



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

FIFTY-FIFTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
Provisional agenda item 13.4

A55/8
19 April 2002

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Note by the Director-General

BACKGROUND

1. A global fund for AIDS and health was first conceptualized at a meeting of the G8 group of countries (Okinawa, Japan, July 2000) and given powerful support by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of WHO in early 2001. From a consultation among major stakeholders (June 2001) a clear consensus emerged that:

- the initial target of the fund should be AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria
- the main purpose of the fund would be to collect, manage and disburse funds which would be additional and complementary to other forms of development assistance
- resources provided through the fund would be linked to the achievement of results
- the fund would represent a break from “business as usual” – aiming to make more efficient use of donor resources, with lower transaction costs for all involved
- the fund would be both a genuinely international entity and a partnership between the public and private sectors. It would thus not belong to one set of countries, or be tied to the United Nations, the World Bank or other institutions.

PROGRESS

August to December 2001

2. A *transitional working group*, comprising representatives of 38 countries and organizations, was established in August 2001. Its task was to prepare a negotiated framework document setting out the name, principles, purpose, scope and basic architecture of the fund. The group received support from a *technical support secretariat* based in Brussels.

3. By the end of its last meeting in December 2001, the group had fulfilled its terms of reference. The fund had been named the *Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria*, and a draft framework document covering governance, eligibility criteria, technical review, accountability, legal

issues and fiduciary arrangements had been prepared. The Board of the Fund was established after the group had negotiated its structure and composition. It comprises seven representatives of donor countries, seven of developing countries (drawn from six WHO regions, with two representatives from the African Region), two of nongovernmental organizations, one of a private foundation, and one of the private sector. Four *ex officio* positions, for WHO, UNAIDS, the World Bank, and an additional nongovernmental organization representing people living with AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria, were added as non-voting members.

4. The final decision of the group was to agree that the secretariat of the Fund would be located in Geneva and the Fund would be established initially as a Foundation under Swiss law. In support of this decision, one additional *ex officio* position for a Swiss citizen was added to the membership of the Board. To ensure continuity, the support secretariat – strengthened with additional staff – was moved from Brussels to Geneva as the Fund's *Interim Secretariat*. An *Interim Director*, on loan from the Swedish International Development Agency, was designated to manage the process before appointment of the *Executive Director*.

January to March 2002

5. The Fund was formally established at the first meeting of its Board (28 and 29 January 2002). Formal articles of association and the draft framework document mentioned above were adopted, and membership of the Board – based on constituencies – was confirmed. Dr Chrispus Kiyonga (Uganda) and Dr Seiji Morimoto (Japan) were elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board, respectively. The Board agreed on a timetable of tasks that the Interim Secretariat would complete before the second meeting of the Board (22 to 24 April 2002).

6. **Call for proposals.** A call for proposals was issued shortly after the first Board meeting, requesting countries submit them to the Interim Secretariat by 10 March 2002, and attaching guidelines and a proposal form prepared by a subgroup of the working group, which included WHO.

7. **Technical Review Panel.** A working group co-chaired by France and Thailand prepared the terms of reference and working procedures for an independent review panel that would be responsible for making recommendations to the Board. Nominations for the panel were requested from Board members, members of the transitional working group and – in order to open the process as widely as possible – on the Fund's web site. From over 700 applications, a subgroup of the Board, working with WHO and UNAIDS, selected a panel of 17 experts (and a further 17 to act as alternates). The review panel started work on 24 March 2002.

8. **Appointment of the Executive Director.** Private consultants were hired to assist in the process of recruiting the Executive Director of the Secretariat. By the deadline in March over 600 applications had been received and by early April a short list of candidates had been drawn up for interview by a subgroup of the Board. Recommendations for the appointment would be made to the second meeting of the Board.

9. **Trustee and administrative service agreements.** The working group had agreed that the World Bank would be asked to be the fiduciary agent of the Fund. Negotiations to prepare a framework agreement are under way. An administrative service agreement with WHO, which will provide the Secretariat of the Fund with a range of services, is being completed.

10. In addition the overall investment strategy of the Fund is being elaborated, a monitoring and evaluation system is being set up, and resource mobilization and communication strategies are being developed. Progress on these tasks will be reported to the Board at its second meeting.

11. The call for proposals was followed by intense activity at country level, including establishment of a country coordinating mechanism. The purpose of this key body is to ensure that proposals submitted to the Fund have the approval of the major development partners, not only in government, but also in civil society, the private sector and development assistance agencies. Despite the tight deadline, such mechanisms were established in most of the countries submitting proposals. By the deadline of 10 March, over 300 proposals had been received. After an initial screening by the Interim Secretariat, around 130 were forwarded to the Panel for review.

ROLE OF WHO

12. WHO has worked intensively both in providing support to the Fund itself, and in responding to requests from countries that were preparing proposals for submission.

13. In addition to providing administrative services for the support secretariat and the Interim Secretariat, WHO has made available technical staff to both bodies. WHO staff also helped to establish the Technical Review Panel and are collaborating in the work of groups concerned with monitoring and evaluation and communication.

14. Short deadlines have meant that much of the support to countries for preparation of proposals had to be provided on an ad hoc basis. In future, however, such support will become an important element of WHO's overall effort to scale up interventions designed to improve the health of poor people.¹

15. An addendum to this document will provide further information after the meeting of the Fund's Board scheduled to take place at the end of April 2002.

ACTION BY THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

16. The Health Assembly is invited to note the information contained in this document.

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¹ See also document A55/5.