



MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA  
LEARNING HUB



SCALING UP  
HARM REDUCTION IN MENA



# Global Fund 101 Global Fund & Its Grant Cycle



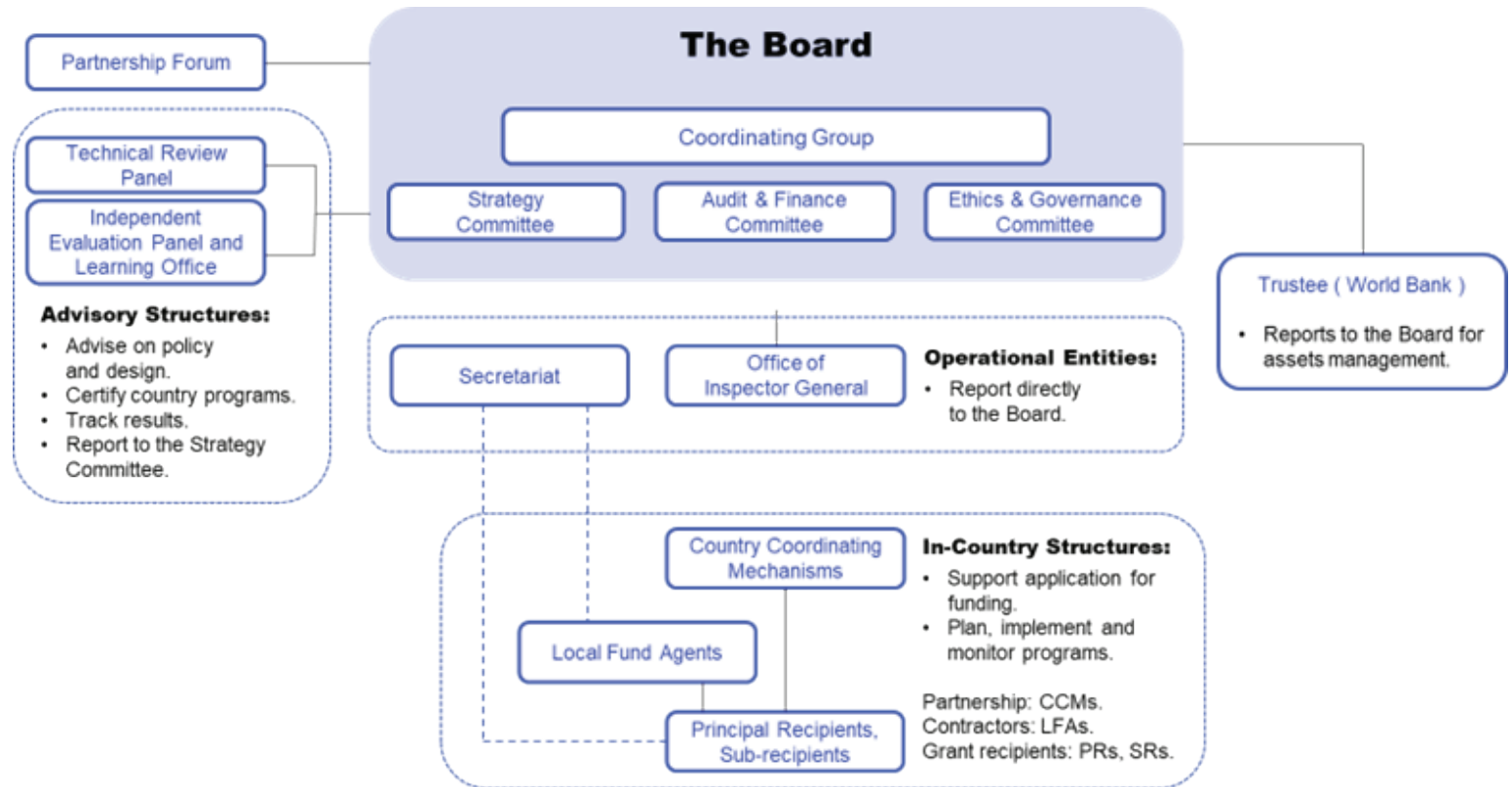
## **Global Fund 101 – Global Fund and Its Grant Cycle**

As part of its mission to strengthen regional knowledge and capacity, the MENA Learning Hub is pleased to share this Global Fund 101 newsletter—a concise guide to understanding how one of the world's largest health financing mechanisms operates. Building a solid grasp of the Global Fund's structure, processes, and partnership model is essential for all stakeholders in our region, particularly as we prepare for Grant Cycle 8 (GC8), where informed engagement will directly influence the quality, impact, and ambition of upcoming funding requests. Through this newsletter, the Learning Hub aims to equip partners with the foundational knowledge they need to participate effectively, advocate strategically, and ensure Global Fund investments are maximized to meet regional priorities.

