

# Sri Lanka Country Consultation – Global Fund Strategy Development – 2022 and beyond

## Background

This consultation was organized by CARE Consortium with support from APCASO to gather inputs from Sri Lanka communities and civil society for the beyond 2022 Global Fund strategy and for the Asia-Pacific position statement on the Global Fund beyond 2022 strategy. A total of 24 participants mainly representing SR organizations, civil society CCM members and KAP committee members joined the consultation.

The findings of the consultation are synthesised under each call of the draft Asia-Pacific position statement.

### 1. We want the Global Fund to put the money where its mouth is on CRG and CSS.

The current statement clearly captures the key priorities of the communities and civil society in Sri Lanka under this theme. CRG and CSS remains a crucial challenge for key populations in Sri Lanka as the space for meaningful community engagement is significantly minimal. CRG issues remain the most unaddressed in the current HIV response with CRG focused activities are ineffectively or not at all implemented.

<p><b>Community engagement and monitoring</b></p> <p>The strategy needs to include meaningful community engagement prominently and community engagement needs to be monitored closely to ensure that communities are properly engaged in decision making.</p>	<p><b>Strategic information</b></p> <p>Under this theme, strategic information development related to CRG needs to be prominently included as domestic financing for the HIV response is unlikely to cover strategic information development crucial to address CRG challenges.</p>
<p><b>Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Capacity building needs to be a key strategy to operationalize CRG issues but capacity building needs to be reimagined beyond simple workshops and development of manuals.</p>	<p><b>Sustainability of CSO</b></p> <p>Sustainability of CSOs remains a critical challenge when CRG and CSS issues are concerned. While Global Fund is not responsible to provide on-going financial resources to CSOs it is important that within the strategy Global Fund works towards sustainability of CSOs as part of RSSH.</p>

**Monitoring and accountability of community engagement**

In Sri Lanka, community engagement is superficial and tokenistic. There are no known indicators to monitor community engagement. Most often community engagement lack transparency and accountability. Hence, monitoring and accountability for community engagement needs to be part of the Global Fund new strategy.

**Community System Strengthening**

CSS needs to be a core aspect of the new strategy and a committed funding stream should be provided to CSS in every country grant and regional grant. This is crucial for countries such as Sri Lanka which may transition. Community systems in the country are not strong and decision makers are not acknowledging the community systems as a key part of health systems in general.

- 2. We want the Global Fund to effectively fulfil its mandate on HIV, TB and malaria, first and foremost; only if there are corresponding and real scale up of funding from donors should the Global Fund consider broadening this mandate.**

The Sri Lanka Communities and CS agrees that the Global Fund should focus on HIV, TB and Malaria in its next strategy. Sri Lanka is no way close to ending HIV by 2025 as per the goal of the National STD AIDS Control program. If the Global Fund mandate is expanded, it would further affect countries like Sri Lanka in achieving HIV targets.

**Expand inward not outward**

Instead of expanding the mandate beyond the three disease, expand it within the three disease and key and vulnerable populations. Explore how other medical challenges such as NCDs, COVID-19, nutrition etc impact HIV, TB and malaria responses among key and vulnerable populations. This is important if we are to end the three diseases as epidemics by 2030.

**Mental Health**

The Global Fund new strategy needs to include mental health prominently. In many interventions at the country level mental health is overlooked. The mandate of the Global Fund need to expand to include mental health within the HIV, TB and malaria responses and among key and vulnerable populations.

**Gender equality and gender based violence**

The Global Fund mandate needs to be expended to include addressing gender based violence and gender equality more prominently. In Sri Lanka experience, gender based violence and gender equality is not a key part of the HIV interventions and this results in less comprehensive interventions.

**03. We want the Global Fund to continue to put CRG and CSS approaches as cornerstones of pandemic and health emergency responses.**

Sri Lanka communities and civil society agree with this call. COVID-19 disproportionately affected key populations. People who use drugs and sex workers were specifically targeted by authorities as “spreaders of COVID-19”. However, communities did not see any specific interventions by the PRs to address these challenges and any attempts to work with SR organizations and communities to explore effective strategies to ensure the continuation of HIV services and mitigate impacts.

**Effective monitoring systems**

There are no community systems in Sri Lanka to monitor the service delivery lags due to COVID-19. No discussions are taking place to assess the overall impact of the pandemic on national HIV targets and strategies to mitigate and bounce back. Hence, the new strategy need to include systems to monitor the impact of health emergencies on the responses as COVID-19 will not be the only health emergency in the near future.

**Mandatory emergency response plans**

Emergency responses to continue HIV, TB and malaria response needs to be part of the Global Fund new strategy. It is important to note that this is not calling to expand the Global Fund mandate outward but inward. As part of this, we suggest that Global Fund includes a mandatory emergency response plan to be included in the Funding request process.

**04. We want a fully resourced Global Fund.**

Sri Lanka communities and civil society fully agrees with this call and acknowledge that for a fully effective Global Fund we need a fully funded Global Fund.

**05. We still want a Global Fund that is truly global – one that does not leave key, vulnerable, and marginalised communities behind, regardless of their country income classification.**

Sri Lanka communities and civil society agrees with this call and further highlights the importance in this call especially given that Sri Lanka may transition out of the Global Fund in the next few years.

**Domestic Resources Mobilization**

Global Fund new strategy should prominently include facilitating substantial DRM at the country level and supporting communities and CS advocacy on DRM and financing commitments.

**Monitoring and accountability**

Developing monitoring and accountability systems for fully resourced disease responses needs to be part of the Global Fund new strategy especially for transitioning countries.

## Operationalizing of the new strategy

### Regional grants

Regional grants need to be continued through Global Fund new strategy as an important tool for CSS and advocacy.

### SDGs

SDGs should be an integral part of the new strategy and implementers should be encouraged to actively integrate SDGs to interventions. We don't see PRs using SDG framework to develop and design interventions and as such the interventions are more biomedical rather than comprehensive.

### Community engagement

After 20 years of Global Fund implementation, we still talk about lack of or ineffective community engagement including at the CCM. Global Fund needs to take significant actions to mitigate this challenge and ensure community engagement.

### Laws and policies

We still don't see Global Fund using its convening power to support communities to take significant actions to change laws and policies. Government PRs are not held accountable for the activities that concerns changing laws and policies. Not doing so will significantly impact the effectiveness of the Global Fund interventions and suitability of the results. Global Fund need to include changing laws and policies in to its new strategy.