

Need for Resource Documents on Friends Organisations

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria

The Lowy Institute for International Policy
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THE NEED

Faced with the necessity of discharging its global mission, the Global Fund had at least three organisational models it could have followed:

1. Establishing regional and local offices, creating a bureaucracy and engaging for itself in local lobbying, promotion, educational and scientific work;
2. Establishing a headquarters with many visits to outlying regions and countries by HQ-based personnel; or
3. Establishing headquarters, providing occasional visits of personnel to regions and affected countries of HQ-based personnel, and relying on regional and national Friends organisations to engage with governments and local communities to provide outreach, lobbying support and responsive engagement.

The Global Fund has opted for option 3. This has the advantage of containing administrative costs and protecting expenditures from the Fund. But it has the disadvantage of variability in Friends effectiveness'; the absence of effective Friends organisations at all in some regions and

countries; the changeable input depending on personnel; and the variable effectiveness of part-timeism.

The object of this note is to emphasise the responsibility which the Global Fund has, for itself, to ensure the effectiveness of the outreach of Friends organisations. Whilst there is room for experimentation and local innovation and no need for total uniformity, the mission of the Fund is so important and its beneficiaries so dependent and vulnerable, that it is a responsibility of the Fund to promote the effectiveness and efficiency of Friends bodies, their creation where needed and proper servicing as well as rigorous auditing of outcomes, efficiency and effectiveness.

THE MODALITIES

1 *Documentary brochure*

The Fund should produce a brochure or other document explaining the purpose of Friends organisations, the experience of them so far, and the ways in which they can support and enhance the work of the Fund. The creation of such bodies only has utility as it promotes the effectiveness of the Fund and stimulates local awareness, and support for, its mission. Set out below are some of the contents that could be included in such a brochure or pamphlet.

2 *Video or DVD*

To supplement that printed material (of which there is so much in the field of AIDS), it would be desirable if a filmed program could be prepared covering much the same subject matter as proposed below.

Such a program need not be expensively produced. It should include contributions from the Executive Director of the Fund (Dr. Michel Kazatchkine); the Deputy Director (Ms. Helen Evans) and the Director (External Relations) (Dr. Christoph Benn). There should also be brief explanations from Friends leaders, such as Mr. Ed Scott (Chair, Friends of the Global Fund, USA), Mr. Tadashi Yamamoto (Friends, Japan) and speakers from developing countries most affected by the three diseases. Such a video should not be, or appear to be, addressed only the developed world contributors to the Fund and fund raising. The global character of the Fund's mission should be emphasised and its achievements recounted without mind-numbing statistics. A few vivid graphs and individual instances could bring the message home best.

THE CONTENTS

I suggest that the following matters should be covered in the above publications:

1 Background to the epidemics

A simple introductory description of the three epidemics (AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria) should be given together with graphical material on their impact on human beings, regions and countries. Endless statistics should be avoided. This is not a scientific publication.

2 Origins of Global Fund

A short description should be given (a) a brief history of the Fund; (b) explanation of why these three epidemics; (c) indication of why other

medical conditions are omitted; (d) description of the funding of the Global Fund, sources and current problems; (e) indication of the possible future of the Global Fund and its potential expansion into other medical conditions; (f) identification of the role of the Fund in prevention strategies not just paying for therapies.

3 Purpose of Friends

The non-bureaucratic model elected by the Fund should be explained and justified. The affirmative engagement of civil society organisations as a means of outreach into local communities and respect for local conditions and cultures, should be emphasised. So should the role in prevention strategies, law reform, local education and stigma reduction strategies.

4 Special Problems of Fund

It would be as well to list the special problems of the Fund which are relevant to the effectiveness of Friends organisations. These problems include diversity of (a) the diseases selected, their effects and scientific research on them; (b) the regions and countries most affected and the variety of responses within them; (c) the availability of presently effective and expensive therapies and potential developments including vaccines; and (d) the donational and contributory patterns and needs in the future, including reciprocity and mutuality as principles of participation in the Fund.

It would also be desirable to address specifically and candidly difficulties faced by the Fund in the current circumstances of global economic downturn and the difficulty of reaching out to societies with poor infrastructures, including in civil society. Often it is such countries that are most in support from the Fund. The ways in which Friends organisations can stimulate and support the mission of the Fund should be explained by reference to past and current experience with Friends.

5 Experience of Friends Organisations

There should be a brief description of the experience to date in establishing, setting up and operating Friends organisations in (a) USA and North America; (b) Europe; (c) Latin America; (d) South and West Asia, the subcontinent; (e) Africa; (f) Middle East; (g) Japan and (h) Pacific friends.

6 Challenges of Fund

The particular challenges faced by the Fund should be acknowledged with an indication that these are consequently challenges for Friends organisations, namely (a) avoiding bureaucracy and administrative expenses but ensuring local and global effectiveness; (b) securing participation of individuals and cso (c) maintaining enthusiasm; (d) securing funding from political decision-makers; (e) maintaining donations to the Fund in hard economic times; (f) promoting prevention, education and law reform strategies; and (g) promoting the ethos of basic health for all as an affirmative outcome – not simply reacting to three diseases.

7 Long-term Goals

The long-term objectives of Friends organisations, interacting with the Fund, and csos need to be stressed including treatment of (a) eradication of the three diseases; (b) maintenance of the revenue to the Fund; (c) consideration of the future addition to the Fund's mission of other widespread endemic diseases; (d) promoting positive health outcomes; (e) linking such objectives to international human rights discourse, by reference to the UDHR and ICCPR rights to access to basic health care; and (f) inter-relationship of the Global Fund with the World Health Organisation, UNAIDS, and other agencies and organs of the United Nations should also be explained.

The foregoing is a first draft of the proposed initiatives only. There should be input from present Friends organisations and especially from client and patient groups and selected governmental personnel. The important point to make is that the Fund has a clear responsibility of its own to promote Friends, as effective and not simply ceremonial, bodies for outreach, promotion, prevention, reinforcement and support of its mission.

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