### **The Global Fund Model: A Partnership for Global Health**

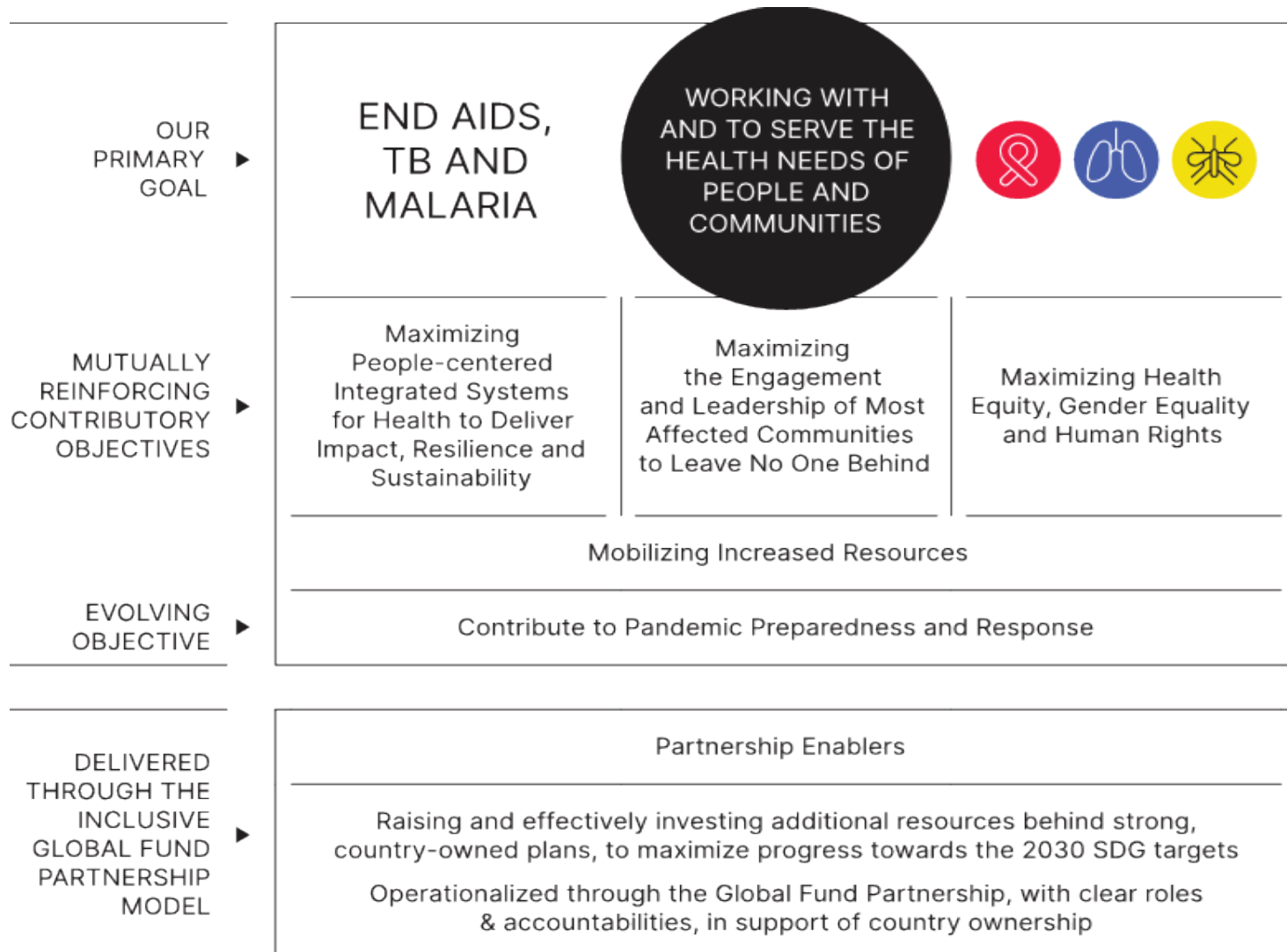
The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria operates on a unique partnership model designed to mobilize, manage, and invest the world's resources to eliminate these three devastating epidemics. It is an innovative, multi-stakeholder structure that relies heavily on country ownership and performance-based funding. The architecture of the Global Fund is layered, spanning a central governing body, a vast Secretariat, and critical in-country partners that drive program implementation.

