

## **Youth Statement on the 35<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting of the Global Fund**

Adolescents and young people are one of the age groups that are severely affected by HIV, TB and Malaria. Forty percent of global new HIV infections occur among young people, with increased HIV related death among adolescents. Adolescent girls and young women continue to account for one in four new HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa, whilst in almost all settings adolescent key populations are disproportionately affected by HIV. There are an estimated 530,000 tuberculosis cases among children under 15 years old and most malaria deaths occur among children in Africa.

This is but a tip of an iceberg of issues, pointing us to the urgency and importance of meaningfully engaging them in our fight against AIDS, TB and Malaria.

Involving young people in the Global Fund process is critical as they can provide valuable insight and expertise on what works, to ensure that their specific needs are addressed in the planning, design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the Global Fund's programmes. Supporting adolescent and young people's participation in Global Fund supported programmes, can ensure that grants are created and administered to achieve the greatest impact. This has already been recognised by the Global Fund Board as it adopted the decision point **GF/B20/DP325** at its convening in Addis Ababa in November **2009**, emphasizing the urgency of providing more room for youth leadership and involvement in the response to the three diseases. In addition, it called for more attention towards protecting young people's health and human rights, particularly of young women and girls and those who are marginalised, including but not limited to young sex workers and people who use drugs; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth; and young migrants.

The new strategy framework and current funding model present an opportunity for increased adolescent and young people engagement that cannot be missed. We applaud the work undertaken so far by the Global Fund Secretariat, various committees and partners to explicitly highlight in the new Strategic Framework the specific needs and the importance of addressing age-related barriers to services for adolescent and young people. However, more can be done.

Adolescents and young people should be valued as experts with agency, tremendous experience and a wealth of knowledge and must therefore be resourced to provide that expertise to ensure the Global Fund's programmes, our investments, work better for us.

Let us go beyond seeing them as targets for prevention and treatment programmes and also focus on ways in which we can engage and support them to improve access to the services, tools and commodities they need to safeguard and protect their health and well-being. Age is also a determinant of all of our health experiences; as such adolescent girls and young women, young MSM, young PLHIV, young SW, young injection drug users, young indigenous people and other key and vulnerable populations will need to be supported, being mindful, of course of their ages, so no one is left behind.

We encourage board constituencies to:

1. Ensure there is technical support for adolescent and youth-led organisations to build their capacity on a range of areas required in order to enable them to meaningfully engage in the Global Fund-related processes, for instance, through the Special Initiatives and/or Catalytic Funding.
2. Ensure efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of CCMs include providing safe spaces for young people in all diversities to participate in this important governance structure/body, “leaving no one behind in the accountability and oversight network.”
3. Build the capacity of young people and youth-led/ youth-serving organizations and networks to access grants (e.g. by becoming sub-recipients or sub-sub recipients, regional grantees). Strengthening their skills in programing, resource mobilization and grant management ensuring that they have systems to manage the global Fund grants.
4. Broaden the scope of funding for research, including operational research, and data on adolescents/young people, to provide an evidence base for adolescent human rights and gender sensitive interventions and programing.

We encourage all constituencies at the board to consider the potential impact and implications of all the decisions made at this board meeting on key and vulnerable populations, including young people. As we deliberate and discuss, let us reflect and ask ourselves:

1. How does this policy/strategy/decision cater to the needs and realities of adolescents and young people?
2. How will this policy/strategy/decision affect young people, especially those adolescents and young people from key and vulnerable populations?

3. What can we do/say today to ensure we can improve the health outcomes of adolescents and young people?
4. What can we do after this board meeting to ensure the Global Fund works better for adolescents and young people?
5. How can we partner with the Global Fund Secretariat to ensure that its staff from various departments have adequate capacity to operationalise the new Global Fund Strategic Framework 2017 – 2022 and what kind of support can we provide to make the Global Fund new strategy truly work for adolescents and young people?

We also want to call on the Global Fund Secretariat to ensure that all of its staff members as well as its Technical Review Panel members are adequately equipped with knowledge and skills required to address the specific needs of adolescent and young people in all diversities.

Let us appreciate that meaningful engagement of adolescents and young people must not be limited to bringing/having them at the table, but ensuring that our commitments and concerns are translated into evidence and rights-based programmes that are led by and targeting adolescents and young people in the concept notes with budget lines.

This must be our resolve for adolescents and young people. We welcome your commitments and expressions of support during your deliberations and interventions over the next few days.

In Support

**Point Seven Constituency,  
Developing Country NGO Constituency,  
Communities Constituency.**

For the Youth Delegates of the Global Fund Board