DEVELOPED COUNTRY
NGO DELEGATION

The brief compiles the positions and reflections shared by the Developed Country NGO Delegation and does not represent the views held by the Global Fund Secretariat or the Global Fund Board as a whole.

Overview

The Developed Country NGO Delegation attended the 56th Global Fund (GF) Board meeting (BM56) from 28–30 October 2026 in Geneva, Switzerland. This report summarizes the key discussions, decisions, and outcomes from the meeting. Official Board decisions can be accessed by **following this link**.

In advance of the meeting, our Delegation submitted a constituency statement for consideration by the Board and Secretariat, engaged with multiple Board constituencies, and met with a range of Global Fund Secretariat departments and teams. Our Board Member (BM), Alternate Board Member (ABM), and Interim Constituency Focal Point (CFP) also participated in the Implementers Group Retreat on 26 October 2026.

The 56th Board Meeting took place during a period of significant organizational and leadership transition for the Global Fund. The Board approved the appointment of a new Executive Director, endorsed the Malaria Impact Accelerator (MIA), approved the 2027 Workplan and OPEX Budget, and adopted mid-strategy adjustments to the 2023-2028 KPI Framework. Ahead of the meeting, our Delegation called for a dedicated Board discussion on transition-related issues, noting that the launch of GC8 made this a timely priority for Board consideration. We highlighted that global health architecture reform, while important, had already received substantial Board attention throughout the year. However, the final BM56 agenda was not adjusted by Board Leadership and our Delegation noted the disconnect between the strategic importance of transition and its limited consideration at this Board meeting. Our intervention during the Report of the Executive Director focused on elevating key transition related issues and risks and reinforced the need for sustained Board attention.

Board interventions by our Delegation focused on transition, sustainability, community systems, organizational capacity, risk management, GC8 implementation, performance measurement, the Malaria Impact Accelerator, and preparations for the next Strategy and replenishment cycle. These discussions reflected the increasing complexity of the operating environment, including funding constraints, organizational transformation, leadership transitions, and the growing number of countries preparing for transition from Global Fund support.

Throughout the meeting, our Delegation consistently argued that transition should be assessed through readiness rather than timelines alone. We advocated for stronger transition readiness measures, greater transparency around strategic risks and Portfolio Optimization decisions, sustained Secretariat capacity to support countries, and continued protection of community-led

services, civil society engagement, human rights programming, and services for key populations as GC8 moves into implementation.

Key Takeaways

Despite not being formally on the agenda, BM56 reinforced that transition is emerging as one of the Global Fund's most significant strategic challenges. As GC8 implementation advances and more countries prepare for transition, the success of the Partnership will depend not only on financing and meeting transition timelines, but on country readiness, community systems sustainability, civil society engagement, institutional capacity, and effective governance before, during, and after transition.

Appointment of the Executive Director

The Board approved the appointment of **Dr. Mark Dybul** as the next Executive Director of the Global Fund. He is expected to assume the role in early 2027 following a structured transition process overseen by Board Leadership.

Board Leadership emphasized the importance of ensuring continuity during the transition and maintaining momentum on GC8 implementation, organizational transformation, and replenishment follow-up activities. Informal reflections following the decision highlighted lessons for future Executive Director appointments, including the need for clearer voting procedures and broader constituency engagement throughout the process.

Our Delegation welcomed the completion of the recruitment process and encouraged reflection on lessons learned from both the Executive Director recruitment and Board Leadership transition processes. **We also called for future governance planning to consider workload, sequencing, and resourcing requirements for major governance milestones to strengthen transparency and constituency engagement.**

Report of the Executive Director

The Executive Director highlighted strong GC7 performance, progress on GC8 preparation, successful completion of Covid-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM) investments, progress on strategic transformation, increased use of innovation, stronger country ownership, and resource mobilization achievements. He also identified transition, HIV prevention, domestic resource mobilization, TB innovation, and sustainability as critical strategic issues that will shape the Global Fund's future direction.

Our Delegation welcomed progress on GC8 and recognized the Secretariat's efforts to manage multiple organizational and strategic changes simultaneously. However, as noted above, we emphasized that transition remains the most significant strategic risk facing the Partnership and requires greater Board attention. Our Delegation's position is that **transition readiness must be assessed through governance, political commitment, civic space, community systems sustainability, and institutional capacity of CSOs**, rather than through eligibility criteria, timelines, and alternative financing options alone.

Our Delegation argued that the Board must move beyond managing transition deadlines and instead assess whether countries can transition without jeopardizing community-led services,

key population programming, and health outcomes. **We called for transition to become a standing strategic Board priority and urged Board Leadership to initiate discussions on readiness and viability as a matter of urgency.**

The Board intervention substantially reinforced and elevated themes already contained in our written statement. The statement highlighted transition readiness, sustainable financing, community systems, and civic space concerns.

Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Matters

The OIG presented its 2027 workplan and highlighted increasing pressures associated with GC8 implementation, organizational transformation, leadership transitions, and constrained resources. The OIG also confirmed plans to undertake a strategic review of transition under GC8 and GC9.

Our Delegation strongly supported the OIG's focus on transition readiness and organizational resilience. We agreed that transition outcomes depend on a broader range of factors than income classification and support the use of explicit readiness indicators to inform transition decisions. We welcomed the forthcoming **OIG Strategic Review of the Global Fund's Approach to Transition under GC8 and GC9**, a review our Delegation has consistently advocated for across multiple Board meetings. We underscored the importance of using the review to inform a practical transition readiness framework that clearly defines roles, expectations, accountability mechanisms, and readiness criteria for countries, the Secretariat, and the Board.

We also reinforced the importance of maintaining robust evaluation functions capable of informing strategic decision-making.

Risk Management Update

Discussions at the Board meeting focused on implementation of the emerging Risk Appetite Framework and the need for improved risk visibility. Our Delegation supported the development of the risk appetite framework but we again noted our concerns about interconnected risks across transition, resource mobilization, procurement, co-financing, and organizational transformation. We believe stronger visibility is required regarding whether mitigation measures are successfully reducing risk.

We questioned the Secretariat on how it assesses cumulative risk and requested more clarity on how it monitors the effectiveness of mitigation measures. More specifically, we requested greater visibility into emerging risks, residual risks, and the evidence used to determine whether mitigation efforts are succeeding.

In our written statement we focused on elevated strategic risks and organizational resilience. The Board intervention expanded this discussion by specifically examining interactions between risks and asking how the Board can exercise meaningful risk-informed oversight.

Our Delegation will continue advocating for improved reporting on mitigation effectiveness, interconnected risks, and early warning indicators, particularly regarding transition, co-financing, human rights, and commodity security.

Country Funding Update and GC8 Monitoring

Discussions focused on GC8 grant-making progress, Technical Review Panel (TRP) findings, sustainability, transition readiness, community systems, prioritization decisions, and Portfolio Optimization. The Secretariat reported strong progress in GC8 grant-making, and that almost all funding requests reviewed to date had been recommended for grant-making.

While only highlights were shared from the TRP ahead of the Board Meeting, the TRP Window 1 and Window 2 reports were published during the Board Meeting and can be accessed **here**. As you can see, the TRP assessed GC8 funding requests as generally high quality and well aligned with the strategic shifts, while cautioning that implementation readiness, sustainability, transition planning, and community systems financing remain significant challenges. The TRP stressed that successful transition should be driven by readiness rather than timelines and called for stronger sustainability planning, accountability mechanisms, and protection of community-led and key population services.

Our Delegation welcomed the TRP's assessment that funding requests were generally strong and aligned with the GC8 strategic shifts. At the same time, **we highlighted concerns regarding community systems financing, transition readiness, and the growing volume of critical essential interventions included within Unfunded Quality Demand (UQD).** We strongly endorsed the TRP's recommendations on transition and **highlighted the Community Systems Strengthening (CSS) Maturity Framework as an existing tool that could support monitoring of transition readiness and sustainability.**

We also called for **earlier publication of UQD information, reiterated our ask at BM54 (February 2026) and the 30th Strategy Committee (June 2026) for a review of the Portfolio Optimization framework around Portfolio Optimization decisions, and stronger monitoring of strategic shifts during implementation.** Our Delegation emphasized the need to prioritize Community, Rights and Gender (CRG) investments, community systems, and transition outcomes as GC8 moves from planning to implementation.

Potential Private Philanthropy Malaria Contribution: Malaria Impact Accelerator (MIA)

Our Delegation supported the approval of the **Malaria Impact Accelerator (MIA)**, a philanthropic initiative that could mobilize significant additional resources for malaria programs through existing Global Fund governance and implementation structures. The proposal was approved unanimously by the Board.

While welcoming the initiative's potential to accelerate malaria impact, we emphasized that successful implementation would depend on robust governance, transparency, and accountability arrangements with clear timelines from the outset. We called for **greater clarity on how the Secretariat will manage risks related to absorptive capacity, procurement and supply chain readiness at the country-level, and workforce requirements, and overall organizational capacity at the Secretariat level**, particularly as it simultaneously delivers GC8, advances organizational transformation, and expands market-shaping activities. Overall, our Delegation also stressed that **donor priorities should complement, rather than influence or dilute, the Global Fund's strategic objectives, governance principles, and accountability framework.**

At the Board table, our intervention focused on four key areas: Community participation, governance oversight, operational readiness, and reporting requirements. We stressed that **country ownership and meaningful engagement of communities and civil society must remain central throughout the grant lifecycle.** Our Delegation also underscored the importance of maintaining strong Board oversight as the initiative evolves. Given the MIA's potential implications for the Global Fund's financing model and governance arrangements, we called for regular Board review of implementation progress, emerging risks, operational trade-offs, and any proposed adjustments to the approach.