# Global Fund Structure



“Read more” - <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/staff/organizational-structure/>

The Global Fund’s bold, ambitious new Strategy sets out how the Global Fund partnership aims to accelerate impact towards the 2030 horizon and contribute to a world free of the burden of AIDS, tubercu-losis and malaria with better, more equitable health for all, as set out in Sustainable Development Goal 3.



“Read more” - <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/strategy/>

## 1- In-Country Partnership and Ownership

The Global Fund's operations are fundamentally driven by the principle of country ownership. Since the Global Fund does not maintain in-country offices, its success hinges on strong, multi-sectoral partnerships at the national level. These in-country structures are responsible for supporting funding applications, as well as planning, implementing, and monitoring programs.

The cornerstone of the in-country model is the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM). CCMs are national committees tasked with writing and submitting funding requests to the Global Fund and providing critical oversight of approved grants. The functions of the CCM are vital: they coordinate the development of the national funding request, nominate the Principal Recipient (PR), oversee implementation, and ensure the Global Fund grant aligns with other national health and development programs. A key element of their mandate is their composition, which must include representatives from all sectors, including the government, civil society, faith-based organizations, academic institutions, and—most importantly—people living with the diseases.

“Read more” - <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/country-coordinating-mechanism/>

Once funding is approved, the grant is managed by the Principal Recipient (PR), the entity fully responsible for implementing the activities funded by the grant in line with the agreement with the Global Fund. The PR, in turn, may engage one or more Sub-recipients (SRs) to implement defined activities under its oversight. The SRs are accountable to the PR, which remains ultimately responsible for the grant's performance.

Providing an external layer of assurance and advisory services is the Local Fund Agent (LFA). The LFA is an independent organization, usually one per country, hired by the Global Fund to act as its "eyes and ears" on the ground. Their primary role is to provide independent assessment, verification, advice, and recommendations on grant design, implementation arrangements, and performance throughout the grant life cycle. Critically, the LFA reports only to the Global Fund and does not make grant decisions or provide technical advice to implementers.

