

# MINUTES OF THE 6TH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE PANDEMIC FUND

June 15, 2023

1. The Sixth Meeting of the Governing Board of the Pandemic Fund was held virtually on June 15, 2023. The meeting was co-Chaired by Dr. Chatib Basri and Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana and covered two Agenda items: 1) coordination among Implementing Entities for the first Call for Proposals, and 2) opportunities for collaboration between the Pandemic Fund and the Global Fund.

## **I. COORDINATION AMONG IMPLEMENTING ENTITIES FOR THE FIRST CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

2. Implementing Entities (IEs) of the Pandemic Fund updated the Board on their experience from the first Call for Proposals in implementing the common approach that was agreed upon last March by the WHO, World Bank, UNICEF, FAO, the Global Fund and GAVI. The briefing drew on a note prepared by the IEs that was circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting.

3. The IEs informed the Board that they had worked together intensively, and with the Secretariat, to support and guide applicants interested in submitting proposals. It was emphasized that the overwhelmingly positive response to the first Call from countries and regional bodies signaled their eagerness to enhance Preparedness, Prevention, and Response (PPR) efforts along with a firm commitment to adopt collaborative and inclusive approaches spanning multiple sectors and involving a diverse range of stakeholders.

4. Noting that while a lot was achieved over a short period, the novelty of the approach, scale of the exercise, and tight timelines, had posed challenges in coordination among IEs as well as across stakeholders at the country level. Differing operational models and internal processes across IEs had made it more challenging for some IEs (e.g., Global Fund and GAVI) to participate in the first Call than for others (e.g., MDBs and UN agencies).

5. Overall, it was noted that important lessons had been learned from the first Call that pointed to the need for further work to align the roles, institutional processes and timelines across IEs, in support of stronger coordination for future Calls. Further, the IEs recommended

that if the resources under the first Call were insufficient to fund all proposals recommended by the TAP, the Board should consider ways to fund those proposals through subsequent rounds or facilitate funding through other means, such as a “matchmaking” platform that has been proposed by some Board members. It was felt that this would be important to sustain country and regional interest in the Pandemic Fund.

## **II. COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE PANDEMIC FUND AND THE GLOBAL FUND**

6. The Pandemic Fund Secretariat noted the emphasis placed by the Boards of both the Global Fund and the Pandemic Fund on exploring opportunities for collaboration, and provided an update on the strong efforts being made by the two Secretariats in this regard. The Board was informed that the Global Fund had indicated that it would not serve as an IE for the Pandemic Fund’s first Call for Proposals but that the Global Fund had now signed its Financial Procedures Agreement with the World Bank (on May 22, 2023), which would enable it to serve as an IE for future Calls. Further, it was noted that both entities were in the midst of their respective funding rounds (the Pandemic Fund’s first Call for Proposals and the Global Fund’s COVID-19 Response Mechanism, C19RM PO2), with overlapping timelines and areas of focus (surveillance, laboratory systems and health workforce).

7. The Pandemic Fund Secretariat informed the Board that 43 countries had submitted eligible, single- country proposals to both the Pandemic Fund’s first Call and the C19RM, that the Pandemic Fund Secretariat had shared this information with the Global Fund Secretariat, and that the two Secretariats were coordinating closely and working towards the aim of identifying proposals that could either complement one another, or were overlapping, to leverage synergies and mitigate the risk of duplication of funding.

8. The Board was informed that, as part of the ongoing dialogue between the two Secretariats, three areas had been identified to facilitate future alignment and efficiencies, including: 1) the timing and sequencing of funding rounds; 2) streamlining of application templates and processes to minimize any associated transaction costs for applicants, including IEs; and 3) the Pandemic Fund Secretariat’s commitment to developing standardized results reporting indicators that minimize the burden on IEs, while still being compatible with the Pandemic Fund’s Results Framework and reporting obligations. While expressing a willingness to engage, the Global Fund Secretariat underscored fundamental challenges related to the compatibility of its operational model with that of the Pandemic Fund, noting, in particular, that the Global Fund allocates most of its funding to countries through an allocation process that operates on a three- year cycle. It was noted however that the C19RM window offers some flexibility as it does not follow this cycle.

9. On the way forward, the Board was informed that once the analysis/“crosswalk” of the 43 proposals that have applied for funding from the Pandemic Fund’s first Call as well as C19RM had been completed by the two Secretariats, an update would be provided to the Board ahead of the July 19th funding allocation meeting of the Pandemic Fund’s Board. The Pandemic Fund Secretariat also welcomed the Global Fund Secretariat’s offer to provide inputs to the lessons learned/Stocktaking review.

### **III. BOARD DISCUSSION & NEXT STEPS**

10. The Board appreciated the updates and emphasized the importance of maximizing collaboration, coordination, and complementarity across IEs, despite differences in operational models, keeping countries and their needs at the center. In this context, members highlighted the role of IEs in helping the Pandemic Fund achieve its goal of catalyzing financial resources, technical knowhow, and coordination, and above all, adding value. It was noted in this context that the Pandemic Fund is a “catalytic” fund, not a “fund of funds.” It was suggested that the Pandemic Fund could consider becoming a signatory to the SDG3 Global Action Plan. Further, members agreed on the need to examine how the application process can be further streamlined and to develop reporting indicators and arrangements with a view to minimizing transactions costs for all parties and asked the Secretariat to prepare a clear plan in this regard.

11. Members emphasized the importance of learning lessons from the Pandemic Fund’s first Call for Proposals. In this context, they underscored that it would be important to hear individual feedback from the IEs on what had worked well, and what hadn’t and that it would be equally important to hear from countries and regional entities, including any challenges faced, and suggestions on what could be improved in future rounds. Members also noted the need to hear from CSOs on the ground. Members agreed that the Stocktaking review to be carried out over the summer would provide an important opportunity to hear from a variety of stakeholders on lessons for the future.

12. On the specific topic of collaboration between the Pandemic Fund and the Global Fund, members appreciated the efforts that the two Secretariats are making, underscored the potential of the Global Fund to bring catalytic value to the Pandemic Fund’s operations, and emphasized the need to find ways to work together and leverage complementarities. Members asked for a progress update from the two Secretariats ahead of the July Board meeting of the Global Fund with a clear plan to optimize collaboration.