

**Review of ongoing and recently
completed evaluations and studies
of technical support to AIDS
programme implementation**

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(GIST)**

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Abbreviations

ASAP	AIDS Strategy and Action Plan
CCM	Country Coordination Mechanism
CPA	Country Partnership Assessment
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EARS	Early Alert and Response System
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization
GIST	Global Implementation Support Team
MARP	Most at risk populations
NAC	National AIDS Council/Commission/Committee
OGAC	Office of the United States Global AIDS Coordinator
PR	Principal Recipient
RST	Regional Support Team
TERG	Technical Evaluation Reference Group
TSF	Technical Support Facility
UBW	Unified Budget and Workplan
UCO	UNAIDS Country Office

A. Background

As a part of the Global Implementation Support Team's (GIST)ⁱ 2008 Work Plan, the GIST members committed themselves to conduct an analysis of technical support provision and coordination.

GIST members were invited to submit relevant reviews or evaluations of technical support undertaken by their own organization or other entities. In addition to GIST supported studies, the following GIST members provided relevant materials:

- Global Fund
- GTZ
- PEPFAR
- Technical Support Facilities
- UNAIDS Secretariat
- UNDP
- UNFPA
- World Bank - ASAP

Other materials assessed included those commissioned by Aidsplan and GAVI. For a full list of documents reviewed, please see **Annex 1**.

Aim:

This review aims to:

- provide a clearer understanding of the most recent outcomes and ongoing analyses of technical support demand and provision;
- explore to what extent the mechanisms exist independently and to what extent they come together to form an overall architecture; and
- provide background documentation for the PCB Thematic Session on UNAIDS and Global Fund Partnership.

What questions are currently being asked in reviews and evaluations and who is asking them?

The various reviews and evaluations included a wide range of foci and issues and apply very different analytical approaches. This makes a coherent analysis difficultⁱⁱ. See **Annex 2** for a description of review questions and methodologies.

Nevertheless, the analysis identified four key issues:

- Short-term versus long-term technical support, and the operational priorities of various technical service providers;
- The choice of indicators for measuring technical assistance i.e. input, outcome and impact indicators;
- Joint activities by, and partnerships and synergies between technical support providers (at all levels); and
- The 'unfunded mandate' and how this impacts upon technical support providers.

B. Short-term versus long-term technical support, and the operational priorities of various technical service providers

Insights and trends

A number of reports looked at the issue of long- and short-term technical support, and the current operational priorities of technical support providers.

In terms of the Global Fund, a grant can generate technical support needs at several points during the life of a grant from proposal development to the work plan design, implementation of the grants and its monitoring and evaluation. Technical support needs tend to differ at each of these points; so, too, the willingness of recipients to seek support (Aidspan, 2008). UNAIDS (especially via the Technical Support Facilities (TSFs)), WHO, GTZ and the World Bank have been at the fore of facilitating and/or funding technical support provision to overcome these hindrances.

Since 2006, and in order to enhance its support to countries' HIV prevention efforts, UNFPA has implemented a strategy that prioritized the allocation and use of its 2006-2007 Unified Budget and Workplan (UBW) resources towards building the agency's dedicated HIV capacity at country and sub-regional level. The external review of UNFPA's Country and Sub-Regional Support to National Responses to HIV/AIDS (UNFPA 2008) found, inter alia, that:

- the scope, intensity and quality of UNFPA's contribution to HIV prevention have undergone a significant positive shift in the last three years;
- moreover, UNFPA is progressively exercising stronger leadership on HIV prevention and is doing so as part of a Joint UN effort;
- that shift can be largely attributed to the enhanced dedicated HIV presence at the country and sub-regional level;
- their effectiveness and efficiency are impacted upon by a number of factors, including UNFPA-dependent ones (esp. leadership and management support and a supportive office environment) as well as broader ones, especially the Joint UN environment; and
- UNFPA's enhanced HIV presence and contribution to HIV prevention efforts in particular have generated high expectations of UNFPA from partners.

The review team concluded that UNFPA's enhanced HIV capacity is making an enormous difference to UNFPA's own image and credibility with national and international partners at country level, but equally, to the credibility and leverage of the Joint UN Team.

In relation to the TSFs performance, the lack of capability within countries to manage technical assistance is raised in each individual review of the TSFs (Godwin and Misra 2008). The TSFs have all struggled with this problem: coping with the ad hoc nature of requests for technical assistance; the 'fix it with a consultant' culture of sending in a consultant to deal with an immediate problem instead of looking for longer-term, more sustainable solutions; and having to respond to sometimes inappropriate demands for technical assistance, rather than supplying against 'unmet need' or 'unmet demand' or strategically pre-determined needs. To a certain extent the problem was anticipated, and was the reason for the 'capacity development of country partners' element in the TSF model. There is, however, a chicken-and-egg situation: if countries have weak capacity to manage technical assistance, it is difficult

to provide effective technical assistance to help them improve. The TSF's have not been able to develop effective strategies so far to deal with this problem.

Where this problem manifests most clearly is in the difficulties TSFs have in 'piping' or scheduling the delivery of technical assistance, both in the longer term and in the short term, in order to be more efficient in anticipating and responding to requests. At this point it becomes apparent that 'country' capability to manage TA goes beyond governments: development partners and UN agencies themselves seem to find it equally challenging.

Effective 'plans of technical support needs' have to a large extent not been developed. None of the TSF reviews mentions technical support plans as driving demand for technical assistance. Specific plans to directly address this gap are not raised in the TSF reports' assessment of capacity development strategies. Indeed, it is not at all clear where the gap lies. Is it in the UN Joint Teams' inability to conceptualize 'plans of technical support needs'? Is it in an inability or refusal by clients to address it? Is it the sheer complexity of the technical assistance environment with which the TAFs are just not coming to grips?

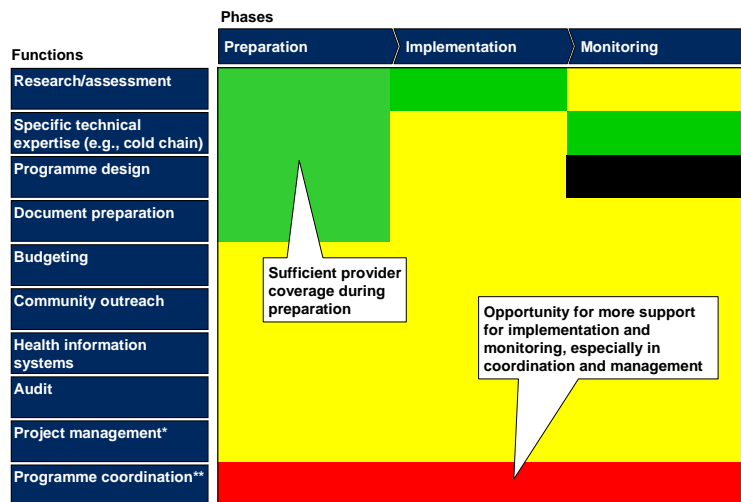
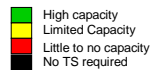
Godwin and Misra (2008) identify three elements to this problem:

- Difficulties in determining in a coherent and comprehensive manner, the 'technical support needs' of programmes;
- Difficulties in harmonizing the many sources and suppliers of technical support; and
- Difficulties in conceptualizing the appropriate role of short term technical assistance within this overall environment.

The graph below shows the technical support needs and gaps in relation to GAVI's mandateⁱⁱⁱ. It clearly demonstrates a similar pattern in relation to the provision of AIDS technical support. The short-term preparatory phases are well resourced and have sufficient available capacities or technical support provision, while the longer-term needs relating to programme implementation face severe capacity constraints and lack a coherent plan for capacity development. The latter are in dire need of long-term, planned and sustained support, preferably within the context of a nationally-led framework for capacity development beyond the HIV and even health sectors.

THE PROVIDER LANDSCAPE ALIGNS TO AREAS WHERE COUNTRIES CURRENTLY RECEIVE SUPPORT

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* Project management includes management and coordination of one project, conducted by a single technical support provider

** Programme coordination entails coordinating activities between multiple providers involved with various aspects of the health system

Source: Provider profiles; interviews; team analysis

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The HLSP report (2008) found that the TSFs are being used to build capacity in three main areas:

1. Country Coordinating Mechanisms: technical support has focused primarily on structural reforms of CCMs and building their capacity to achieve compliance with Global Fund conditions. Common problems include getting countries to understand the philosophy and responsibilities of CCMs, adapting CCM architecture to the local context, putting in place governing processes, ensuring correct representation to meet Global Fund criteria.
2. Principal and sub-recipients: technical support is being used to support financial and programmatic systems to handle large scale grants. This means developing or strengthening new and existing organisational systems to meet Global Fund requirements.
3. Monitoring and evaluation: technical support is being provided at ministry level to strengthen capacity to use monitoring and evaluation tools, and with principal and sub-recipients in ensuring that grant work plans and indicators are harmonised with national frameworks and plans.

HLSP (2008) also found that in some instances short-term technical support can mirror the effect of longer term capacity building. TSF support to Global Fund implementation has been crucial to overcoming specific and immediate bottlenecks. Part of the success of the TSFs' support can be attributed to consistent use of the same consultants who work on (often quite lengthy) assignments from start to finish, and then remain engaged in ongoing capacity building processes^{iv}. Using the same consultant can make capacity building initiatives less disjointed and closer to the "ideal" of longer term support.

What issues are not being addressed?