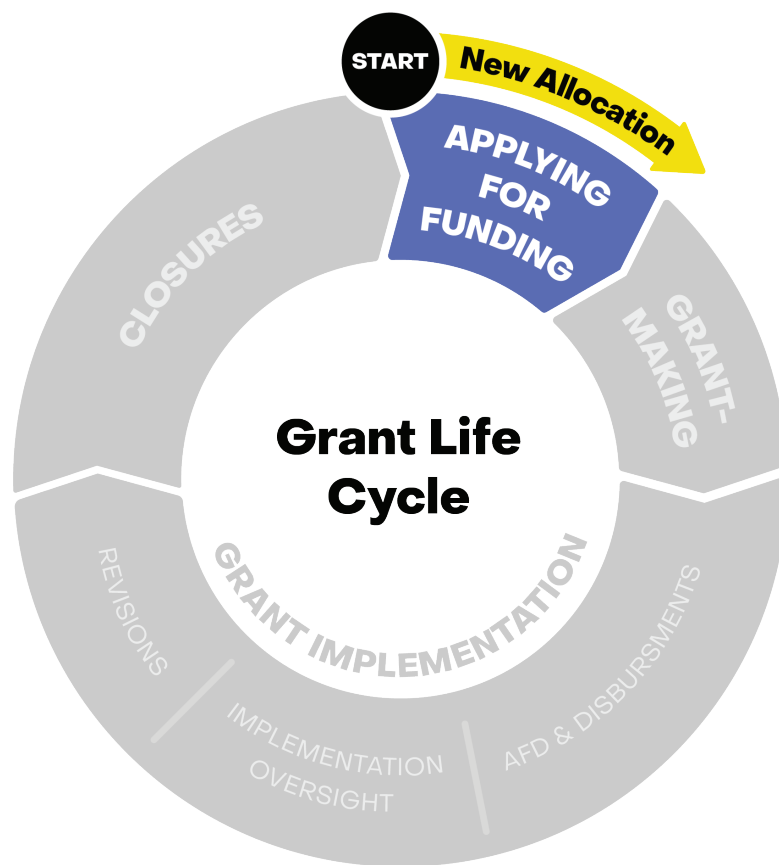
### **Global fund actors:**

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|---|--|
| <b>Communities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People directly affected by the three diseases and community-led organizations representing them.</li> <li>• Participate in program design, monitoring, and ensuring accountability and equity.</li> </ul>  | <b>Principal Recipients (PRs)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The entity legally responsible for the grant.</li> <li>• Oversees implementation, manages funds, ensures performance, and contracts SRs/SSRs as needed.</li> </ul>                                    |
| <b>Sub-Sub-Recipients (SSRs) / Sub-Recipients (SRs)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations contracted by the PR to implement specific activities.</li> <li>• Accountable to the PR for program delivery, data, and financial management.</li> </ul> | <b>Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National multi-stakeholder platforms that lead the development of funding requests.</li> <li>• Oversee grant implementation and ensure inclusive participation of all sectors.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Global Fund Country Teams</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secretariat teams assigned to each country.</li> <li>• Support grant negotiation, oversee implementation, review performance, and coordinate with PRs, CCMs, and LFAs.</li> </ul>             | <b>Local Fund Agents (LFAs)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent organizations contracted by the Global Fund.</li> <li>• Provide external assurance, verification, and monitoring—but do not make decisions or give technical advice.</li> </ul>             |
| <b>Technical Review Panel (TRP)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent group of global experts.</li> <li>• Reviews funding requests for technical soundness, strategic focus, and feasibility before grants are approved</li> </ul>                   |  |



## **The Grant Life Cycle: Applying for Funding and Review**

The Grant Life Cycle (GLC) is a six-step, country-facing process that begins with allocation and moves through funding request, grant-making, and implementation, culminating in closure. The cycle begins with the Global Fund Secretariat communicating the allocation amount for a country's HIV, TB, and/or malaria components. Eligibility for Allocation is determined by factors such as income level and disease burden, although exceptions exist, such as for upper-middle-income countries that demonstrate barriers to providing funding for key populations. Allocations are calculated using a formula based mainly on disease burden and economic capacity, which is then refined through a qualitative adjustment process.




Integral to the funding request is the Country Dialogue. This is an essential and ongoing process that ensures the development and implementation of the funding request are connected to the country's broader health sector and disease strategies. It is in this inclusive forum that people affected by HIV, TB, and malaria share their experiences to help define the most effective interventions and services, and where stakeholders discuss and make choices about which services the Global Fund should be asked to fund, including the program split for components like Resilience and Sustainable Systems for Health (RSSH).

Step 1: Funding Request Submission is where the CCM selects the Principal Recipients and submits a proposal projecting how the country will use the funds for program activities. The funding request process strongly emphasizes alignment with robust, costed, and prioritized National Strategic Plans (NSPs).

"how to step up at country dialogue"- <https://www.theglobal-fund.org/en/video/2020/2020-01-09-how-to-step-up-at-country-dialogue/>