2027 OPEX Budget and Workplan

Our Delegation approved the 2027 OPEX budget and workplan while acknowledging growing pressures associated with GC8 implementation, organizational transformation, transition support, and workforce planning. The Board unanimously approved this Decision Point.

Our Delegation supported the budget proposal while **emphasizing that Secretariat staff, institutional knowledge, and country-facing capacity remain strategic assets.** Sustainable delivery requires balancing affordability with organizational resilience. We encouraged stronger Board visibility into the links between affordability decisions, organizational capacity, enterprise risk, and country-level outcomes.

In our written statement, we highlighted that the success of differentiated support models, assurance reforms, and organizational consolidation will depend on maintaining strong country-facing capacity, technical expertise, and meaningful engagement with communities and civil society. We further noted that automation and AI should be deployed as tools to strengthen decision-making and operational effectiveness, while preserving the human judgment, contextual understanding, and relationships that underpin successful implementation.

Global Fund in the Global Health Ecosystem

Discussions focused on evolving global health architecture, practical partnerships, World Bank collaboration, and the Global Fund's role in broader health system reforms.

Our Delegation supports practical, impact-oriented collaboration but does not believe Global Health ecosystem reform should dominate Board attention at the expense of more immediate strategic risks such as transition, sustainability, and implementation capacity. Our Delegation argued that governance attention should remain focused on mission-level priorities and practical partnerships, suggesting that broader strategic questions about the Global Fund's future role should be addressed through the upcoming Strategy process and, when needed, Decision Points, rather than through repeated ecosystem discussions at Board meetings.

In our written statement we emphasized the need to **preserve country ownership, accountability, and community engagement while seeking greater clarity regarding the implications of the One Plan, One Budget, One Report model.**

Strategic Performance Report and KPI Revisions

The Board approved the mid-strategy KPI adjustments. **Our Delegation supported the KPI revisions but maintained concerns about aggregating disease-specific human rights indicators which we had raised at the 31st Strategy Committee meetings earlier in October.** We believe simplification should not reduce visibility into disparities, inequities, or barriers facing affected populations.

We noted that several underperforming KPIs are linked to prevention and encouraged corrective action in key areas including prevention programming, pediatric HIV, key populations, and TB prevention. We also cautioned that while integrated or aggregated indicators can be useful for certain analysis, they should not obscure areas where progress is stalling or reversing. As the Global Fund Secretariat maintains a very robust database of data and performance against indicators that contribute to KPIs, our Delegation is committed to keeping a watchful eye on the individual data points for these newly aggregated KPIs.

Resource Mobilization

Our Delegation welcomed the strong pledge conversion results while recognizing the increasingly complex resource mobilization landscape. We noted the governance implications of evolving donor requirements, earmarking practices, and new financing arrangements.

At the Board table, we highlighted the need to carefully assess the implications of donor expectations for governance, decision-making, and accountability. We also **called for a review of the Pledge Confidence Framework and underscored the importance of ensuring that strategic priorities continue to be set through Board-approved strategies, KPIs, and governance processes rather than through individual funding arrangements.**

Looking ahead, our Delegation argued that future donor expectations, performance priorities, and replenishment messaging should be considered collectively through the development of the next Strategy and KPI framework. We supported the early launch of preparations for the Ninth Replenishment while also emphasizing the need to allow sufficient time for strategy development, stakeholder consultation, and Board deliberation on key strategic priorities and trade-offs.

Additional Written Updates

Post-2028 Strategy Development Process

Our Delegation welcomed the launch of consultations for the next Global Fund Strategy but **raised concerns that the proposed timeline and fully virtual approach may not provide sufficient opportunity to address the significant strategic questions facing the Partnership.** We emphasized that the next Strategy should provide a clear framework for the Global Fund's future role, priorities, and accountability, while remaining responsive to increasingly diverse country contexts.

Given the emphasis on differentiated implementation contexts and country realities, **we strongly encouraged the Secretariat to complement the proposed online partnership forums with dedicated regional consultation processes.** Leveraging regional partners, community platforms and civil society networks, will be critical to ensuring meaningful participation and ownership. Regional consultations should not be treated as optional inputs but as a core component of the Strategy development process, helping to ensure that the next

Strategy is informed by diverse regional perspectives and the realities of the countries and communities it seeks to serve.

Throughout BM56, we also highlighted the importance of allowing adequate time for Board discussions on prioritization, trade-offs, sustainability, transition, and replenishment before key strategic decisions are finalized.

About the Developed Country NGO Delegation

The Developed Country NGO Delegation is one of twenty voting Delegations to the Global Fund Board. It plays a critical role in the development and evolution of organizational strategy, the funding model, the work of the Secretariat and policy. Delegation members are representatives of civil society organizations based in countries not eligible for the Global Fund grants. For more details on the Delegation, please visit our website, www.developedngo.org and on the Global Fund, please visit www.theglobalfund.org

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