The HLSP (2008) case studies of Global Fund-related good news stories found that the country examples have highlighted a number of ongoing issues, including:

- Fundamentally, Global Fund processes are still poorly understood at country level, and many organisations do not have the capacity to comply with them. Global Fund structures, such as the CCM, are causing considerable problems at country level.
- While it is important to support their functioning in the short term, a longer term strategy for integrating CCMs into existing country coordination structures is imperative. The report notes that some countries have already made strides in this area (e.g. Tanzania, Mozambique, Uganda) but efforts need to be accelerated.
- There is some evidence that technical assistance is supporting strategic and technical work, but most seems to be directed towards solving operational bottlenecks, often at the initial stages of grant implementation. As such it is difficult to discern broader or longer term impacts.

Similarly, the TERG comments on the Five-Year Evaluation of the Global Fund Study Area 2 found that, notwithstanding the many examples of successful technical assistance being provided, functional systems to provide such assistance are not yet in place (Global Fund, September 2008).

Interviewees for the GTZ qualitative study (2008) identified a lack of long-term technical support in the following areas:

- procurement and supply management and M&E
- assistance to civil society to access Global Fund resources
- organizational development skills for the development of CCMs.

Furthermore, in terms of short-term technical support, a better steering process is needed for proposal development while experienced proposal writers and expertise are required in strategic planning. Other problematic areas identified are:

- overlaps occur in technical support provision in managerial support, M&E and proposal development; and
- duplication occurs in budgeted plans and technical support on gender strategies.

Overview of challenges

The GTZ study (2008) cites the main challenges for technical support provision to weak countries as:

- difficulty in getting epidemiological data;
- lack of capacity at country level; and
- lack of financial and programme management capacity.

In addition, overall, organizational development and the need for a technical support plan as part of every proposal was often mentioned by interviewees.

Particular challenges to implementing Global Fund grants include:

- the vertical nature of the programmes creates problems for country systems;
- CCMs struggling to fulfil their supervisory role;
- insufficient funds for CCM secretariats' running costs, needs and capacity assessment; and

- strengthening the capacity of civil society.

Godwin and Misra (2008) suggest that there is still a considerable lack of clarity about how relevant the TSFs are. Furthermore, the review identified a number of questions about the design of TSFs as providers of short-term TA and a capacity development programme. Critically, these questions revolve around:

- What is the role of short term technical assistance? Is short-term TA, provided essentially on an ad hoc basis, and in a contextual vacuum – or at least a context over which the TSFs have little control - truly a key intervention and appropriate use of the substantial resources going in to the TSFs? The reviews raise this question, but do not attempt to answer it.
- What is the best location for a substantive capacity development programme? The reviews show that the TSFs are struggling with the capacity development programme.

Recommendations

The Global Fund Five Year Evaluation Technical Evaluation Reference Group (TERG) made a number of recommendations regarding creating demand for sustainable technical assistance in relation to Global Fund proposals (Global Fund September 2008), including that:

- The TERG strongly recommends adopting a longer-term perspective in delivering technical support particularly for human resources capacity building, such as training support with a timeline of five to ten years. Note that this recommendation is also supported in the UNAIDS report on technical support (UNAIDS 2008).
- Coordination and management of technical support is a country responsibility^v. The TERG advises not to be prescriptive as to how a mechanism for the management of technical support should be developed. The Global Fund and partners should reassure countries that requests for technical assistance are considered to be a strength in any grant proposal.
- The TERG recommends that efforts be made by all parties to develop a culture of seeking and using technical assistance. Much of the responsibility for identifying and seeking technical assistance lies with the countries, with partner organizations providing relevant support as required.

In relation to the TSFs operations, the consolidation report (Godwin and Misra 2008) made the following recommendations to UNAIDS:

- UNAIDS needs to make a substantive study of the role of short term technical assistance. The key points to be looked at are probably:
 - What is needed for UNAIDS Country Offices to work together with other partners, and the TSFs, to develop coherent plans for overall technical support to their countries, within which the provision of TSF short term technical assistance and capacity development provision can be integrated and its relevance maximized?
 - What kind of technical assistance should the TSFs be providing?
 - What business model should the TSFs operate upon?

- UNAIDS needs to make a substantive study of what is the best location for a substantive capacity development programme. Key issues to be looked at are:
 - Is the capacity development programme appropriate for the TSFs? Should it be re-located, perhaps to the RSTs?
 - How to develop an optimum, relevant, CD strategy, bearing in mind the overall technical support environment and players?

Caraël et al. (2007) recommended that, in the South East Asian context, “a detailed dialogue take place between TSF SEAP, UNAIDS RST, UCCs in the region, NACs and local country partners on the scope and nature of capacity development, and ways to make it sustainable... It is best if response to immediate needs for TA and working towards a comprehensive, need-based capacity building are done concurrently so that there is a sustainable value to the region from the project”. Such a strategy would also be appropriate for all the TSFs (including the ICTC) as well as the GTZ and other civil society technical support providers. It could fit within either a HIV (and TB) capacity development strategy, or within the framework of nationally-led and developed capacity development plans.

Summary

- There is a lack of capability within countries to manage technical assistance which manifests itself in, for example, ad hoc requests for technical assistance, a ‘fix it with a consultant’ culture or sometimes inappropriate demands for technical assistance.
- In relation to Global Fund grants, there are difficulties in ‘pipe-lining’ or scheduling the delivery of technical assistance, both longer and short term, due to the lack of effective technical support need plans and systems.
- In some instances short-term technical support is mirroring the effect of longer term capacity building, though more by accident/chance than design.
- Particular challenges to implementing Global Fund grants include:
 - the vertical nature of Global Fund programmes;
 - CCMs struggling to fulfil their supervisory role;
 - insufficient funds for CCM operational costs and capacity assessment; and
 - an insufficient capacity of civil society.
- Fundamental questions remain unanswered in relation to technical assistance, namely:
 - What is the role of short term technical assistance?
 - What is the best location for a substantive capacity development programme?

Ways forward:

Possible ways forward include:

- Undertaking a substantive study of the role of short term technical assistance.
- Undertaking a substantive study of what is the best location for a substantive capacity development programme.

- Creating a culture among all stakeholders of dialogue about technical assistance needs at the country level as well as seeking and using or providing technical assistance.
- Adopting a longer-term (5-10 year) perspective for the delivery of technical support, particularly for human resources capacity building, based on a country owned plan or strategy.
- Considering requests for technical assistance to be a strength (or possibly a requirement) of Global Fund grant proposals.

C. The choice of indicators for measuring technical assistance

Insights and trends

The reports reviewed highlight many questions about how to measure various aspects of technical support i.e. which indicators should be used. Options include process, input, output and impact indicators.

Godwin and Misra (2008) state that “No attempt is made in fact to assess the effectiveness or relevance of this technical assistance; though some is made to assess the effectiveness of the *provision* of this technical assistance”.

To date, only input (and process) indicators, principally for the provision of days of technical assistance, have been developed. In terms of quantitative analysis of technical support, by and large, achievement is reported in the following areas:

- provision of technical assistance days,
- provision of technical assistance to cover the UNAIDS selected thematic areas,
- provision of technical assistance to all countries covered by the TSF,
- number and nature of clients,
- number and nature of funders,
- development of a consultant pool,
- provision of capacity development and
- staffing of the TSF.

In terms of qualitative assessment, various additional aspects are measured, namely: Is technical assistance provided in a ‘timely’ manner?, Is technical assistance ‘quality assured’?, What sort of costs are associated with it?, What are the problems and challenges?, What are the perceptions of stakeholders?, How are TSFs managed?, and How are the governance relationships managed?

Similarly, the semi-annual report of Grant Management Solutions (PEPFAR and USAID 2008) focuses on output indicators without any discussion of outcomes or impact^{vi}.

The assessment of ASAP (World Bank 2007) found that:

The assessment team found that ASAP had generally met the expectations set out in the draft ASAP Business Plan for 2006-07 in terms of the quantity and quality of work and adherence to agreed operating principles. It is on track to meet the quantitative goals for technical support, development of tools and capacity building, although the mix of technical support has been stronger than anticipated on broad strategic planning and less on action planning.

The overall quality of ASAP outputs has also been good, especially the peer reviews of draft strategic plans, instruments such as the Self-Assessment Tool and the planning effort for the capacity building program. It was not possible to assess the ASAP’s impact on the quality of strategic and action planning at this early stage.

The discussion concerning indicators relates to a larger discussion about strategy and norms for the provision of technical support and associated technical assistance, and the relative roles of TSFs, Joint Teams and UNAIDS. The debate reflects the great difficulties UNAIDS is currently facing in clarifying what 'Technical Support Plans' are supposed to be in the context of Joint Teams and Joint Programmes^{vii}.

In the final analysis, while input (and process) indicators may be beneficial for organizations providing technical support to measure their own performance; they have little to do with scaling up access to HIV (and TB) prevention, treatment, care and support services in countries; which must ultimately be the aim of any organization working in the HIV response.

What issues are not being addressed?

A number of unaddressed issues were identified in the reports. The TSF-SA review (2007) noted that:

While overall, TSF has reached the agreed target for provision of technical assistance, a number of internal and external factors affect its functioning. Some internal factors are covered under the institutional arrangements and management sections of this report. The TSF needs to address the issue of cost effectiveness and efficiencies - with support of UNAIDS. The current design of the TSF has not defined cost effectiveness. Ensuring ongoing, high volumes of assignments to make maximum use of fixed capacity is likely to be one key to being 'cost effective'. However, TSF has also had a 'multiplier' effect given that it has unlocked extra resources and resolved bottlenecks. Thus, a simplistic look at 'cost efficiency' will be misleading. To this end, key indicators will need to be developed, measured for TSF (with definitions) and bench marked with comparable figures in the market (through a study). UNAIDS should take the lead in defining 'cost effectiveness' and in reviewing the model against other market players.