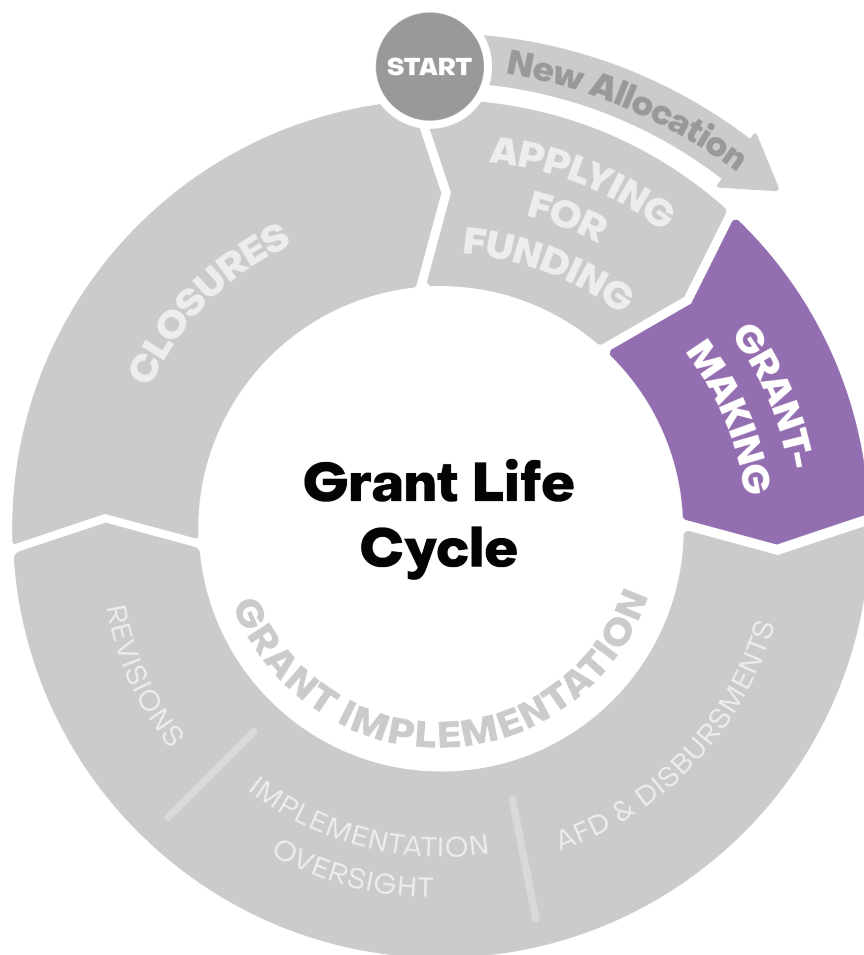




The submission must include critical documents: the Performance Framework, the Detailed Budget Template, and the Prioritized Above Allocation Request (PAAR) among others.

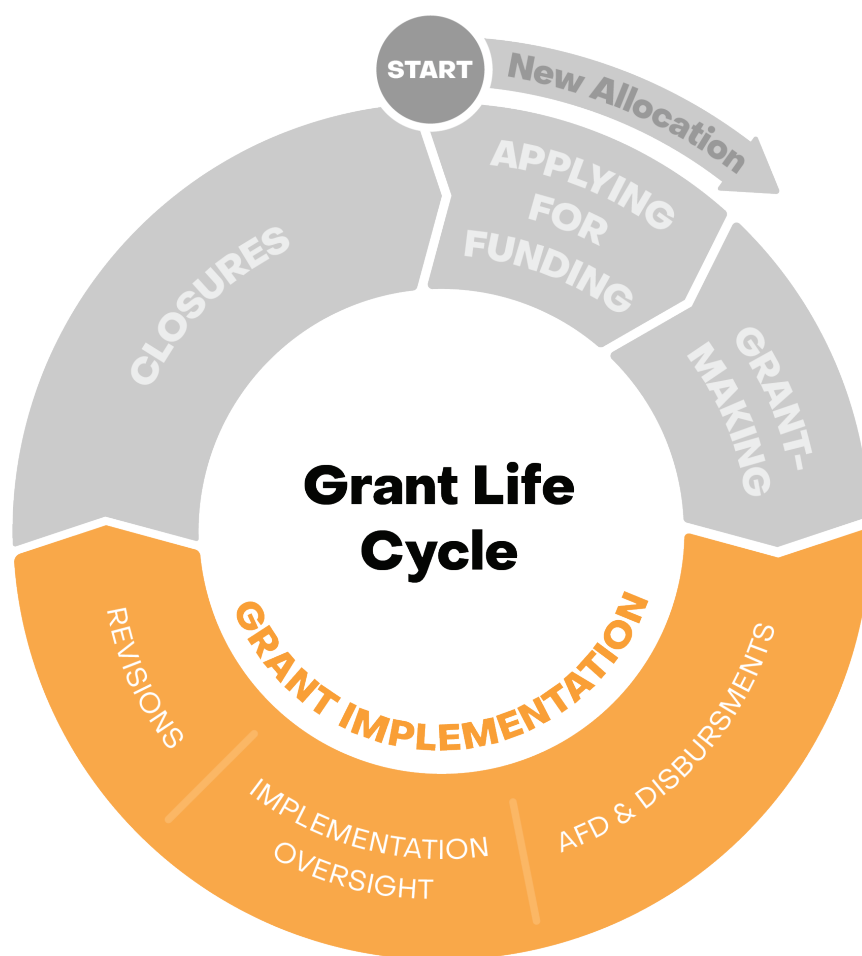
The Performance Framework outlines expected performance over the funding period, linking program goals and objectives to specific indicators and targets used for grant performance assessment and disbursement decisions. The Detailed Budget Template translates the prioritized interventions into a quantified and costed format, ensuring alignment with national strategic priorities and integrating Value for Money (VfM) considerations.

