on gender equality through the Global Fund’s NFM. More than 40 individuals attended from over a dozen countries across Africa. Over a third were openly living with HIV, and many were young (including eight young women born with HIV) and from sex worker communities. All represent or work directly with and for populations vulnerable to and personally affected by HIV, TB and malaria, with most working at the grassroots level. The majority of participants were women, including transgender women, with a small number of men also attending.

The workshop was organised and facilitated by AIDS Strategy, Advocacy and Policy (ASAP) and supported by the Global Fund. Representatives from the Global Fund Secretariat joined the community-based participants to provide background information and better understand experiences and needs in implementing countries.
**Priority demands from participants**

Participants identified priority demands in the following areas: meaningful engagement, inclusion and representation, human rights, good data and evidence, financing, and accountability and collaboration with women’s groups working in country.

1) **Meaningful engagement, inclusion and representation:** Women in all their diversity need to be meaningfully engaged, included and represented at all levels so that Global Fund resources support programmes that advance gender equality. Important steps have been taken, but more is needed so that gender equality advocates are engaged through all national and global processes that influence how Global Fund resources are allocated and used. Action is required to secure meaningful inclusion of women in all their diversity, in particular young women, transgender women and women who do not speak English.

Key action areas include:

- Global Fund Portfolio Managers (FPMs), other country team members and regional focal points should engage directly with gender equality advocates to ensure that the Global Fund supports gender-sensitive and -transformative interventions in concept notes and eventual grant agreements, and to overcome challenges in the participation of women in all their diversity in Global Fund-related processes at country, regional and global levels. Gender equality advocates share responsibility and will act as ‘eyes and ears’ on the ground—watchdogs to ensure that Global Fund processes and programmes have maximal impact and work for women.

- Young women, transgender women and women who are sex workers face disproportionate vulnerability to HIV in many parts of Africa. Women in general are inadequately represented in Global Fund processes and structures, but further and active steps particularly must be taken to include young women, transgender women and sex workers in country processes and structures as well as in global governance.

- The Global Fund Secretariat should take steps to coordinate the GES and the SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Implementation) strategies. There are notable overlaps—especially for transgender women and sex workers—but these two strategies are usually treated and implemented separately. Language that explains these links and overlaps should be drafted and included in both documents.

- Global Fund-related meetings—including Women4GF workshops—need to be conducted in languages other than English, so that information about the NFM and GES reaches gender equality advocates in non-English-speaking nations and communities. Global Fund documentation should be available in several languages (and translated locally), as should be critical documents that help increase awareness and technical capacity. Women4GF Africa workshop participants called for priority efforts to mobilise advocates in the Francophone and Lusophone countries of Africa.

2) **Human rights:** Bold actions are essential to protect the human rights of women in all their diversity, and especially young and key affected women. The Global Fund stresses the importance of addressing human rights through its programmes to have maximum impact on HIV, TB and malaria, including the
identification, tracking and redress of human rights violations. Technical partners in country—the UN family in particular—have a core mandate and responsibility to ensure that members of legally and socially oppressed populations, including sex workers, women who use drugs, transgender women and people from LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) communities, are able to participate meaningfully and safely in Global Fund processes. In regards to the NFM, their high-quality participation is especially essential in country dialogues and to ensure that concept notes include priority programmes.

3) Good data and evidence: Gender equality advocates in all their diversity need clear data and evidence to make a stronger case regarding vulnerability to, and impact of, HIV, TB and malaria and to advocate for the right programmes that respect rights and respond to needs. All workshop participants, and particularly those from the Francophone African region, called for greater information about existing evidence, and increased investment from a range of partners in research on gender-based violence and violence against other key populations including men who have sex with men (MSM), women who use drugs and sex workers. Only with stronger data and evidence can gender equality advocates make a stronger case for the inclusion of more extensive and better funded interventions to address key vulnerabilities, including gender-based violence, in national strategic plans (NSPs) as well as Global Fund concept notes.

4) Financing: All reviews of the GES have shown that the implementation of gender programmes is difficult to track if they have not been clearly budgeted in final grant agreements. Countries therefore must make gender budgeting and reporting standard practice. This will ensure that gender-sensitive and gender-transformative programmes are costed and tracked in NSPs, and subsequently in Global Fund budgets, funding agreements and reports. Sufficient funding must be available to meet the full range of gender-transformative interventions needed to respond to the specific demands each country faces and to maximise the impact of Global Fund support.

5) Accountability and collaboration: To date, the Global Fund has not been successful in implementing its GES. Gender equality advocates and women in all their diversity commit to joining forces with the Secretariat and other partners to ensure implementation happens, to track processes, and to take the strong action required to increase the quality and success of gender programming in Global Fund grants. For this partnership to be meaningful, civil society groups (especially women’s groups) at country level need enhanced technical capacity and financial support to monitor both national and Global Fund-specific processes, including NSP development, policy dialogue, country coordination mechanism (CCM) selection, country dialogues, concept note drafting, grant negotiations, grant signings and programme implementation.

2. Basic Background

2.1 About the workshop

The December 2013 Cape Town workshop was the fourth under the banner of an emerging project, Women4GF (W4GF), launched in July 2013. Women4GF aims to coordinate and strengthen the ability of women’s rights advocates—in particular women living with HIV and personally affected by TB and

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malaria, and key affected women—to engage at country, regional and global (including Board) levels with the Global Fund and its NFM from a gender-equality perspective.

As referred to in Section 1, one of the main rationales behind the creation of Women4GF is that, despite the GES being in place since 2008, gender equality and women’s rights have not been addressed adequately through Global Fund processes. Women’s rights advocates, especially women living with HIV and personally affected by TB and Malaria have not engaged and have been mostly absent from the conversation in comparison with other key Global Fund populations, such as men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers and people who use drugs. The lack of strong, sustained energy around gender (from both civil society and within the Global Fund) is a key reason why the GES has hardly been implemented or understood at country level. As a result, women’s rights, priorities and challenges are not satisfactorily recognized or responded to throughout all Global Fund structures and processes.