Overview of challenges

As discussed below, Godwin and Misra (2008) raise the issue of the necessity for developing a framework for measuring the relevance of the TSFs, particularly in terms of impact, outcome and output results.

In terms of the Global Fund, the Global Fund Five-Year Evaluation Study Area 2 (Macro International Inc. 2008) states that:

At the country level, interactions with the Global Fund are very uneven and depend far too much on individual relations and the capabilities of individual GF portfolio managers. If the Global Fund is now to scale up its activities to the levels envisaged and required to achieve impact, it will be important to establish more integrated institutional approaches and more systematic institutional guidance across several key areas (e.g., technical assistance, health systems strengthening, performance-based funding, CCM requirements, and grant management and oversight responsibilities).

The lack of clarity and guidance is already impeding the implementation of programmes, and remedying this situation needs to be addressed urgently.

Ways forward and recommendations

In terms of addressing ways of measuring the effectiveness, efficiency and/or relevance of technical support, the reports provide a diverse range of options.

Godwin and Misra (2008) consolidated study of four external assessments of the TSFs recommended the explicit establishment of a series of norms about how TSFs should function with regard to developing country-support strategies, and the relative roles and responsibilities of TSFs, UCOs and the RST in this; about how capacity development strategies are commissioned, and the relative roles and responsibilities, and about how TSFs, as primarily providers of short term technical assistance (if that is their primary function) relate to the larger provision of technical support by Joint UN Teams.

Furthermore, the report recommends the development of some kind of results framework, developed according to UN and UNAIDS officially-laid down standard Results Based Management approach. Such a framework would enable the relevance (and other aspects) of the TSFs to be assessed properly, and accountability for the TSFs to be ensured. The framework should state:

- What impact results are the TSFs contributing towards;
- What outcome results are expected;
- What output results are expected?

Since a Results Based Management framework is officially held to be the UN standard, its development should be a priority at global, regional and TSF levels.

Godwin and Misra's (2008) also identified a number of possible outcome indicators covering a variety of areas for technical support:

- National M&E systems functioning effectively and generating regular, accurate reports.
- National Strategic Plan measuring highly on the RST Strategic Planning Assessment tool in place and guiding implementation of all partners.
- CSO implementing its programmes effectively and contributing clearly and comprehensively to the national response.
- CSO accounting systems audited and found to be effective.

Quality assurance is another area which was highlighted as having inadequate indicators for objective assessment (TSF-EA review. 2008). It might be useful for UNAIDS, either through its back-stopping support, or as an independent assignment, to commission the development of a professional quality assurance system which TSFs can adopt.

The assessment of ASAP (World Bank 2007) focuses on the programme's core issue of strategic planning, presenting a way forward which emphasizes the importance of technical assistance focusing on the prize of programme outcomes at the expense of other (lesser) indicators:

ASAP's experience can be built on to stimulate a culture of change within the UNAIDS Cosponsors and Secretariat and, through them, among key contributors to the international funding of HIV/AIDS, to demystify and promote

greater simplicity around strategic planning and program implementation, to place lighter requirements on countries for planning and managing their responses, and not allow a preoccupation with financial accountability in strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, however understandable, to overshadow what should be an even greater concern with, and emphasis on, program outcomes.

Furthermore, as strategic plans and action plans reviewed by ASAP and supported by ASAP funding are finalized and implemented, the UNAIDS Secretariat and ASAP Secretariat should commission an independent review of the impact and usefulness of ASAP interventions, to gauge the quality and usefulness of ASAP interventions.

Summary

- The effectiveness or relevance (i.e. output or impact indicators) of technical assistance is not being assessed; though the effectiveness of the *provision* (i.e. input and process indicators) of technical assistance is.
- There are difficulties in clarifying what ‘Technical Support Plans’ are supposed to be and who should be responsible for them to be in the context of Joint Teams and Joint Programmes.

Ways forward:

- The Global Fund working with the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors and other technical support providers and with the input of civil society should establish integrated institutional approaches and systematic institutional guidance across several key areas (e.g., technical assistance, health systems strengthening, performance-based funding, CCM requirements, and grant management and oversight responsibilities).
- Establish norms about:
 - how technical support providers should function with regard to developing country-support strategies, and the relative roles and responsibilities of stakeholders;
 - how capacity development strategies are commissioned, and the relative roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, and
 - how the broader array of short term technical support providers relate to the larger provision of technical support by Joint UN Teams.
- Develop outcome indicators for the provision of technical assistance in various areas, including M&E, strategic planning, civil society organizations programme implementation and capacity strengthening.
- Develop a professional quality assurance system for technical support providers.
- Develop a results-based framework, in line with a standard Results Based Management approach.

D. Joint activities by, and partnerships and synergies between technical support providers (at all levels)

Insights and trends

With the large and increasing number of technical support providers, creating partnerships and synergies between them is vital to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of technical support.

The UNAIDS report on technical support (UNAIDS 2008) pointed to the considerable similarity in the kinds of problems being encountered in providing technical support at the country level, noting that:

The UN generally, and UNAIDS specifically, lacks a coherent strategic framework for HIV-related TS. As a result, TS is sometimes distorted by organizational jousting, “empire-building” and turf rivalries. It is prone to duplication, inaccuracy, and wastefulness. And it fails to capitalize on the scale, diversity and supplementary potential of available resources. As a result, even the strengths of specialized agencies (such as WHO and UNICEF) are not adequately being deployed within the current TS arrangements in southern and East Africa, for example.

Over the past five years, UNAIDS has been party to several important initiatives around TS, many funded via the UBW, yet not integrated into a coherent whole. For the most part, they’re divorced from one another. At times they even operate in tension or competition – despite the fact that they are not intrinsically in conflict. They have not been assimilated into an operational strategy. Yet despite this lack of synergy, the initiatives have made valuable contributions to TS provision for HIV – an indication of the impact that could be achieved if the massive, bottled-up and unused potential can be harnessed.

In the context of Global Fund grants, there is ongoing confusion about the respective roles and mandates of Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs), national AIDS authorities, and UN theme groups in relation to identifying and addressing technical problems, and overseeing and assuming accountability for tackling them. At face value, CCMs would seem well-placed for such roles. However, they generally lack the technical expertise to play a meaningful oversight role throughout the lifespan of grants (Aidspan, 2008).

Similarly, the TERG report (Global Fund September 2008) noted that the fundamental issue identified in Study Area 2 of the Global Fund Five-Year Evaluation was the lack of a well-developed overall partnership strategy defining the roles and responsibilities of partners in identifying technical assistance needs and providing technical support.

Furthermore, the Global Fund Five-Year Evaluation Study Area 2 Report (Macro International Inc. 2008) found that:

Overall, the Global Fund is in urgent need of systemic and strategic arrangements to secure reliable, timely and high quality technical assistance. An effective and efficient system for technical support to Global Fund grants

does not yet exist. This is largely an extension of the problem of confused international divisions of labour, but is also the consequence of in-country confusion that is preventing the development of effective partnerships for technical support mobilization. Importantly, although in-country partners are well-positioned to identify TA needs and facilitate access to TA resources, in many cases they do not engage actively enough with grant implementation partners. Although the Global Fund can do much more to facilitate the engagement of development partners, many partners also need to clearly determine how they will support grant activities in support of achieving global public health goals.

Similar issues arise in relation to other areas of technical support. For example, one of the more frequent issues raised during interviews for the ASAP assessment was the relationship between the TSFs and ASAP (World Bank 2007). The report stated that “It is unclear how ASAP fits into the growing array of organizations providing technical support for HIV/AIDS planning and program implementation”; concluding that the specific role of ASAP in the growing field of technical assistance for HIV/AIDS strategic planning, especially its relationship to the UNAIDS TSFs has yet to be fully established.

Only one organization found that its technical support has found its niche. The GTZ qualitative study (2008)^{viii} found that the BACKUP Initiative is well connected and renowned. It states: “One advantage of the initiative is GTZ’s decentralized structure of country offices and programmes as well as its link to other German Development Cooperation organizations.

Examples of where there are or are not joint efforts in provision of technical support

Overall, there is limited data on partnerships and other synergetic relationships. The examples below of where there are operational partnerships, namely in the context of the MENA and West and Central Africa Regions, are not representative of all regions. The nature of the epidemic in these regions as well as the low skills base, particularly in West and Central Africa sub-region, make comparisons with other regions, particularly Southern and East Africa, impossible.

The ASAP assessment (World Bank 2007) noted that ASAP and the UNAIDS Regional Support Teams Middle East and North Africa Region (RST-MENA) have been developing a model of cooperation which offer promising ways for developing a more managed approach to demand and response. ASAP has provided a block grant of US\$ 500 000 to support the UNAIDS RST’s own strategic plan for “building capacity in national strategic planning in the Middle East and North Africa”^{ix}. The modus operandi emphasizes identification of needs for strategic planning and implementation at country level through a collaborative process facilitated by the UCC and/or with the Joint UN Team, with the demand for support relayed to the RST and discussed with ASAP. In this model, ASAP serves principally as a funding agent and partner with the country and regional team, but does not have a direct relationship with individual countries. The RST is responsible for managing the delivery of these services, including the selection of consultants, approval of terms of reference and oversight of the technical support work.

A second model has emerged from ASAP's collaboration with West and Central Africa's RST and countries of the region (World Bank 2007). There the UNAIDS RST has defined with the countries and through the UCCs and the UN Theme Groups the priority needs in strategic planning. A regional plan defining technical assistance requirements was subsequently drawn up which identifies demand and assists with timely mobilization of technical assistance resources both from within the region, including from the TSF, as well as from ASAP. The communication channel is, as in the MENA region, between the country, which communicates with the RST, which in turn contacts the ASAP as needed, facilitating a three-way interaction.