The PAAR lists costed, prioritized interventions that cannot be funded from the country's allocation, which, if approved, are added to the Register of Unfunded Quality Demand (UQD). Step 2: Technical Review Panel (TRP) Review follows submission. The TRP, an independent group of experts, rigorously assesses the funding request for technical merit and strategic focus. Their review criteria focus on maximizing impact towards ending the three diseases, maximizing health equity, strengthening sustainability and value for money, and bolstering pandemic preparedness capabilities. The TRP's outcome determines whether the request is Recommended for Grant-making or requires Iteration.

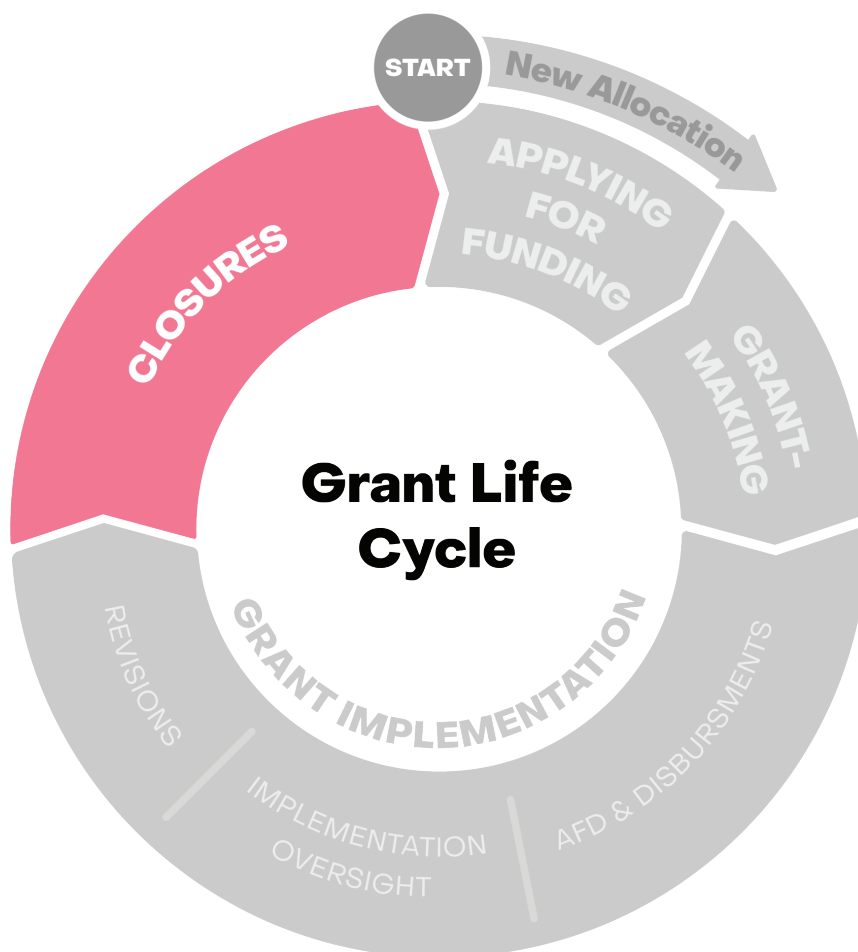


Following a positive review from the TRP, the grant moves to Step 3: Grant-making. This is the process of translating the funding request into quality, implementation-ready grants. The Global Fund Secretariat's Country Team, led by a Senior/Fund Portfolio Manager, works with the nominated PR to finalize the grant documents. Grant-making involves intense negotiation to finalize the detailed implementation arrangements, the performance targets, the budget, and the capacity assessment of the PRs. The final legal agreement is typically composed of a Framework Agreement, which defines the overarching terms of collaboration, and one or more Grant Confirmations, which are signed for each program implemented by the PR.