Ensuring the robust implementation of the GES, and monitoring compliance, is an immediate necessity—and is an important goal of the Women4GF initiative. Women4GF seeks to ensure that gender-transformative programmes (those that directly seek to achieve gender equality) are financed by the Global Fund. As long as this achievement lags, Global Fund resources cannot and do not have maximal impact.

The following objectives were specified at the beginning of the 4-6 December 2013 Cape Town workshop:

• To strengthen the capacity of African women’s rights advocates—especially women living with HIV and personally affected by tuberculosis (TB) and malaria, and key affected women including transgender women to engage at country, regional and global (including Board) levels with the Global Fund and its NFM from a gender equality perspective
• To learn from experience and begin to strengthen the capacity of partners in NFM focal countries to bring a gender perspective—in the country dialogue process, the development of concept notes, as well as in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and revision of forthcoming Global Fund grants
• To strengthen partnerships and engagement between women’s rights advocates, women living with HIV, key affected women and stakeholders already strongly involved in the NFM and the Global Fund, including the Civil Society Board Delegations
• To build mutual capacity in gender and Global Fund processes and secure high level engagement with the Global Fund from a gender equality perspective
• To develop advocacy and action plans to sustain community-led efforts on gender equality with the Global Fund and to support the implementation of the GES

2.2 About this report

This report provides a summary of presentations, discussions and outcomes from the Cape Town workshop. It is not intended to be an in-depth account of all proceedings and thus does not discuss all information and resources chronologically or extensively (if at all). The document aims to support advocacy and decision-making efforts related to the Global Fund and key gender-related concerns and priorities among participants. (In-depth information about Global Fund structures and processes, including the NFM, is available on the Women 4GF website (http://women4gf.org/2014/03/funding-model-and-processes/))
This report and the discussions held at the workshop are part of a process designed to be ongoing. It is therefore important to stress that the information and summaries throughout the report are based on what was known and discussed as of the dates of the workshop. Subsequent developments regarding the NFM, the GES and other Global Fund mechanisms are not reflected, unless specifically stated otherwise.

The report is structured as follows:
- Core information about Global Fund, including the NFM (Section 3). The section also contains a summary of participants’ main concerns and some clarifications provided by Global Fund representatives.
- Summaries of presentations providing information about additional opportunities for financial and technical support for civil society and community groups seeking to engage more effectively with the Global Fund (Section 4)
- Summary of concluding action planning exercises (Section 5)
- Potential entry points in the NFM, to influence grantmaking, as suggested by Global Fund representatives and proposed by participants (Box 1)

The report also contains two annexes:
- Annex 1 contains a list of participants
- Annex 2 includes a representative sampling of personal commitments made by participants for achievements by the end of 2013 and in 2014.

Background material, including the full text of many of the presentations, is available at the Women4GF website (www.women4gf.org). Meeting participants also have access to a dedicated, password-protected, on-line dialogue space on that website.

3. The Global Fund in Practice: Core Information

3.1 Notable Global Fund structures

The Global Fund is technically a financing mechanism, not an implementing entity. This means it can be thought of as a “bank” that makes money available to countries that need funding to expand and improve their responses to HIV, TB and malaria.

The Global Fund’s Secretariat, based in Geneva, puts into action and oversees the decisions of a 20-member Board. Although the Board has ultimate decision-making power and responsibility, the majority of decisions are taken at committee level and then presented to the Board for approval. The most important of the three main committees for most community activists is the Strategy, Investment and Impact Committee (SIIC), which provides recommendations about the overall direction of the Global Funds work. The Board nearly always approves committee recommendations – which means influencing SIIC and other committees can be very important.

The Global Fund is designed as a partnership involving a wide range of stakeholders. For example, half the Board members are from what is known as the “implementing bloc”—the countries, communities and individuals who should benefit from the money. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and
communities have a direct say on the Board through three seats held by representatives from the following: Developing Country Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Delegation, Developed Country NGO Delegation, and Communities Delegation.

Most participants at the W4GF Africa workshop were likely to be eligible to join one of three delegations if they wished and were accepted: the Communities Delegation, the Developing Country NGO Delegation, and either the Eastern and Southern Africa or West and Central Africa delegations (depending on their country). Governments usually control the second two of these four delegations, although some also allow civil society representatives on their delegations. The first two, meanwhile, are exclusively for civil society. All delegations develop their own criteria and rules for membership and selection of Board and Alternate Board Members.

The Communities Delegation comprises people living with and affected by the three diseases. It is the only constituency without a geographic constraint; in other words, people from all countries in the world are eligible to join.

All workshop participants were encouraged to consider applying to become a delegation member, if they were not already. The Communities Delegation is especially interested in having women join to ensure greater and more meaningful engagement of women in debate and decision making.

Two other Global Fund structures are important to note for workshop attendees:

- The Technical Review Panel (TRP) is an independent body that reviews the technical quality (or “soundness”) of proposals on behalf of the Global Fund and makes recommendations for funding decisions including changes, approval/rejection, etc. Under the NFM (see Section 3.2 below), its direct engagement will increase as it reviews concept notes and works with countries to prepare fully fledged (and acceptable) programmes.

- The Grant Approvals Committee (GAC) is a committee within the Global Fund Secretariat that was created as part of the NFM. It reviews proposals that are sent to it by the TRP and considers them in regards to several criteria, including i) technical soundness and ii) compliance with the Global Fund’s strategy and institutional priorities, including potential impact of the activities. One seat on the GAC is reserved for civil society.