In other regions, the relationship between ASAP and the TSFs and other providers of technical support is still evolving. Given the continuing expansion of TSFs and other new technical assistance providers; the assessment team suggested that ASAP maps the array of strategic planning technical assistance providers so that their comparative roles inform the development of ASAPs's business plan (World Bank 2007).

Finally, it was found that the quick turnaround and financial focused support offered by GTZ mesh well with the short timelines and consultant-focused assistance that Grant Management Solutions (GMS) offers (PEPFAR and USAID 2008).

Overview of challenges

Harmonization and coordination at the global and regional levels are critical for enabling factors underpinning effective, efficient and relevant partnerships^x. The GTZ qualitative study (2008) outlined the following coordination and harmonization challenges:

- competition among technical support providers;
- the division among the Global Fund CCM, NAC and United Nations Teams in many countries;
- lack of ownership by countries; and
- competition for the lead agency position on technical issues/policies.

The UNAIDS draft report on technical support (UNAIDS September 2008) found that coordination among the various technical support mechanisms is not evident, and it is not clear that the comparative advantages of each are being fully exploited.

Furthermore, the basis on which UNAIDS and other stakeholders operate at the country level has been called into question. The UNAIDS draft report on technical support (UNAIDS September 2008) noted that:

Overall, the UNAIDS Secretariat has been weak on analyzing the terrain (political, institutional, political-economic, and social) on which HIV responses operate. As a consequence, its grasp of developmental change processes is sometimes unsteady – a weakness that encourages one-size-fits-all “solutions” and uniform entreaties^{xi}... UNAIDS is hardly alone in this respect. This weakness increasingly is also evident among some bilateral agencies, which appear to have morphed into development assistance administrators rather than development cooperation partners.

The UN Division of Labour for technical support itself provides a good basis for more focused technical support provision. The UNAIDS draft report on technical support

(UNAIDS September 2008) found that the division of labour has worked well in some instances, for example, in Kenya, where the Division of Labour is being interpreted a little more expansively to include consideration of whether the agencies are adequately resourced to provide the most effective technical support in their respective areas, and how those capacities can be strengthened. In other words, there is a move towards a sense of collective responsibility for ensuring that adequate resources and capacities are available for fulfilling various roles. However, at least one assessment (outside the purview of this review) ^{xii} has found that the Division of Labour is not always understood outside the UN system. And there are questions whether the Division of Labour is indeed altering practices and rationalizing the technical work of UN agencies.

In 2008, UNAIDS and the Global Fund agreed on a division of responsibilities to help improve the coordination and effectiveness of their respective efforts to boost HIV responses. This agreement tasks UNAIDS with helping countries to develop evidence-based funding proposals, to support the Global Fund's technical review process, and to provide countries with focused technical support to speed up implementation of programmes approved by the Global Fund.

The TSF's as providers of technical support have also posed a number of challenges. Firstly, the role of the TSFs as potential 'one-stop shops' in technical support provision is an issue which needs to be clarified. Secondly, Godwin and Misra (2008) consolidated review of four TSF evaluations made it clear that the TSFs have to manage relationships at two critical levels: regionally, with their 'peers', and at the country level.

- **At the regional level:** Beyond exhorting the TSFs to manage their relationships better, none of the reviews offered specific suggestions as to how this should be done ^{xiii}. Where the Inter-Agency Reference Group exists, this may well be the appropriate mechanism. Ensuring that both the needs and perspectives of UNAIDS, Cosponsors, and non-UN partners are accommodated, however, could be a challenge.
- **At the country level:** The TSFs' work on coordination, harmonization, partnerships, and effective responses needs to revolve around country-specific strategies.

The reviews also make clear, however, that who is the bearer of the primary responsibility for the development of these 'strategies' is very unclear. Some of the issues that need to be resolved are:

- Within each country what are the roles of the UCO and the TSF: who should take the lead in identifying technical support needs and areas of support required?
- How does this relate to Cosponsors and the Joint Team?
- What is the role of the RST in this?
- How do the RST and the TSF strategize for regional needs, based on identified priorities from UCOs – e.g. with regard to ASAP?

Godwin and Misra (2008) noted that the TSF-EA review made the most substantive comments on the relationships with the RST and UNAIDS Headquarters, drawing on comments from the earlier TSF-SA review, as follows:

The external review of the TSF-SA in May 2007 highlighted a number of areas where strategic direction from UNAIDS and the RST would be important to optimizing the appropriateness and results of the TSF's work over the next 2 years. These areas included:

- Review of the TSF role and its focus areas in the evolving TS environment;
- Optimizing effectiveness of the Technical Assistance Fund;
- Prioritizing and maximizing effectiveness of partnerships and “practice areas” with Cosponsors (UNDP; UNICEF etc.) and other initiatives (e.g. ASAP, National AIDS Spending Assessments (NASA), etc.);
- Strategies for CSO support and partnerships; and
- Prioritizing areas for TSF to enhance its services and efficiency.

Just how these strategic imperatives are to be managed between UNAIDS HQ and the RST are unclear. The current RST structure allocates a single staff person to ‘manage’ both TSFs (SE and EA). Yet the performance of the TSFs is a ‘key result’ in the RST’s strategic results framework for the coming three years. If the RST is to be held accountable for this ‘result’, the financial and management accountability mechanisms and frameworks for the TSFs between Geneva and Johannesburg need to be urgently clarified.

The Performance Review of the West and Central Africa TSF review noted the importance of the relationship between the RST and the TSF, and the need to clarify it:

The TSF and the RST should together plan the TSF’s annual capacity development work plan to ensure that the TSF’s capacity development program is in line with regional priorities and that their respective work plans are mutually supportive. The RST can help provide information and advice regarding opportunities for the TSF, and provide strategic directions for the capacity development program.

Not only are these inter-related roles at present unclear, a mechanism to discuss and determine them, and make them explicit, seems to be lacking. None of the reviews spelled out specifically how this clarification was to be achieved. The reviews also suggest that it is likely that, if the kind of management of relationships suggested above is to be successful, TSFs (and UNAIDS) will need to allocate additional resources to this part of their work.

The Performance Review of the West and Central Africa TSF also stated that the implications for the TSF of initiatives such as the Global Fund have not yet been determined, in terms of its structure, vision and activities

The ASAP assessment (World Bank 2007) underscored that the lack of clarity over the respective roles of ASAP and TSFs in particular - as well as other sources of technical support on HIV/AIDS, such as those under the purview of UN specialized agencies - remains a question for ASAP moving forward.

In relation to the BACKUP Initiative, the GTZ qualitative study (2008)^{xiv} found that “a disadvantage of the BACKUP Initiative is that due to its involvement in a broad range of thematic areas, it cannot properly direct its resources to topics and regions”.

Recommendations and ways forward

The UNAIDS report on technical support (UNAIDS 2008) suggested that what’s needed at *country level* is a strategy *and* framework for responding to priority (technical support) needs. This means mapping needs and demands, along with the available resources for addressing them, and developing a corresponding framework for action. And that model needs to emerge from country-specific analyses.

The UNAIDS report (2008) noted that:

UNAIDS’ starting point has been a technical support management process that is “country-owned and led by the national AIDS coordination authority, in close collaboration with various sectors and partners, including the UN, bilateral and multilateral agencies and civil society^{xv}”. It has isolated several steps in such a process:

- Identify gaps and obstacles that hinder implementation of the national response;
- Determine technical support needs based on (a) the capacities that are needed to tackle those hindrances, (b) available technical capacities, and consequently (c) the identification of technical capacity needs;
- Plan the technical support as part of the national strategic plan;
- Implement the technical support; and
- Monitor and evaluate the technical support.

The UNAIDS draft report on technical support (UNAIDS September 2008) discussed the necessity for a technical support strategy, noting that at:

... (A)t country level (it) needs to situate technical support needs and define technical support priorities within the context of a constantly evolving HIV response – and within the particular strengths and weaknesses that are at play within various programme areas, UN agencies, government and civil society structures, etc. These needs and priorities shift in line with changes in the response... It means regularly taking stock of developments in order to determine the next round of programmatic challenges.

This holds true for whatever planning process for technical support is employed i.e. from developing national technical support plans to undertaking technical support needs assessments as part of Global Fund proposals. In terms of achieving this, in the context of the multitude of donors, projects, processes and procedures that countries have to contend with, the UNAIDS draft report on technical support (UNAIDS September 2008) underlined that:

It is incumbent upon UNAIDS at country and regional levels, first of all, *not* to contribute to this jumble of demands and impositions. Secondly, it should urge and support countries to coordinate their respective stipulations, processes and dictates, and put them in line with recipient countries’ processes and calendar – guided by the recipient countries^{xvi}.

In terms of aligning country-level activities with nationally-owned and – decided HIV strategies, including in the area of technical support, the UNAIDS Report (2008) suggested a conservative approach to developing national technical support plans in line with national strategies by:

Selecting one or more high-priority, high-effectiveness national programmes (which form part of the national strategy), and then developing a technical support plan for those programmes. And resources would be dedicated toward regularly updating, re-assessing and, if necessary, adjusting those plans^{xvii}.

