

Initial Guidance Note: Regional Applications

November 2013

Summary

In the new funding model the regional application process will follow **two-steps**. Applicants will first submit an **Expression of Interest** and **only eligible and strategically focused applicants will be invited to submit a concept note**. During the 2014-2016 allocation period, there will be two calls for Expressions of Interest (**April 2014 and April 2015**). Successful applicants will be able to submit concept notes for review by the Technical Review Panel during the **second half of 2014 and in 2015 according to the established submission deadlines**. An optional Expression of Interest template (including detailed guidance) as well as the concept note materials will be available by the **end of January 2014**.

Background

Under the new funding model, the Global Fund will continue to support strategically focused regional applications that are designed to achieve impact and clearly demonstrate the value-added of a regional approach.

A **regional application** is defined as an application from a group of countries within the same geographic region aimed at addressing common issues such as cross-border interventions and structural barriers that impede access to services (e.g. harm reduction, advocacy and policy, drug resistance, migrants and displaced populations, etc.) that are strategically focused and demonstrate a strong potential for high impact in the fight against the three diseases. Typically this kind of application will only include activities and interventions that cannot be funded effectively through a country allocation due to their inherently regional nature.¹

As the Global Fund allocation methodology provides individual country allocations, funding for existing and new regional applications will need to be set aside specifically for this investment purpose. The total amount of funding set aside for regional applications during the 2014-2016 period will be determined following the outcome of the replenishment conference in December 2013 and is expected to be approved by the Board at its Thirty-First Meeting in March 2014.

¹ This guidance note is not applicable for multi-country applications which are defined as a combined application from small island economies and/or other small countries that typically do not apply as individual countries and are submitted normally through a Regional Coordinating Mechanism. Guidance on multi-country applications will be available as part of the concept note materials and guidance.

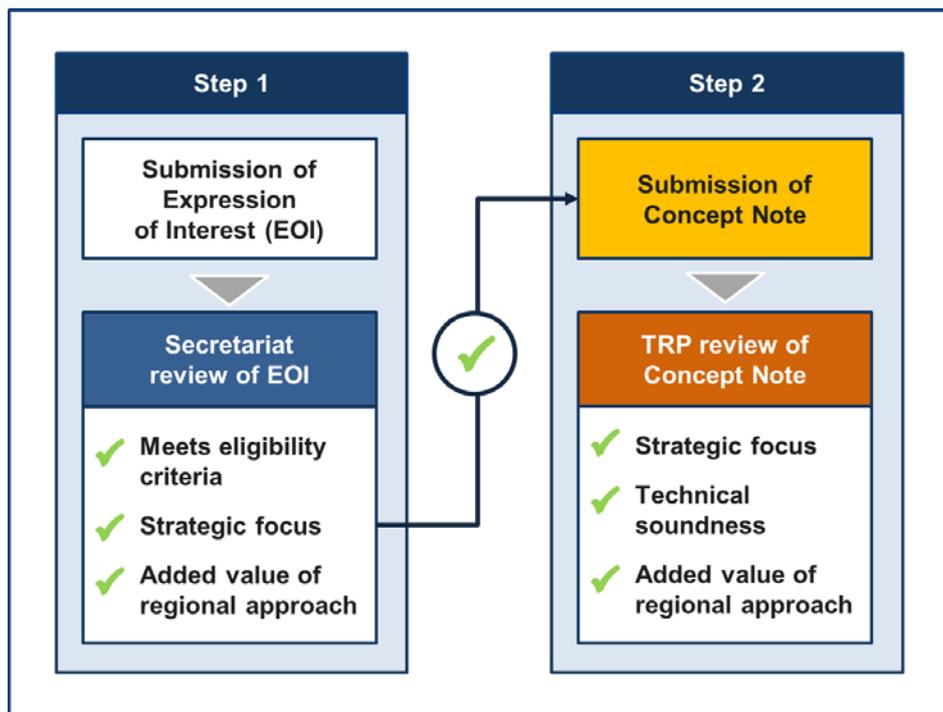
This initial guidance note aims to provide high level guidance on the **expected process**, **eligibility requirements**, and **anticipated timelines** in order to support the early preparation of future regional applications. More detailed guidance will be available in early 2014.

Regional Application Process

While the Secretariat will not officially ‘invite’ applicants to submit a regional concept note, it will actively engage with partners, civil society, and key populations networks, to identify strategic opportunities for regional investments.

Two-Step Application Process

All regional applications, including applications from currently funded regional grants, will follow a two-step application process. As a first step, interested applicants will be requested to submit an **Expression of Interest**. The Expression of Interest will be a short document (four to five pages maximum) that will request key information on the goals and objectives of the regional initiative, expected impact and outcomes and relevant information on expected implementation arrangements, including any foreseen issues of CCM endorsement. An optional template (as well as detailed guidance) will be available to applicants by the end of January 2014.



The Global Fund Secretariat will review all Expressions of Interest and assess whether all applicable eligibility and regional requirements are met, as well as review the strategic focus of the request. The Technical Review Panel may also be asked to assess these. Only eligible and strategically focused Expressions of Interest will receive an invitation to submit a concept note.

At the time of the invitation, the Secretariat will also communicate an indicative funding amount.²

The second step, the development of a **regional concept note**, will request more detailed information from the applicant on how the funding will be invested strategically to achieve the desired impact and outcomes. The regional concept note will be similar to single country disease specific concept notes.