3.2 How the Global Fund disburses money: the NFM

The new funding model (NFM), officially approved by the Board in November 2012, is the cornerstone of the Global Fund’s 2012-2016 Strategy (“Investing for Impact”). It provides the framework for how the Global Fund disburses money, which is its main responsibility and reason for existing. Among the new model’s key aims are to simplify the grantmaking process, make funding more flexible and predictable for implementing countries, and ensure that the bulk of funding goes to where the needs are greatest (especially countries with high disease burden and low per capita incomes).

The Global Fund is currently in the process of “testing” the NFM, with a handful of “early applicants” invited to participate in late February 2013. The full roll out is planned for March 2014, at which time all eligible countries will be advised of their allocations and will have the opportunity to access funding. An important point to note is that the NFM is not yet finalized and is still “evolving”, especially in response to what it learns from the testing phase initiated earlier in 2013.
The NFM is an “iterative” process, meaning that the Global Fund and country applicants are expected to discuss proposals regularly and that many steps in the process will be repeated, if necessary, until the final outcome is satisfactory to both the Global Fund and the applicant. The series of steps, or components, begin at initial consideration of a country’s needs and continue through grant implementation. The graphic below, prepared by the Global Fund, shows the basic steps in the NFM. Summaries of several of the main steps and concepts are presented after the graphic.

![Ongoing Country Dialogue Diagram](image)

**Country dialogue.** The core element of the overall NFM is called “country dialogue”. It is intended to be an ongoing, multi-stakeholder process that is initiated and led at the country level. Among the sectors that the Global Fund expects to be represented in the country dialogue are government, civil society, key populations, people living with the diseases, technical partners (for example, UNAIDS), academia and other funders.

The idea is that the country dialogue is something that “naturally happens”. In practice this might consist of people sitting around a table and discussing past, present and future disease responses, openly and in-depth. It is assumed that the main programmatic and funding priorities for Global Fund proposals are to be identified through the country dialogue. Those priorities should be reflected in national strategic plans (NSPs), proposals submitted to the Global Fund, and interventions included in approved and implemented grant programmes. Priorities and interventions should be based on evidence (data, epidemiology, analysis, etc.) as well as a clear understanding of the needs and challenges facing the most vulnerable, including those living with and affected by the diseases.

It is important to note that the country dialogue and the CCM are not the same thing. The country dialogue is considered an overarching process that is not directly associated with the Global Fund. The CCM, however, is a Global Fund entity. In the new grantmaking structure, it remains the formal “owner” of the funding request because it submits the concept note, makes in-country arrangements with the principal recipient (PR), and is responsible for moving the proposal forward.
**Concept note.** A concept note is a preliminary proposal for Global Fund support that should flow out of the country dialogue. In theory, a concept note is supposed to be a relatively brief, basic document that lays out a country’s priorities and financial requests and thus initiates a back-and-forth process (which the Global Fund refers to as “iterative”) to finalize a full proposal. As seen in the testing phase, however, concept notes have been far more complex and lengthy than anticipated.

**NSPs and investment case.** The Global Fund recommends that concept notes be based on NSP regarding specific diseases. Countries develop NSPs themselves independently of the Global Fund. “Good” plans include information on the impact of the disease (including data and trends), specific actions and priorities to respond, who or what should be involved, etc. From the perspective of the Global Fund, high-quality NSPs are also those that discuss gender and key populations and clearly indicate what will be done to provide the most impactful services.

The Global Fund considers drafting, review and revision of NSPs to be part of the overall country dialogue process. As such, they should be developed with the involvement of a full range of stakeholders, including civil society, communities, people living with and affected by the diseases, and members of key populations. The importance of NSPs is reflected in the Global Fund’s strong encouragement that they be assessed through a “credible, independent and multi-stakeholder process.”

The Global Fund expects that “good” NSPs will adequately show why its funding and other support might be needed. In the absence of a quality NSP, countries are required to provide a clear “investment case” for the amount of money they request and what they seek to use it for. The reason for this requirement is that the NFM is based on the Global Fund principle of “investing for impact”.

**TRP and GAC review.** As per the NFM system as currently designed, concept notes are first reviewed by the Global Fund’s Technical Review Panel (TRP)—described in Section 3.1—to consider whether they have technical merit. Depending on that panel’s impressions, a concept note is either sent to the Grant Approvals Committee (GAC) for further review or returned to the CCM with requests for changes. The “iterative” principle means that there could be several rounds of back and forth aimed at improving the quality of the concept note.

Once the GAC approves the concept note, drafting a full-fledged grant begins. This includes creating a formal agreement and contract, determining a budget and establishing a performance framework (indicators, in other words). The comprehensive proposal then goes back to the GAC for a second review; once approved by that committee, it is sent to the Board for approval. Grant implementation begins shortly after Board approval, with the money ideally flowing to countries far more quickly than it did in the previous system.

**Funding availability for individual countries.** In the Global Fund’s previous rounds-based grantmaking system, countries were not provided with any guidance regarding how much money they should ask for. As a result, the range of requested amounts for all proposals, regardless of disease, varied widely and often was not based on objective criteria. Many stakeholders, especially from civil society, observed that countries often asked for far less than they truly needed.

The NFM seeks to address this problem, and improve “predictability”, by providing countries an initial amount that the Global Fund thinks they can realistically spend effectively and efficiently. This core amount is called “indicative” funding. The amounts for each country are determined through a complicated series of mathematical formulas based on disease burden (for all three diseases, considered
separately); “ability to pay” (per capita income); and past performance, among other factors. Countries have some flexibility to decide how they want to divide their available funding across the three diseases (HIV, TB and malaria) as well as for a broader approach called health systems strengthening (which must be relevant to at least two of the diseases). Some restrictions remain, however. Countries must justify decisions that, for example, allocate a share of the overall resources for one disease if that share varies greatly from the Global Fund’s formula. Also, a new Board decision requires any country with high rates of TB and HIV co-infection to submit a joint proposal for funding to cover the two diseases. The majority of countries likely to be affected by that decision are in sub-Saharan Africa.