In relation to Global Fund operations, the Global Fund Five-Year Evaluation Report (Macro International Inc. 2008) stated that:

Recognizing that its success is critically dependent on effective and efficient partnerships, it is recommended that the Global Fund continues to seek a clarification of the roles and responsibilities of other entities at both global and country levels. This requires not only initiative and leadership from the Global Fund, but also willingness, commitment, and follow-through from the Global Fund's partner organizations. Specifically, partnerships need to be clarified with regard to strategy and operationalization, in six inter-related areas:

1. The Global Fund Board seek to open “governing body to governing body” discussions aimed at leading to direct negotiations of a Global Partnership Framework.
2. Development partners strengthen their bilateral engagements with the Global Fund.
3. The Global Fund continue to play a leadership role in supporting the engagement of Civil Society.
4. The Secretariat review the roles and functions of the CCMs.
5. The Global Fund significantly expand and strengthen its engagement with the Private Sector.
6. The Global Fund Secretariat review and enhance its Operational Guidelines, with the objective of contributing to a partnership strategy that supports the partnership framework initiative of the Board.

The first area mentioned raises an interesting and potentially useful synergy between the UNAIDS Division of Labour and that proposed by the Global Fund Five-Year Evaluation Report, namely:

- a. The need for a division of labour with clarity of roles and responsibilities that the different organizations will play with regard to all aspects of financing, technical assistance provision, coordination, monitoring and evaluation. The resulting agreements should serve as a guiding framework for and a catalyst to greater coherence, efficiency and effectiveness in country-level programming.

The UNAIDS Division of Labour is an obvious framework for analyzing technical support as it outlines the roles and responsibilities between and among the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors. This clarity could be utilized to both define roles and responsibilities for the provision of technical support, as well as to assist in, facilitate and support the development and implementation of the proposed Global Fund

Division of Labour, which could enable the creation of a supportive environment for the provision of effective and efficient technical support.

There were a number of other noteworthy recommendations proposed in the various reviews. In relation to the operation of TSFs, Godwin and Misra's (2008) consolidated review of four TSFs made a number of recommendations, namely that:

- At the regional level UNAIDS needs to get Inter-Agency Reference Groups established for all TSF.
- At country level, UNAIDS needs to work with the TSFs to elaborate and clarify a strategy for managing coordination, harmonization and partnerships.

The ASAP Assessment (World Bank September 2007) recommended that ASAP's role be defined more explicitly, recommending that it would be useful for UNAIDS Secretariat to sponsor a mapping exercise to clearly map the respective roles and value-added of ASAP, the TSFs and the emerging technical assistance programmes funded by bilateral agencies, not-for-profit organizations and foundations, and identify opportunities for harmonization among them, including in the area of strategic planning. The mapping should outline the respective roles, relationships and mechanisms for collaboration, in particular with TSFs.

The GTZ qualitative study (2008) recommended that the BACKUP Initiative should proactively market the Knowledge Hubs as a regional technical support capacity. However, the spirit of complementarities for the coexistence of Knowledge Hubs (WHO), TSFs (UNAIDS), Civil Society Action Teams (CSATs) and others should be kept in mind.

Summary

- The respective roles and mandates of CCMs, national AIDS authorities, and UN theme groups in relation to identifying and addressing technical problems, and overseeing and assuming accountability for tackling them is confused. The lack of an overarching strategic framework for country level technical support results in a lack of ownership by countries, competition between technical support providers, high transaction costs, and duplication of and ill-fitting technical support.
- The Global Fund lacks an overall partnership strategy defining the roles and responsibilities of technical support providers in identifying technical assistance needs and providing technical support.
- Presently, CCMs lack the technical expertise to play a meaningful grant oversight role.
- Harmonization and coordination of technical support at the global, regional and country levels are critical enabling factors for effective, efficient and relevant partnerships.
- There is limited data on partnerships and other synergetic relationships. Where examples do exist, they are either unrepresentative of the situations of

the most affected regions, or synergies have occurred more by accident than design.

- The role of the TSFs as potentially 'one-stop shops' in technical support provision and their relationship with other technical support providers are issues which needs to be clarified.

Ways forward:

- The Global Fund should continue to seek clarification on the roles and responsibilities of partners at the global, regional and country levels.
- Develop a country specific strategy and framework for responding to priority (technical support) needs, through means mapping needs and demands, along with the available resources for addressing them, and developing a corresponding framework for action.
- The UNAIDS Division of Labour to be utilized:
 - As the framework for providing technical support by the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors at the country level, and
 - To assist in, facilitate and support the development and implementation of the proposed Global Fund Division of Labour for the provision of country-level technical support.

E. The “Unfunded” mandate and how this impacts upon technical support providers

Insights and challenges

The Global Fund has created demands on a number of technical support providers to assist in the development of proposals as well as in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of grants. Some technical support providers view these demands as having created an “Unfunded” mandate.

In response to such concerns, the TERG Report on the Five-Year Evaluation of the Global Fund (Global Fund 2008) stated that:

The Study Area 2 report from the contractor recommended that, as a priority, the Global Fund Board should restate that it does not directly fund partners to provide technical assistance, and should specify more clearly how and when recipients of Global Fund grants can use funding to support technical assistance provided by partner organizations. The TERG believes that the principle that Global Fund monies are provided directly to country programs should not be diluted. The TERG recommends that the Board of the Global Fund should re-emphasize that it does not directly fund its partners to provide technical assistance and should reinforce its message that countries are encouraged to submit grant proposals with comprehensive budget allocations for technical support.

The TERG Report (Global Fund 2008) on the Five-Year Evaluation of the Global Fund underlined that a confounding factor in the provision of technical support for Global Fund grants is the persistent confusion as to whether or not financial support to the Global Fund precludes the need to provide additional funds to other organizations, such as WHO and UNAIDS, to provide technical assistance to Global Fund grants. This confusion becomes largely academic if the Global Fund stipulates that requests for technical assistance are considered to be a strength of any grant proposal, and that this position is jointly and actively promoted by the Global Fund and partners.

The ASAP Assessment (World Bank 2007) underlined that it is uncertain whether ASAP’s current level of effort is viable or sustainable in the medium-term, given that its current program budget (US\$1.5 million) is less than one fully operational TSF. The Assessment posed a number of questions about the future of the ASAP, namely:

- Should ASAP maintain its current level of work through and beyond its three year term?
- Alternatively should it scale up the effort, possibly through some form of cost-sharing with clients?
- Or should ASAP recognize it was created to fill a temporary gap, and as national capacity develops it can devolve or possibly dissolve at the end of its current term?

In terms of the future financing of ASAP (if in fact its mandate is to continue), this could and should be included as part of national requests for technical assistance, budgeted for in Global Fund proposals, as discussed above.

Recommendations and follow-up actions

The TERG Report (Global Fund 2008) outlines the principles on which the Global Fund was created and makes a number of recommendations on the future provision of and division of labour among Cosponsors in providing technical support:

The Global Fund was designed to empower countries and to overcome the extreme scarcity of resources necessary to implement essential programs. The TERG believes that it is desirable for development partners to realign their programs in such a way that they are supportive of this joint effort. The development of efficient partnership frameworks at all levels is critical and should follow this common vision. In support of this common vision, countries and development partners need to tailor their technical assistance programs to support country needs. Development partners should re-examine the extent to which their existing resources and budgets can be targeted to more efficiently support countries in their implementation of Global Fund programs. The TERG considers that providing technical support to countries in HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria is part of the core functions of partners such as WHO, UNAIDS, Stop TB, and RBM.

The Five-Year Evaluation of the Global Fund Study Area 2 (Macro International Inc. 2008) recommended that the Board of the Global Fund clarify, as a matter of highest priority, that it does not, at this time, directly fund its partners to provide technical assistance; and reinforce that partners may be financed to provide technical support to grants through the budgets allocated to technical support in the grants themselves.

The TERG Report (Global Fund 2008) on the Five-Year Evaluation of the Global Fund disagreed with the Five-Year Evaluation Report on how technical support at the country level should be organized, stating that:

Coordination and management of technical support is a country responsibility and the TERG does not agree with the recommendation in the Study Area 2 report that there be a focal organization in each country to coordinate technical support. The TERG encourages the Global Fund and partners to reassure countries that requests for technical assistance are considered a strength in any grant proposal.

Rather, the TERG recommended that the Global Fund should maintain the essential principle that Global Fund monies be provided to fund country programs. As such, the TERG recommends:

- The Board of the Global Fund should re-emphasize that it does not directly fund its partners to provide technical assistance, and should reinforce its message that countries are encouraged to submit grant proposals with comprehensive budget allocations for technical support.
- In keeping with this, the Technical Review Panel (TRP) should review the adequacy of technical assistance plans, including the development of such capacities at the country level.
- Development partners should re-examine the extent to which their existing resources and budgets can be targeted to more efficiently support Global

Fund programs. This may be part of the “governing body to governing body” discussions leading to a Global Partnership Framework, including a coherent fundraising strategy.

In keeping with the approach of the last bullet, the external review of UNFPA’s Country and Sub-Regional Support to National Responses to HIV/AIDS (UNFPA 2008) recommended that:

- UNFPA adopt budgetary measures to enable it to sustain its current strategy to enhance country and sub-regional offices’ HIV capacity;
- the agency complement those measures with an accountability framework and with human resource policies, including for training and capacity building, that can contribute to an enabling and supportive environment;

and, importantly, given that the quality and scope of UNFPA’s contribution cannot be dissociated from a coherent and robust joint UN effort, the team also recommended that:

- UNFPA together with UNAIDS give consideration to inter-agency training and capacity building programmes re the UN system and HIV prevention ;
- by the same token, there be a broader inter-agency reflection on and revisiting of the allocation and strategic use of so-called UBW resources in general.