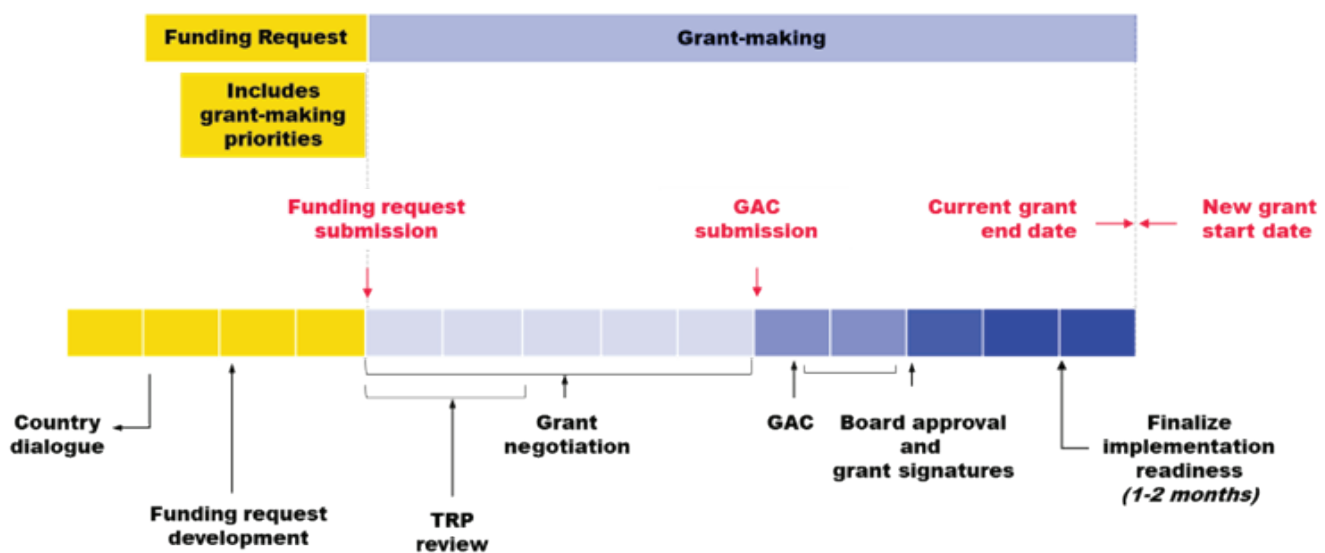
Once finalized, the grant is submitted for review by the Grant Approvals Committee (GAC), an internal body of the Secretariat. The GAC reviews the disbursement-ready grant and makes a recommendation to the Board. Board Approval is the ultimate sign-off, after which the grant is signed, and the first Annual Funding Decision (AFD) is processed.



Step 4: Grant Implementation is where the work begins. The Global Fund uses a performance-based funding model. This means that progress toward targets set in the Performance Framework and the rate of fund absorption are critically considered when making subsequent Annual Funding Decisions and determining disbursement amounts. During this phase, the LFA continues its role, providing independent verification of PR deliverables and offering insights on overall performance by drawing connections between programmatic, financial, and supply chain information.



Finally, Step 5: Closure occurs when a grant reaches the end of its implementation period or following a mutual decision by the CCM and/or the Secretariat. The Global Fund acknowledges that to avoid interruptions in vital health services, processes from different grant cycles must often overlap, meaning closure activities for one cycle may occur while applying for funding for the next. The entire Global Fund model is thus a dynamic, interconnected system, focused on continuous improvement and strategic investment to achieve maximum impact against the three diseases.



## Funding Request Process

For more information on Grant Cycle 8, the global fund is holding Information Sessions on Applying for Funding - <https://resources.the-globalfund.org/en/information-sessions/apply-for-funding/>