All grants are to last for three years. The total amount available to each country is based on the total amount the Global Fund has to spend over that period. For the first three-year period, 2014-2016, the Global Fund raised slightly more than $12 billion, an amount announced one day before the Cape Town workshop started.\(^1\) Over the next few months, the specific initial amounts for each country will be determined prior to the full roll out of the NFM in March 2014.

**Timelines under the NFM.** The Global Fund also has no direct control over when countries submit concept notes during the 2014-2016 period since the intention of the NFM is that countries request resources when they need them. However, the Secretariat assumes the majority of eligible countries will initiate the process fairly early in 2014, especially if they have not had the opportunity to apply for funding (or have been unsuccessful) in recent years.

According to estimates presented at the W4GF Africa workshop, the Global Fund expects that some 40 countries would be in “pre-concept note country dialogue” by January 2014. Overall, it expects a “peak” in the middle of 2014, shortly after the NFM is fully launched at the end of March— spend. (The “peak” refers to the total number of countries at one or more of the following stages of the grantmaking process: concept note writing, review by the TRP and/or GAC, and grant signing negotiations.)

**In general, the timeframe is tight because many countries will want to access funding as quickly as possible and begin using it. Therefore, the Global Fund is recommending that countries prepare as soon as possible, if they have not already done so. W4GF Africa workshop participants were urged to be aware of their countries processes, especially since country dialogues are likely to have already begun in many countries. Opportunities to join, get involved and influence new Global Fund processes must be explored and seized quickly. Global Fund representatives suggested a first step for participants would be to contact the CCM in their country to find out about the timing and scheduling. With that information, they could begin to plan and identify entry points for themselves and colleagues.**

Preliminary estimates from the Global Fund, presented at the workshop, assume that some countries from Africa will send in concept notes for grants for one or more of the three diseases in “early 2014”. Others, meanwhile, were expected to be on a more “relaxed” schedule, often because they have sufficient funding in hand already to not need new money immediately. Global Fund representatives stressed that exact dates and timelines would emerge in 2014 and be determined by countries.

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\(^1\) The total amount announced, $12.013 billion, is the most ever raised by the Global Fund for a three-year period. It is less than what the Global Fund had been hoping to raise for 2014-2016, however. It had sought $15 billion, a sum that it believed would allow it to meet the expected needs of all eligible countries.
3.3 Gender and the Global Fund

3.3.1 Gender Equality Strategy

The Global Fund’s major step related to the rights and engagement of women and girls was the adoption in 2008 of its Gender Equality Strategy (GES). The four overall aims of the strategy, which had long been advocated for by civil society groups (and especially women’s groups), are to

- fund proposals that scale-up services that reduce gender-related risks and vulnerabilities. Such risks might include gender-related violence such as sex workers being harassed and physically assaulted, and girls unable or afraid to go to school because of the possibility of sexual attack;
- decrease the burden of diseases for those most-at-risk (including, for example, migrants);
- mitigate the impact of the diseases; and
- address structural inequalities and discrimination.

Based on these overall goals, the GES included outcomes that were supposed to be met by 2012. According to Global Fund representatives and other observers, few of those outcomes have been achieved. The lack of progress was first highlighted in an early evaluation, released in 2011. The evaluation concluded that the GES itself was a good and potentially groundbreaking strategy, but that implementation had been weak.2

Other independent reviews and evaluations have shown similar negative results. Some have shown, for example, that most Global Fund programming has not been “gender-transformative”, a definition that refers to activities and interventions that address the root causes of gender inequality and make a real and substantial change in the health, well-being, rights and lives of women and girls (see Section 3.3.2.). Women’s participation in core Global Fund processes also lags. According to data collected by the Global Fund, nearly two-thirds (65%) of CCM members worldwide were male at the end of 2012 and only 6% of seats on the CCMs are earmarked for women.

The advent of the NFM offers new opportunities to move forward on gender. For one, the new Global Fund management strongly supports the GES and is hiring new staff to help promote positive change. Those Secretariat staff and others are expected to play important roles in pushing the TRP to focus on gender equality when reviewing proposals.

Also, there are many entry points during the new grantmaking process where gender champions and allies can influence proposals. Among the priorities of Global Fund staff in the Community, Rights and Gender Department is the gathering and use of gender and age disaggregated data to feed into concept notes and TRIP review. The Global Fund has never required the gathering of disaggregated data of this sort, but the Secretariat is now in the process of making it mandatory for applicants as part of its effort to improve evidence-based programming overall. A likely consequence will be the clear expectation, based on data, that more funding and interventions should be targeted to meet women’s prevention and treatment needs.

Such efforts are coinciding with, and will be supported by the development of a GES implementation plan. That plan is expected to be finalized in early 2014 and be reflected in new guidance on gender

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2 This independent formative evaluation was conducted by the Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation. The text of the evaluation is available on the Women4GF website at http://women4gf.org/2013/10/evaluations-of-gender-equality-strategy-and-sogi/.
prepared by the Secretariat. Initial consultations for the implementation plan indicate that it is likely to focus on ways to achieve “increased funding” outcomes, with more grants addressing gender inequalities.

Also of note is that an Action Plan for the GES and gender more generally is being developed for launch in 2014.

Presenters and participants at the W4GF Africa workshop also briefly discussed the Global Fund’s Sexual Orientation and Gender (SOGI) strategy, which was adopted one year after the GES. Several participants remarked that the two strategies are confusing because they seem to overlap. When introducing the SOGI, for example, the Global Fund said that it applies "to all people whose sexual orientation, gender identity and/or sexual behaviours do not conform to majority norms and values, focusing on adults engaging in consensual sexual behaviours that increase their health-related vulnerabilities."