The Global Fund Partner Consultation Meeting (Global Fund September 2008) recommended that the Global Fund and Partners “address the unfunded mandate at political level with donors, particularly in light of rising demand for TA as volume of funding rounds increases.”

Furthermore, in relation to Global Fund operations, the Global Fund Partner Consultation Meeting recommended that the Global Fund:

- Convene consultations with partners to concretely define the extent of the respective unfunded mandate.
- Make technical assistance a mandatory component of grant proposals to overcome reservations on the part of countries to request technical assistance funding.
- Increase resources for CCM capacity development to enable CCMs to perform technical assistance coordination function.

Ultimately, National Technical Support Plans could provide a guiding framework for a more structured and predictable technical support process, including providing clarity on responsibility for funding technical support for Global Fund grants. However, such plans should not be stand-alone; but rather integrated into operational planning, which in itself will require investment in capacity building.

Summary

- There is confusion as to whether or not financial support to the Global Fund precludes the need to provide additional funds to other organizations to provide technical assistance to Global Fund grants.

Ways forward:

- The Board of the Global Fund should re-emphasize that:
 - it does not directly fund its partners to provide technical assistance,
 - countries' requests for technical assistance are considered a strength in any grant proposal, and
 - countries are encouraged to submit grant proposals with comprehensive budget allocations for technical support.
- As part of their core functions, technical support partners should realign their programmes, including their technical assistance programmes, so that they are supportive of Global Fund assistance to empower countries to overcome the scarcity of resources necessary to implement essential HIV-, TB- and malaria-related programmes.
- Technical support partners and the Global Fund should undertake “governing body to governing body” discussions leading to a Global Partnership Framework (i.e. a division of labour for coordinated and harmonized provision of technical support) to be implemented at the country-level
- Assess the utility of increased resource allocation for CCM's capacity development to enable them to undertake a technical assistance coordination function.

Conclusion

The reviews and evaluations assessed are disparate in their design and focus. Some such as the external review of *UNFPA's Country and Sub-Regional Support to National Responses to HIV/AIDS* (UNFPA 2008) focus on the operations of one technical support provider, while others such *What UNAIDS Can Do to Make Technical Support Work Better and Smarter for HIV Responses* (UNAIDS 2008) take an extremely broad view of the current technical support landscape. The problem of such divergence is that a coherent analysis is extremely difficult to undertake. It would be useful for future reviews and evaluations by GIST members and other technical support providers, if a unified set of questions and methodologies could be developed. In part, the existing reviews and those yet to be completed are a missed opportunity to provide baseline data against which future efforts to provide coordinated and harmonized technical support provision can be measured.

Outlined below are a series of actionable items which, based on the various technical support provision reviews and evaluations, potentially provide stepping stones to assist in the operationalization of a more a harmonized and coordinated framework for providing effective, efficient and responsive technical support to countries, based on country identified needs.

Short-term versus long-term technical support, and the operational priorities of various technical service providers

Efforts to assist countries in strengthening their long-term programmatic capacities have yet to be undertaken in line with the coordinated and harmonized framework envisaged by the UNAIDS Division of Labour and the GTT Recommendations. To date, many technical support providers have focused on short-term needs both through necessity (i.e. responding to immediate country concerns) and in part because these are easier to fulfil.

As part of efforts to harmonize and coordinate technical support, serious reflection, discussion and negotiation is required by and among technical support providers to develop a coherent strategy for long-term capacity development at the country level, including how (and by whom) both long- and short-term technical support is provided. A number of recommendations have emerged, including the need to:

- Undertake a substantive study of the role of both short and long term technical assistance.
- Undertake a substantive study of what is the best location for a substantive capacity development programme.
- Create a culture among all stakeholders of dialogue about technical assistance needs at the country level as well as seeking and using or providing technical assistance.
- Adopt a longer-term (5-10 year) perspective for the delivery of technical support, particularly for human resources capacity building, based on a country owned plan or strategy.

- Consider requests for technical assistance to be a strength (or possibly a requirement) of Global Fund grant proposals.

The choice of indicators for measuring technical assistance

Currently, technical support is being provided with minimal provision for effective monitoring and evaluation. A number of studies highlighted that technical support providers should develop, negotiate and agree outcome indicators for the provision of technical assistance, including for M&E, strategic planning, civil society organization implementation and capacity strengthening. Other essential steps identified include:

- The Global Fund working with the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors and other technical support providers and with the input of civil society to establish integrated institutional approaches and systematic institutional guidance across several key areas (e.g., technical assistance, health systems strengthening, performance-based funding, CCM requirements, and grant management and oversight responsibilities).
- Technical support providers negotiating and establishing norms on:
 - how technical support providers should function with regard to developing country support strategies, and the relative roles and responsibilities of stakeholders;
 - how capacity development strategies are commissioned, and the relative roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, and
 - how the broader array of short term technical support providers relate to the larger provision of technical support by Joint UN Teams.
- Creating an effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation framework, through:
 - Developing a professional quality assurance system for technical support providers, and
 - Institutionalizing a results-based framework, in line with a standard Results Based Management approach.

Partnerships, joint activities and synergies of technical support providers at all levels

The UNAIDS Division of Labour and the architecture of the Global Fund are based on harmonized and coordinated efforts, including for technical support to countries. The reviews illustrate that the operationalization of the existing framework is lacking at all levels. Where partnerships do exist, they are the result of accident rather than design or negotiation. As such, there are a number of actions, which need to be undertaken, namely:

- The Global Fund continuing to seek clarification on the roles and responsibilities of partners at the global, regional and country levels.
- Develop a country specific strategy and framework for responding to priority (technical support) needs, through means mapping needs and demands, along with the available resources for addressing them, and developing a corresponding framework for action.
- The UNAIDS Division of Labour to be utilized i.e. operationalized:

- As the framework for providing technical support by the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors at the country level, and
- To assist in, facilitate and support the coordinated development and implementation of the proposed Global Fund Division of Labour for the provision of country-level technical support.

The “Unfunded” mandate and how this impacts upon technical support providers

The TERG Report (2008) underscores the resistance to the proposal for establishing a focal organization in each country to coordinate technical support for Global Fund proposals. As such, it is unlikely that in the foreseeable future the Global Fund will establish or support the establishment of such a mechanism at the country level, which means there will not be a Global Fund-based funding stream to support providers of technical support. In order to clarify this situation, the Board of the Global Fund should re-emphasize that:

- it does not directly fund its partners to provide technical assistance;
- countries’ requests for technical assistance are considered a strength in any grant proposal; and
- countries are encouraged to submit grant proposals with comprehensive budget allocations for technical support.

Firstly, in response to such clarification, it is imperative for technical support providers to be creative in how they manage and fund their contribution to the Global Fund’s efforts to scale up interventions to support universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. An obvious first step is for technical support providers to encourage and support countries to submit grant proposals with comprehensive budget allocations for technical support.

Secondly, technical support providers, as part of their core functions, could (and should seriously consider) realigning their programmes, including their technical assistance programmes, so that they are supportive of Global Fund efforts to empower countries to scale up and implement effective and efficient HIV prevention, treatment, care and support programmes.

Finally, the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors and the Global Fund should undertake “governing body to governing body” discussions to effectively operationalize the Divisions of Labour, given the operational realities of each country, ensuring that these support country identified priorities based on the country’s epidemiological data.

Annex 1: Evaluations and studies of technical support to AIDS programme implementation.

Aidspan

Aidspan Whitepaper, April 2008. Providing Improved Technical support to enhance the Effectiveness of Global Fund Grants.

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Michel Caraël, Tom Philip and Susan O’Leary (17–28 September 2007). External Assessment Technical Support Facility for South East Asia and the Pacific.

Report of the External Review of the Technical Support Facility in Eastern Africa (13-25 April 2008).

HLSP (June 2008). UNAIDS Technical Support Facilities Supporting Global Fund Implementation: Good News Case Studies.

Peter Godwin and Sujaya Misra (June 2008). Lessons learned from four external assessments of the TSFs: a consolidation. Draft Report.

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UNAIDS (13 October 2008). What UNAIDS Can Do to Make Technical Support Work Better and Smarter for HIV Responses. Draft 1. Hein Marais, Johannesburg, South Africa.

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UNAIDS, The World Bank and UNDP (2005). Mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in Sectors and Programmes An Implementation Guide for National Responses.

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WHO

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Annex 2: Methodologies, Interview Questions and Interviewees from various technical support evaluations and reviews

Global Fund

1. Global Fund (20 June 2007). Global Fund Five-Year Evaluation Study Areas 1 And 2 Inception Report Summary.

Initial Hypotheses—Technical Assistance

- Delivery of TA to countries remains unequal between the three diseases, between countries, and phases of the proposal and grant cycle.
- The requirements of the Global Fund business model have limited the attention and priority it gave to assuring the timely availability of qualified technical assistance; and consequently affected the quality and effectiveness of GF funded activities.
- The effectiveness of TA delivery by the partnership system can be improved notably through: (i) The strength of global partnerships associated with each of the three diseases; (ii) Increasing disbursement of TA budgets allocated through Global Fund grants.
- When TA systems are in place to ensure the timely availability of qualified technical assistance for Global Fund programs, gains in local capacity building can be demonstrated.

SA2 Study Questions

- From the perspective of stakeholders, what systems and procedures are in place for providing predictable and timely managerial and technical support to countries? What have been the strengths and weaknesses of these systems in providing support to grantees? What have been the impediments to the use of technical assistance?
- What have been the quality, availability, and cost of technical assistance?
- What role has the Global Fund played vis-à-vis its technical partners to enable the provision of needed technical assistance?
- To what extent have partners at the international level acted to facilitate grant performance through their country-based staff and other resources?