Regional applications typically should be for three years. In exceptional circumstances, subject to the discretion of the Secretariat, they may be for longer or shorter periods. Regional applicants can choose to submit a funding request that exceeds the indicative amount ('full expression of demand'), yet regional applicants are not eligible to receive any incentive funding.³

The concept note will be reviewed by the Technical Review Panel (TRP) and the Secretariat. **Only technically sound and strategically focused requests will be recommended for grant-making.** Once the grant-making process has been completed and the grant is disbursement-ready, it will be recommended to the Global Fund Board for approval.

Regional Dialogue and Concept Note Development Process

With all concept note development processes, the Global Fund expects there to be an open, transparent and inclusive process during the regional dialogue and application process. The Secretariat will engage with the applicant ahead of final submission to help ensure broad involvement of key populations, women's representatives, civil society groups, technical partners and other key stakeholders. In cases where the regional dialogue processes requires financial support, the Secretariat will endeavor to find ways to provide support either directly or through its partnership networks.

While regional applicants are not requested to provide documentation on the broad involvement of stakeholders at Expression of Interest stage, it is expected that applicants will conduct consultations with partners and key affected population networks for the development of the Expression of Interest. This needs to be well documented and will form part of the final concept note submission.

Overall Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility and counterpart financing requirements

The Global Fund eligibility policy was recently revised and approved by the Board to incorporate previous Board decisions and align it to the new funding model.⁴ Eligibility determinations for 2014 will be available most likely at the beginning of January 2014, after the Secretariat has received the latest available disease burden information from technical partners.

² In the context of regional applications, the indicative funding amount is defined as the amount of funding that is allocated to an applicant after the review and approval of an Expression of Interest. Activities and intervention included in this amount must be prioritized and clearly defined within the funding request.

³ A separate reserve of funding to reward high impact, well-performing programs and encourage ambitious requests.

⁴ Decision Point: GF/B30/DP5

A regional application will only be considered eligible for funding if the majority (at least 51 percent) of countries included in the application is eligible to submit their own request for funding for that same disease through a single-country application. **Regional applicants are not required to meet Global Fund counterpart financing requirements.** However, as part of the concept note, they must meet the application focus requirements and demonstrate that their application focuses on underserved and most-at-risk populations and/or highest impact interventions within a defined epidemiological context.⁵ The level of application focus required differs according to the overall income category of the countries included in the application:

Income category	Level of focus
Lower Income	No restriction
Lower Middle Income (Lower and Upper-LMI)	50%
Upper Middle Income	100%

Applicant Minimum requirements

The Global Fund has two distinct categories of regional applicants: Regional Organizations and Regional Coordinating Mechanism applicants.

In order for a regional organization to be considered an eligible applicant they must:

1. Be a legally registered entity.
2. Not be a United Nations, multilateral or bilateral agency.
3. Demonstrate broad regional stakeholder consultation and involvement by describing:
 - a. Experience working in the region on the issues targeted in the proposal application.
 - b. How they work with other regionally focused initiatives, programs and/or organizations.
 - c. How they will work with the respective CCMs for each of the countries included in the funding request.
 - d. How people living with and/or affected by the diseases have been engaged in a meaningful and substantive way during regional dialogue and concept development.

⁵Underserved and most-at-risk populations are defined as: subpopulations, within a defined and recognized epidemiological context (i) that have significantly higher levels of risk, mortality and/or morbidity; (ii) Whose access to or uptake of relevant services is significantly lower than the rest of the population. Highest impact interventions within a defined epidemiological context are defined as: evidence-based interventions that (i) address emerging threats to the broader disease response; and/or (ii) lift barriers to the broader disease response and/or create conditions for improved; (iii) service delivery; and/or (iv) enable roll-out of new technologies that represent global best practice; and are not funded adequately.

Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) applicants must demonstrate compliance with the Six CCM minimum requirements which are detailed in the [Guidelines and Requirements for Country Coordinating Mechanisms](#).

Both regional organization and RCM applicants must provide evidence of national CCM endorsement with the submission of the concept note. This endorsement does not require the CCM to endorse the budget or specific interventions, but rather endorse the overall approach as the regional concept note relates to their relevant country. In the event that endorsement is not available, in particular from countries which suppress or have no established partnerships with civil society and non-governmental organizations, the Secretariat will engage with the applicant to identify an alternative approach.

Key Dates and Timelines

In order to ensure that there is an equal opportunity to access funding set aside for regional applications, the Global Fund will ensure that review windows be available in both 2014 and 2015. It is expected that approximately half the available funds will be set aside for each year.

The first date for the Global Fund to receive Expressions of Interest will be **1 April 2014**. Outcomes of this review would be communicated in sufficient time for regional applicants to prepare concept notes for review by the TRP at the subsequent windows during the second half of 2014. A second opportunity to submit Expressions of Interest will be in **April 2015**.

Application Materials

By the end of **January 2014**, the Global Fund will make available tools and guidance needed to submit an expression of interest. The regional concept note template will be available at a later date, and will form the basis of final grant documents in order to facilitate the grant-making process.

Further information

The website of the Global Fund will be updated with new information regarding regional applications, when it becomes available.

For specific questions please contact Accesstofunding@theglobalfund.org.