In practice, the Global Fund has considered the SOGI strategy to refer primarily to men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender people and sex workers. As some workshop participants noted, many women are included in that definition and most if not all of those populations are defined at least in part by gender. Several therefore urged the Global Fund to take action to clarify the distinction or, as many preferred, to create one unified strategy that would ensure all vulnerable populations are clearly covered.

### 3.3.2 Defining categories of gender-related programming

It can be difficult to determine what kinds of activities and interventions are valuable and “good” in regards to gender. The GES describes three main categories:

- gender-negative, -blind or -neutral;
- gender-sensitive; and
- gender-responsive or -transformative.

In general, the Global Fund expects to support programmes in which activities are gender-sensitive at a minimum—with those that are gender-transformative the “gold standard”. The GES includes definitions of key terminology related to gender. Put simply, *gender-sensitive interventions* are those that take into account gender inequities and seek to ensure that women and girls benefit from the interventions. At the very least, such interventions “do no harm” because they do not make things worse or allow for the continuation of services that directly harm women in all their diversity. Scaling up services that reduce gender-related risks and vulnerabilities would fall within this category. An example is promotion of female condoms—a “female-initiated” technology which may require less negotiation with male partners than male condoms.

To be *gender-transformative*, an intervention should actively seek to redefine gender norms and relationships to overcome existing inequalities. Developing and supporting such interventions can be more difficult. They might include training and education on gender-related violence, concrete steps to overcome lack of access to education among women and girls, and the development and implementation of strategies to address traditional and cultural practices that put women at special risk. An example would be interventions that directly address sexuality norms and inequities that make it difficult for women to negotiate condom use.

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3 More detailed information about these definitions may be found in the GES.
Box 1. Identifying Entry Points in the Grantmaking Process

Workshop participants discussed ways and methods to influence grant making. Presenters at the meeting, including representatives from the Global Fund, reminded participants that a potentially useful way to ensure that key gender-related issues and priorities are reflected is to make the case for them at country level clearly, directly and forcefully.

The following strategies and activities recommended:

- Get the right people involved (i.e., those with the time, capacity and ability)
- Ensure that full, accurate information and data are collected and made available. This is essential to make the evidence case for more and better gender-related programming.
- Work collectively, perhaps by holding consultations and raising awareness in other ways, to strengthen the role of key populations, people living with the diseases and women on CCMs. This is an important step toward ensuring that their voices are heard and their priorities addressed.
- Learn about Global Fund guidance on grant programming (gender, community systems strengthening, key populations, etc.)
- Make sure that NSPs and concept notes undergo gender analysis and/or assessments.

Participants considered the issue of entry points vis-à-vis the NFM in working groups as well. Most focused on the following components: NSP, Global Fund Secretariat, country dialogue, concept note, and CCM. The suggested priority activities were often similar across these entry points. Among them were the following:

- Gather and disseminate evidence underscoring the need to focus on women including key affected women in Global Fund programming;
- Ensure gender-related priorities are specified, recognized and addressed. This would include participation by at least one gender expert or champion on the concept note writing team;
- Monitor and evaluate (i.e., “watchdog”) all stages in the grantmaking process to determine whether, and to what extent, key priorities are followed through; and
- Reach out to the Global Fund Secretariat and technical partners for support when needed, and hold them accountable should they be unable or unwilling to respond usefully.

Workshop participants also discussed the usefulness of doing work at a regional level, given the commonalities across many of their countries. Regional organizing could save time and money, and also allow the more rapid and effective sharing of information and lessons learned. The benefits of such efforts would be further maximized by efforts to ensure that information and support are available to French- and Portuguese-speaking countries to help their advocates participate more effectively.

3.4 Summary of participants’ concerns and clarifications

Workshop participants made numerous comments and Global Fund representatives sought to clarify and respond to the questions, comments and concerns, and in some cases, provide additional information in the following cases:

Funding for building the capacity of civil society and community groups. Four streams of funding are available through the NFM: for HIV, TB, malaria and health systems strengthening (HSS). At times in the past the Global Fund had considered a fifth stream, for community systems strengthening (CSS), which would have focused specifically on building the capacities of civil society groups and communities to,
undertake advocacy, and deliver services, etc. A dedicated CSS stream was not created; and instead, it was agreed to focus on integrating CSS throughout all funding.

Global Fund representatives said there are opportunities in each of the other four components to strengthen civil society. Renewed effort is being made to i) explain the importance of CSS to the overall response to all three diseases, and ii) prompt countries to include CSS activities in applications. Guidance on how and where to apply for CSS-related activities is being developed and should be available by the time the NFM is fully rolled out.

**Addressing obstacles to supporting key populations.** In many countries, legal, political and social obstacles make it difficult for Global Fund support to reach key populations such as transgender women, sex workers and people who use drugs. CCMs often refuse to consider such activities and it may not be safe for groups working with and for those populations to seek support or attention from the government.

Such situations seem to put in conflict two key Global Fund principles: country ownership and human rights. The Global Fund seeks to prioritize the latter (human rights) in a variety of ways. By focusing on evidence-based programming, for example, it tries to get countries to collect data showing risks, disease prevalence and vulnerabilities across a range of populations. It also has required countries to change policies that clearly violate human rights, such as in Vietnam where they have confronted programmes of forced detention of people who use drugs.

The Global Fund does not have a presence in country. A useful step to raise concerns about key populations and human rights, and get support in tackling challenges, is to seek out members of the relevant Global Fund country teams, who are based in the HQ in Geneva, including the FPM. Contact information is available on the Global Fund website. Concerns can also be raised by directly contacting the Secretariat, including the Community, Rights and Gender Department.

The Global Fund’s technical partners, including UNAIDS, Roll Back Malaria and the Stop TB Partnership, are in many cases a good source of support as well. They have a responsibility to support key populations in gaining access to the services they need and deserve. In-country representatives from partners should be contacted.