Note that Module 5 of the Country Partnership Assessment Tool will look at:

- (1) the roles and responsibilities of different partners in identifying and mobilizing technical assistance,
- (2) whether current technical assistance systems are meeting grant implementation needs,
- (3) how technical assistance systems are functioning,
- (4) the quality of technical assistance, and
- (5) whether technical assistance is contributing to local capacity.

2. Macro International Inc. (25 June 2008). Study Area 2: Final Report: Executive Summary.

Study Area 2 - effectiveness of the Global Fund partnership environment - sought to address two overarching questions:

1. How effective and efficient is the Global Fund's partnership system in supporting HIV, TB, and Malaria programs at the country and global level?
2. What are the wider effects of the Global Fund partnership on country systems?

With regards Technical Assistance, Study Area 2 questions covered:

Do you agree with the recommendations?

Who should act on the recommendations (the Global Fund, in-country implementers, partner organizations)?

Do you see the need for more TA? If so, in which areas?

Do you have sufficient access to TA? If not, why not?

What can YOU do to overcome the barriers to effective TA?

Other questions:

- To what extent should the availability of TA be incorporated into the grant negotiation process?
- Are there country fiscal and hiring policies that affect TA budget disbursement (including internationally sourced TA)?
- What are the design and communication incentives that will encourage PRs to spend TA budgets in an effective, demand-driven manner over the course of the grant life cycle?

What further, perhaps more focused and actionable, recommendations do you propose?

GTZ

1. BACKUP Initiative (May 2008). Support to partner countries to utilise global financing mechanisms in the health sector. Phase: January 2007 to December 2008. Project progress review.

The review mainly focused on assisting GTZ and its partners in defining the project's general orientation for the new phase 2009 – 2012. The methodology of the review involved:

- Review of documentation: reports, data collected under results-based monitoring, website etc.
- Interviews with key stakeholders at the defined levels
- Country missions: interviews with cooperation partners, GTZ office staff and technical staff, interviews with other selected stakeholders.

Interviewees included GTZ secondees, GIST members as well as staff from WHO HQ Geneva, UNAIDS Secretariat Geneva, ILO HQ Geneva, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Secretariat Geneva, and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ). See *Annex 4*:

Instruments used in the Project Progress Review (PPR) pages 46-53 for questions asked.

2. GTZ (July 2008). Technical support mechanisms for Global Fund processes. A qualitative study.

The study focused on the technical support providers' perspective and examined six categories: 'Thematic areas and expertise', 'Regional focus and scope of coverage', 'Modes of technical support provision', 'Technical support gaps and challenges', 'Harmonisation and coordination at global and regional levels' and 'Vision'.

Data was collected through a desk study and key informant interviews. The technical support mechanisms and 27 stakeholders were selected and categorised according to: type of provider (UN organizations, bilateral agencies, regional institutions, international NGOs and business coalitions) and level of intervention (global and regional)^{xviii}.

The analysis of technical support gaps and challenges focused on the following questions:

- What are the major technical support gaps?
- Which areas overlap?
- What are the modes of technical support provision?
- What are the challenges?
- How do technical support providers harmonise and coordinate technical support at global and regional levels?

GAVI

GAVI Alliance (2008). Strengthening technical support. A report prepared by McKinsey and Company.

The objective of this project was to develop three or four ways to strengthen existing options for technical support. The GAVI Secretariat requested insights into three distinct pieces:

1. An overview of the existing technical support landscape in health development; including best practices in procurement and provision.
2. An understanding of country-level needs for a strengthened technical support model within immunisation and health system strengthening programmes.
3. Three to four recommended options for strengthened technical support models for the GAVI Alliance Board to consider in late October 2008. These models to include the procurement process, funding flows, options for providers, and organisational and cost implications for the GAVI Alliance.

Methodology and Process

- Over 20 reports and reviews on technical support
- Sent survey to ~450 stakeholders (Received 139 responses, 67% from in-country stakeholders)
- Profiled 7 existing technical support models
- Profiled 24 technical support providers, both international and local
- Interviewed 211 stakeholders, including 145 in-country
- 5 country visits (Kenya, Cote D'Ivoire, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Vietnam) and 16 country desk reviews

- Attended WPRO Technical Advisory Group on immunisation and VPD in Manila and WHO/UNICEF regional HSS Focal Points meeting in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt

The survey outlined in *Increasing choice and strengthening the quality of technical support available to countries to draft, implement and monitor GAVI proposals: Surveying country needs* is centred around four key questions:

- What are the requirements for technical support?
- How are those requirements met today?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current solutions?
- What are early opinions of suggested new models?

Technical Support Facilities

1. Peter Godwin and Sujaya Misra (June 2008). Lessons learned from four external assessments of the TSFs: a consolidation. Draft Report.

The Technical Support Facilities in Southern Africa, West and Central Africa, Eastern Africa and Southeast Asia and the Pacific were externally reviewed in 2007-08.

The purpose of the consolidation report was to review the TSF external reviews, management reviews and TSF progress reports and extract lessons learned regarding:

- **Effectiveness:** how well TSF is performing in achieving its mission of providing quality assured technical support to country partners; how effective the TSF has been in scaling up capacities of country partners in managing Technical Support; and effectiveness of the TSF in strengthening regional capacities of providers of technical support.
- **Efficiency:** how well TSF is using its resources to achieve its mission and review the management systems established for quality assurance of technical support to country partners.
- **Relevance:** how well TSF's mission, design and structure continue to serve the purpose of the stakeholders.

Exploring these three areas was the objective of all four regional TSF reviews.

UNAIDS also wished to explore:

- What assumptions is the TSF model based on?
- How well does the current TSF model respond to current needs for technical support in countries?
- How have the TSFs performed, how is this measured, and how could it be measured differently?
- Different management models of TSFs – what are the opportunities and challenges of the different models?
- Governance of the TSFs: the role of UNAIDS RST and HQ?
- TSFs' relationships to relevant partners at regional and country level, including UCCs and UNAIDS cosponsors
- What is the identity of the TSFs – UNAIDS or host institutions? What should it be?
- What is the potential and what are the opportunities for TSFs to continue their work beyond 5 years of UNAIDS core funding

The report did not cover all aspects of the TSFs' operations rather focusing on a few key areas which emerged from all the reviews:

1. what the TSF model really is and how it works; issues about trying to measure how the TSFs have performed, and
2. the range of partnerships and relationships TSF have to manage and operate within.

2. UNAIDS Technical Support Facility Southern Africa External Review. 1-14 May 2007 Final Report.

The methodology of the review involved:

1. In-depths interviews with UNAIDS RST-ESA director, key staff members, consortium members and staff of the TSF Southern Africa;
2. A specific questionnaire was filled out by 8 of the 10 UCCs in the region covered by the TSF Southern Africa and followed up by in-depth interviews of three of them;
3. Around 20 clients of the TSF-SA, including NACs, Ministries of Health, NGOs, bi-laterals and UNAIDS Co sponsors were interviewed;
4. Four consultants filled out a questionnaire and four were interviewed by phone or in person;
5. In country visits to South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia provided an opportunity to meet and assess key stakeholder perceptions on the utility and value of TSF-SA services.

The content of the questions used in the interviews and survey are contained in:

- *Annex 1: Selected indicators of TSF effectiveness, efficiency and relevance* at 41-45.
- *Annex 2: Professional development of consultants (Questionnaire)* at 44-45

3. Performance Review of the Technical Support Facility in West and Central Africa.

The methodology used was qualitative, consisting of three data collection methods, namely: direct or telephone interviews; face-to-face filling of questionnaires or by telephone or internet; and a literature review. The results were cross-checked to enhance the validity of the data.

A series of interviews were conducted with the Director of the Regional Support Team (RST), the Director of the Bureau d'appui en Santé publique 96 (BASP) and the Advisory Group of the International Public Health Cooperation Centre (GC-CCISD), the TSF Coordinator and team. In-depth interviews were conducted directly with five UNAIDS Country Programme Officers (CPOs) also called UNAIDS Country Coordinators (UCCs). A questionnaire was administered to 12 of the 17 CPOs. Interviews were conducted with 15 clients of the TSF, including NACCs, NGOs and the United Nations. 14 consultants responded to the questionnaire, while 6 consultants were interviewed by a member of the team during the country visits to Burkina, Ghana and Togo. The full list of interviewees is contained in *Annex 4 List of persons interviewed and met* at 42 of the report.

More than 30 reports were consulted and analyzed, including 4 half-yearly progress reports, the capacity building plan, the marketing strategy, the mission reports of UNAIDS focal points, and the audits conducted.

4. Report of the External Review of the Technical Support Facility in Eastern Africa (13-25 April 2008).

The methodology of the review involved:

- Conducting a desk review of relevant reports and documents, including the AMREF Proposal and UNAIDS/AMREF Contract documents, Strategy papers and Plans, TSF Workplans, TSF 6-monthly reports, reports of Governance Meetings, the report of the Management Review, and other data and records within AMREF, TSF, RST, etc.
- Conducting meetings and interviews with the key stakeholders including the RST Director, Focal Point and staff in Johannesburg, the TSF Southern Africa, several days of in-depth interviews with TSF staff and AMREF management including the Director General/CEO in Nairobi, five consultants used by the TSF, four UCOs and two co-sponsors (UNICEF, WFP), six clients (3 NACs, 3 CSOs, AMREF KCO), partners & stakeholders (CDC-GAP, HLSP, Constella-Futures, DFID, PEPFAR, GTZ, the Dutch Embassy;

In addition to the primary objectives of measuring the TSF's effectiveness, efficiency and relevance; the RST ESA indicated a number of areas of particular interest as the manager of the TSF contract, including:

- A clear assessment of how far the TFS was meeting UNAIDS' strategic objectives;
- A better understanding of how far UNAIDS Co-sponsors were using the TSF;
- An assessment of the relationship between TAF-supported TA and fee-paid TA and how the TSF and clients see this;
- Some attempt to draw on the earlier TSF evaluations to see what could be used to inform this evaluation;
- A better understanding of how the far the relationships between Geneva (UNAIDS HQ), the RST and the TSFs need clarification, and do or do not support the effective achievement of UNAIDS' strategic objectives.