**Gender monitoring.** The Global Fund Secretariat attempts to monitor grants to ensure that gender priorities are included, that planned interventions are moving forward and being funded adequately, etc. It can then raise concerns with principal recipients (PRs) if necessary. Few dedicated staff are available to undertake such time-consuming review therefore civil society at the country level is vital for this monitoring. In-country partners, including civil society groups, will have better knowledge and understanding of the realities on the ground. Among other responses, they can advocate for CCMs to include - as a priority - gender transformative programming in proposals and monitor implementation of activities for gender equality impact. The new Gender Assessment Tool, created by UNAIDS, may also be useful in a country. It is designed to evaluate if and how NSPs and concept notes address gender (including key gender gaps). UNAIDS representatives can support such assessments. The new UNDP checklist can also help: http://women4gf.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/UNDP-Checklist-for-Integrating-Gender-WEB.pdf

**Regional grants.** The Global Fund will still consider regional grants under the NFM. As of early December 2013, it was still working on guidance regarding them. It was known at the time of the workshop that
the Global Fund would ask for any countries or non-CCM entities that want to do regional grants to submit expressions of interest by April 2014. Global Fund representatives noted two other issues about regional grants: i) the actual funding available for regional grants will likely be relatively “low” compared with what goes to individual countries, and ii) some of the money to be allocated for regional grants must be provided from each participating country’s dedicated funding amount (or “country envelope”).

Both of these issues indicate that it may be as difficult as it has been in the past, if not more so, to propose regional grants. Some workshop participants urged Global Fund representatives at the meeting to consider ways to make more funding available, and easier to allocate, for regional grants in the future.

**Women’s participation on CCMs.** As noted in Section 3.3.1, women are under-represented globally compared with men on CCMs (as 65% of cumulative CCM members at the end of 2012 were male). The share of women on CCMs in many countries is far lower. In the past the Global Fund has resisted setting quotas or being seen to “control” CCMs because of concern about violating the principle of country ownership. Recently, however, CCM eligibility criteria have set a “minimum standard” that at least 30% of CCM members be female. That level will be made an actual requirement in 2015, according to Global Fund representatives at the workshop.

**New ‘modules’ for creating indicators that can be monitored and measured.** In the previous rounds-based system, grant proposals and agreements included service delivery areas (SDAs) to show where funding was going and for what purpose. The Global Fund is currently developing a new system, to be completed in early 2014, which will use fewer and easier-to-follow “modules”. The Web-based system will also make it easier to select specific modules for key populations (e.g., for MSM and sex workers) and by doing so have indicators that can be measured over the course of the grant. Global Fund representatives said that modules will be available that can be used for civil society support as well.

Workshop participants were encouraged to understand how these modules work and then seek to get priority ones selected for inclusion in concept notes. This approach was presented as a useful entry point opportunity for ensuring quality gender-related activities.

**4. Support for Women, Communities and Key Populations: Additional Opportunities**

Numerous other opportunities are available to support capacity building amongst community groups and other concerns discussed in Section 3.4. Workshop participants were encouraged to seek assistance if they were eligible.

During discussions of the three initiatives summarized below, some workshop participants referred to other possible sources of support for Global Fund-related work. For example, **Grant Management Solutions** has created a platform that can serve as the basis of training on the Global Fund. Also, **Aidspan**—the independent NGO that runs the Global Fund Observer, a highly recommended resource for all stakeholders—has resources to help civil society and community groups raise awareness on Global Fund and gender issues.

The recommended first place to start with both possible options were their websites: www.gmsproject.org/ (Grant Management Solutions) and www.aidspan.org (Aidspan).
4.1 ATHENA Network

The ATHENA Network is a global network that was created to advance gender equity and human rights in the response to HIV and AIDS. It co-sponsored and co-organised the first of the W4GF workshops in July 2013.

ATHENA and its recently formed a partner the AIDS Legal Network (ALN) are seeking to provide more targeted support to communities and advocates in countries eligible for Global Fund money. In 2014, the partners plan to roll out the initiative to five countries at first: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malawi, South Africa and Uganda.

The goal of the initiative is to increase understanding and awareness of the Global Fund’s grantmaking mechanisms. ATHENA and ALN intend to establish partnerships with national networks of women living with HIV and women’s rights organisations to convene local and/or national activities, such as dialogues, discussion groups, workshops and training sessions. One key goal will be to expand the leadership of women who are the most affected by the three diseases going through the NFM processes in the five focus countries.

As of December 2013, ATHENA and ALN were still waiting for confirmation of the needed external financing to launch the initiative. It was expected that such funding would be available in early 2014.

4.2 German and French government programmes

The German BACKUP Initiative, a German government programme, provides financial assistance to individuals and organisations including civil society and community groups to help them access and effectively implement Global Fund grants. The money is intended to strengthen civil society and others to ensure the most effective use of Global Fund resources and thus is available for capacity development only. Funding cannot be used for service delivery or treatment, for example.

Gender equality is one of four cross-cutting areas considered in BACKUP support. Therefore, groups that focus on gender-related issues (and work with and for diverse gender groups) are encouraged to apply.

Applications can be sent from organisations in any country currently eligible for receiving Global Fund support. Three types of technical support are available:

- Funding through the “fast access mode” is for specific, short-term activities (e.g., support for attending a meeting). With a maximum amount of €10,000 (US$13,400), it is intended to be provided quickly and with minimum paperwork and delays.
- The “consultancy mode” has no specific or implicit time limits. It supports the hiring of consultants who, for example, design strategies or work plans, or undertake a gender mapping in a country as part of Global Fund processes.
- Funding through the “project mode” is for more elaborate, longer-term activities—e.g., to develop a network. As much as €150,000 (US$ 201,000) can be made available through this funding stream.

One major requirement is that all applicants have their proposals endorsed by the chair of the country’s CCM. The initiative’s sponsors acknowledge that this requirement can be sensitive, such as when funding is sought to support individuals who are criminalized and highly stigmatized, such as sex workers.
and people who use drug users. In such cases, the German government’s development agency will support the applicant and contact the CCM directly and/or key people in to discuss the request—assuming all other eligibility criteria are met.

The BACKUP Initiative currently plans to provide funding through 2015 only. Therefore, applications for all three kinds of support must be received by April 2014. Information about the initiative and application processes can be found on its website: http://www.giz.de/backup. Questions can be sent by email to backup@giz.de.

The French government also offers targeted support for communities through its Initiative 5% programme. Funding can be obtained for activities aimed at improving the quality of Global Fund grants, such as hiring consultants to undertake gender assessments and define organisations’ capacity needs. Similar to the German BACKUP Initiative, this French government programme focuses on strengthening civil society capacity—and money is not provided for direct services.

Additional information about Initiative 5% is available at http://www.initiative5pour100.fr/. Workshop participants were also encouraged to contact their Global Fund FPM and ask how they might apply for funding under either initiative. In both cases there are lists of eligible countries – the French list includes all French speaking countries and also a wider group of countries described as the “Francophone”.

4.3 Joint Civil Society Action Plan (JCSAP)

In June 2013, three Global Fund Board delegations—Developing Country Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), Developing Country NGO and Communities Delegations—launched an effort to develop a Joint Civil Society Action Plan (JCSAP). The delegations decided to take this step because members were concerned that the NFM was unclear and being pushed forward too quickly and they felt

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<th>Box 2. Global Fund support opportunities: strengthening the capacity of key populations and gender training</th>
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<td>The Global Fund has initiated a pilot programme aimed at <strong>strengthening the capacities of key populations and networks of people living with diseases</strong> in Global Fund processes. A main, though not the only, focus is on the CCM. The aim is to enhance and improve civil society engagement in all steps of the NFM, including before, during and after concept note development.</td>
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<td>In the pilot, a “regional entity”, such as the ATHENA Network, forms a partnership with representatives from key populations to draft an engagement plan to be shared with the CCM and Secretariat. The Global Fund then provides financing to the CCM to put the plan in place.</td>
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<td>The Global Fund plans to roll out the pilot in 10 countries. As of early December 2013, some countries had already begun the process but the final list of participating countries had yet to be finalized. In the end, more than half of the countries are expected to be from Africa (including, perhaps, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Swaziland and Uganda). The Global Fund will assess the results of the pilot before determining whether it makes sense to pursue the initiative more broadly. An evaluation also will be conducted, with the results (and lessons learned) made public.</td>
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<td>Participants were also reminded that CCMs can ask for money from the Global Fund to provide <strong>gender training</strong>. Most UNAIDS teams have gender specialists available who can work with CCMs and, more broadly, participants in the country dialogue.</td>
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that the GFS had weakened its commitment to working with civil society.

The overall goal of the action plan is to bring together, in one place, all of the different aspects of work that relate to civil society and the Global Fund. In essence this is not new work but rather consolidating and building on existing action plans that civil society have developed since the NFM was conceptualised. The expectation is that this will make it easier for civil society groups at all levels, and of all capacities, to become more fully (and successfully) engaged.

The Global Fund Executive Director strongly supports the JCSAP as do technical partners including UNAIDS, the Stop TB Partnership and Roll Back Malaria.

One of JCSAP’s main priorities as of December 2013 was to identify important lessons learned from the NFM’s early applicants and move forward key recommendations based on them. As such, it hopes to influence the Global Fund’s final NFM guidance prior to the full roll out and to enable civil society to be involved effectively (including in regards to monitoring). Ideally, JCSAP will have a strong, consistent impact on gender given how important the issue is to its goals. JCSAP has eight building blocks:

1. Improving the quality of data
2. Making CCMs work
3. Building the right mechanism to facilitate civil society support
4. Increasing civil society effectiveness in delivery of services
5. Making the country process work
6. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of civil society and community participation
7. Working with the Global Fund Secretariat
8. Becoming more strategic as civil society

A JCSAP Task Team was established to move this process forward. It includes members from all delegations as well as technical partners. Different members of the Task Team have specific roles, e.g., in regards to gender equality and human rights. Women4GF is currently represented on the Task Team by Sophie Dilmitis.

5. Action Planning: Identification of Priorities and Next Steps

The workshop concluded with two kinds of action planning: collaborative and personal. These exercises were undertaken for initial action planning only, to jumpstart more in-depth and wider-ranging discussions in the weeks and months after the workshop. It was assumed that workshop participants and other colleagues could or should firmly decide on specific steps only with additional planning.

The collaborative work was done in a total of seven small working groups. Participants from the following countries (all of which were represented by at least five workshop attendees) were sorted into distinct, separate working groups: South Africa, Swaziland and Uganda. A fourth working group included participants from Francophone countries, with a fifth comprising participants from all other countries represented at the workshop. A sixth group was termed “global”; it included participants, such as those working with/at the Global Fund Secretariat, whose work is primarily at the global level. The seventh group included participants who work primarily at the regional level, including those associated with networks across different areas of Africa.
Box 3. Global Fund Executive Director responds positively to workshop outcomes statement

On 9 December 2013, a group of Women4GF Africa workshop participants presented the outcomes statement (see Section 1 of this report) to Global Fund Executive Director Mark Dybul at the Women’s Networking Zone (WNZ) at the International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa (ICASA). Dr Dybul agreed that the Global Fund would act on all parts of the statement in addition to saying:

- We need to support women in this region, as this is where the epidemic is.
- Treatment is not going to solve all of the issues that women and girls face—we can’t beat this epidemic if we don’t deal with the systemic issues, like gender based violence
- We are serious about it—that is why I have made important new appointments. But keep checking on us—you must hold us to account.

Each working group was asked to brainstorm the main points and demands to be included in the workshop outcomes statement - released shortly after the workshop. The final text of the outcomes statement, which includes five overarching priorities, is included in Section 1 of this report. That statement was finalized prior to ICASA and distributed in a variety of events (see Box 3 for one example).

Individually, participants spent time making personal commitments for what they hoped to achieve by the end of 2013 and in 2014. These were based on the following questions:

- What will you do before the end of 2013?
- What will you do before March 2014?
- How, with whom and when will you do these actions?

Participants drafted two copies of their commitments but did not disclose these during the workshop. Annex 2 contains a representative sampling of the personal commitments.

Several themes emerged from the collaborative action planning. Most country-level working groups (i.e., all except the regional and global one) focused on the following action areas:

Raising awareness and knowledge of the NFM among themselves and civil society and community colleagues. Some hoped to do this by organizing meetings and trainings. Others discussed identifying appropriate and reliable information sources and then disseminating this, or at least directing colleagues to information. Proposed awareness-raising efforts emphasized the importance of civil society engagement, particularly women’s groups, and how essential this is for future quality Global Fund programming in their countries.

Establishing mechanisms to share information, resources and lessons learnt. Many working groups vowed to create new (or improve existing) networks at national and regional level. In addition to mobilisation, some discussed developing dedicated communications tools (listservs, websites, etc.). The establishment of focal points was another priority action that received considerable attention during discussions of how to better share information. Participants largely agreed that it made sense to have individual focal points in each country, and some names were proposed as an initial step toward developing a mechanism.

Understanding country processes and demanding to be involved. Most working group participants acknowledged the importance of determining what has already happened, what is planned, or has yet
to be considered in their countries regarding the country dialogue and concept note(s)? They agreed to focus on finding out how the process is being organised, the extent of civil society engagement, and how they can get involved. For many, a related part of this step would be to consider whether the “right” people are involved in these critical processes from a gender and communities perspective. Some participants planned to conduct mapping of key players, including on the CCM, as part of this effort—and then to contact those players as soon as possible to make their needs and priorities known.

**Identifying sources of technical and financial support.** Several working groups said they would contact UNAIDS, to discuss their needs and explore possible support options. Some participants were keen on obtaining assistance from UNAIDS to use the Gender Assessment Tool. Many added that they would investigate one or more options mentioned during the workshop, including the German BACKUP Initiative and Aidspan.

**Gathering data and evidence to influence NSPs, country dialogue and concept notes.** Most in-country participants acknowledged the importance of using evidence to provide the rationale for greater focus on their gender-related priorities. Gathering reliable data can be time-consuming and may require specialized knowledge and support. In the interests of time, some said they would start by collecting already-existing data and packaging it in a clear, concise and forceful way. Others were considering ways to identify experts who could be hired to design and undertake data gathering as soon as possible in 2014 (for example). All noted that once the evidence was in hand, they hold accountable CCM members as well as all participants in the country dialogue, concept note drafting and revising team, and grant negotiation team.

Participants in the global and regional working groups also discussed steps they would take to support in-country work. Representatives from the Global Fund Secretariat promised to:

- provide participants with contact information for their respective Global Fund country teams;
- undertake efforts to ensure that more information, resources and support are made available regarding the NFM and gender-related issues at the Global Fund. Such efforts would include creating “community-friendly” documents such as fact sheets; and
- solicit feedback from participants and their colleagues at all stages of their efforts to expand and improve gender-related programming at the Global Fund. An initial step was taken a day after the meeting when the Community, Rights and Gender Department made available on the Women4GF website (www.women4g.org) the draft implementation plan of the Gender Equality Strategy (GES). All workshop participants were encouraged to provide input.

And finally, ASAP, which organised and facilitated the workshop, pledged to review and make changes to the Women4GF website to ensure that key information and resources are more easily accessible.
Annex 1. List of participants

Three categories of individuals who attended all or part of the 4-6 December 2013 workshop are presented below. The first includes meeting participants from the region, the second includes resource personnel (including from the workshop’s organiser), and the third includes representatives from workshop partners (including the Global Fund). In each category, individuals are listed in alphabetical order by last name.

Unless specified otherwise, the country refers to where the individual is currently based.

Two acronyms are not spelled out in the list below:
ICW = International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS
SANAC = South African National AIDS Council

## Participants

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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Annex 2. Summary of personal commitments

This annex includes a summary of commitments made by participants at the end of the workshop.

Some commitments were context-specific and unique, while others were exactly the same as or similar to those made by other participants. The list below is a representative sampling only, with particular effort made not to clearly associate a commitment with a specific participant.

By end of 2013:

• Get to the Women4GF website and explore the information
• Share information with colleagues to raise awareness about Women4GF
• Circulate information about the Global Fund and Women4GF, and employ Aidspan resources to start engagement with organisations in the women’s sector
• Send email to my networks and notify them about the Global Fund and the NFM and ask them to gear up for a meeting with the CCM to ensure that gender issues get in the proposal
• Engage the CCM Secretariat to find out if there is anything done towards extending the HIV and AIDS grant which is coming to an end this December 2013
• Organize an online discussion forum on the CCM (composition, representation and gender); write and publish article on a national daily/newspaper

In 2014:
[Note: the months mentioned at the end of each entry were specified by the participant who made this personal commitment]

• Get links and contacts of each member of the CCM in my country (by March 2014)
• Identify and find my country’s progress in NSP development (by February 2014)
• Know the Gender Assessment Tool report before the proposal launched (by February 2014)
• Engage with other women who are HIV-positive to come up with the strategy (by March)
• Arrange a meeting with [my CCM’s] women’s sector stakeholders to formulate key indicators to shape gender-responsive budget monitoring and expenditure tracking of Global Fund funds (by February 2014)
• Make sure the sex worker populations are represented at the national CCM (by end of year)
• Seek entry point for youth within country’s CCM (by March 2014)
• Compiles a desk review on the country’s CCM structure, Global Fund action plans (by February 2014)