5. Michel Caraël, Tom Philip and Susan O'Leary (17 – 28 September 2007). External Assessment Technical Support Facility for South East Asia and the Pacific.

The review used different types of methods to collect information:

- In-depths interviews with UNAIDS RST-AP director and key staff members, with IPPF Director, and Director and staff of the TSF SEAP.
- A specific questionnaire was filled out by 10 of the 10 UNAIDS Country Coordinators (UCCs) in the region and followed up by in-depth interviews of five of them: Fiji and Pacific region, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam and Cambodia (see questionnaire in annex).
- Around 25 clients and potential clients of the TSF, including NACs, Ministries of Health, NGOs, bi-laterals and UNAIDS Co-sponsors were interviewed.
- Eleven consultants were interviewed by phone or in person.
- In country visits to Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Cambodia allow assessment of key stakeholder perceptions on the utility and value of TSF-SA services.

By using various methods of data collection, and by triangulating the results, the team was able to test the consistency of the information collected which gave them more confidence in the results. The full list of interviewees is contained in Annex 7.3 at 44-45.

UNAIDS

R Garcia, B Carasso, January 2008. Demand for Technical Support – A five-country qualitative test survey.

A five country review of Burkina Faso, Indonesia, Peru, Rwanda and Zambia was undertaken to provide an inventory of the types of technical support that are currently being requested at national country level including an analysis of the main challenges faced to obtain responsive and high-quality technical support .

A selected number of key partners (4 to 5 per country) were identified through purposeful sampling, and consisted of the people responsible for managing and scaling up the National AIDS Program, and who were at the same time the major players to commission and purchase technical support for HIV/AIDS. All key informants were member of the CCM in the country, and two of the NGO/civil society were Principal Recipients as well (Peru and Zambia). Prior to interviewing country partners, a set of meetings were conducted with Global Fund key departments including OPCS, M&E, PSM and Operations (relevant Cluster leaders and Fund portfolio managers) to gather their perspective on technical support in the respective countries.

A framework for mapping the demand for technical support at country-level covering the following four areas was developed. The specific questions asked are also provided:

1. Process, timing and procurement of technical support
 - What initiates a request for technical support?
 - What process was followed to procure the technical support?
2. Areas for technical support
 - What are the main areas and particular issues for which your organization has requested technical support during the past years?
 - What are the main areas for which your organization actually received technical support during this period?
3. Review and application of outcomes
 - How is quality of technical support provision ensured and measured?
 - What happens when the technical support is finished?
4. Integration, coordination, harmonization
 - In your opinion, are there mechanisms in place to relate the technical support request to wider AIDS and development activities?
 - Please give main recommendations to ensure an optimal coordination and harmonization the kind of technical support you receive in your country.

UNFPA

UNFPA (October 2008). UNFPA's Country and Sub-Regional Support to National Responses to HIV/AIDS: An External Review.

In January 2008, UNFPA's Deputy Executive Director (Programme) recommended that there be a rigorous and thorough external review of progress to date to identify lessons learned and to make recommendations on how to further develop and strengthen UNFPA's work at country and sub-regional levels on HIV prevention and linkages with sexual and reproductive health (SRH).

The external review's purpose was to inform UNFPA's ongoing reflection on strengthening its contribution to and support for national HIV prevention efforts. The objective was to review UNFPA's strategy for the use of UBW 2006-07 funds and to appraise there from how it has contributed and is contributing to the overall HIV prevention effort in countries, focusing on the broad strategies behind their utilization and, in particular, on the impact that the recruitment and deployment of dedicated HIV personnel has had on UNFPA's contribution. Importantly, too, it is to determine to what extent this contribution is an integral part of a joint UN effort. On the basis of this appraisal, and specifically on the experience and lessons from the application of the strategy in diverse settings, suggestions and recommendations for strengthening UNFPA's contribution to national HIV prevention efforts in general were provided.

The review process comprised the following:

- A desk review of relevant policy and programme documents (July and August 2008)
- A desk review of a recent evaluation of UNFPA's contribution to HIV Prevention in Botswana, Ethiopia, Swaziland and South Africa (conducted end 2007)
- Country visits for semi-structured face-to-face interviews or conversations with key informants coupled with observations in a purposeful sample of countries in Africa, Asia, Eastern and Central Europe, as well as in sub-Regional Offices for Southern Africa, West Africa, SE Asia, and in New York (July-September 2008)
- Telephone interviews and e-mail exchanges with key informants for the Latin America and Caribbean Region and for Eastern Europe and the Arab States (August-September 2008)
- A synthesis meeting in Geneva where the team took the opportunity of the presence of UNFPA's HIV Branch Chief to clarify policy and programme issues (September 2008).

The list of interviewees is provided in *Annex 3: Individuals interviewed* at 28-31.

The review centered on how UNPFA is contributing to:

- Providing leadership
- Gathering evidence /strategic information
- Facilitating policy dialogue and development
- Mobilizing financial and technical resources
- Enabling partnerships

Annex 3: Defining Technical Support: Short-Term (technical support) and Long-Term (capacity building)^{xix}

Technical support can be provided in a number of different ways:

- as an adjunct to financial assistance;
- as a discrete project with a clear focus on capacity development, including technical assistance personnel, training and equipment;
- stand-alone, such as bursaries for overseas training, or the deployment of individual technical assistance without an accompanying budget or project;
- as long-term residential technical assistance;
- as the short-term technical inputs provided by consultants;
- as volunteers fielded by various development partners.

There are also different **roles** for technical support:

- Short-term technical assistance to provide discrete technical inputs; such inputs do not necessarily contribute to capacity development;
- Long-term technical assistance personnel acting as ‘advisors’ with a brief to impart knowledge and skills to counterparts, to accompany change processes and to develop systems and procedures;
- Long-term technical assistance with a more “hands-on” role, bolstering the implementation capacity of the host organisation by focusing on task accomplishment but in the process doing less advising or coaching;
- Performing a management and control function; usually where technical assistance is linked to a project;
- Other roles such as research, advocacy, networking or the brokering of relationships between different actors and stakeholders.

There is also the **level** at which technical support is provided:

- national or field;
- at HQs or within specific organizational/institutional units;
- within particular sub-sectors, cross-cutting, or at overall policy/strategy level;
- clinical or managerial, etc.

ⁱ The GIST comprises UNAIDS, Global Fund, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, the World Bank, WHO, GTZ, PEPFAR, International AIDS Alliance, Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development, International Council of AIDS Service Organizations, and the International Centre for Technical Cooperation.

ⁱⁱ It would be useful for future reviews and evaluations by GIST members and other technical support providers, if a unified set of questions and methodologies could be developed in order to provide baseline data against which efforts to provide technical support provision can be measured.

ⁱⁱⁱ GAVI Alliance (21 October 2008). GAVI Strengthening Technical Support. Presentation for The Global Fund Technical Seminar.

^{iv} For example, the consultant who facilitated the CCM reform workshops in Chad has now taken a country post for the Principal Recipient and continues to oversee the action plan he helped to develop, at the same time also planning an evaluation to ensure that workshop recommendations are being followed up.

^v Macro International Inc. (25 June 2008). Study Area 2: Final Report. Executive Summary.

At the country level, development and technical partners should mobilize to identify and enable a focal organization or mechanism to coordinate and manage technical support. This process should be supported by inputs from:

- a. The Global Fund Secretariat, in active collaboration with partners, to identify the steps and arrangements that are required to assist countries in assigning the responsibility for TA

mobilization and monitoring to a focal organization. It will be important to depart from a one-size-fits-all approach to country-level TA focal points. This evaluation found viable alternatives to the CCM that should be considered as focal points for TA, including country offices of technical partners and PRs of multiple grants.

^{vi} A. Improving the Effectiveness of Civil Society Organizations

All GMS interventions contribute to improving the effectiveness of CSOs either through strengthening civil society participation in the CCM, through greater transparency and participation in proposal development, or through procurement and supply management, or M&E strengthening of civil society partners in Global Fund projects.

^{vii} See the recent review by the RST 'Lessons Learned in Establishing Joint UN Teams with One Programme of Support on AIDS'

^{viii} Author: Dr. Julia Katzan. Sonderinitiative Mainstreaming AIDS in der deutsche Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (EZ).

^{ix} The RST strategic plan builds it's past and ongoing work and was the outcome of a participatory process with countries of the Region which vetted the Plan in a regional meeting at the beginning of 2007. The Plan foresees "ASAP" services, namely development of tools to guide the strategic planning process that are tailored to the specificities of the countries of the region; capacity building in the application of the tools; and technical support on demand. The operating principles are also the same as ASAP's--demand-driven, flexible, timely.

^x The GTZ qualitative study (2008) underscored that:

- At the country level, coordination and harmonization is done by the UN country coordinator, the CCM and others.
- At regional level, providers mentioned regional meetings with the Global Fund and the so-called RIST (regional implementation support team) meetings as coordination and harmonization mechanisms.
- At global level, GIST and the Rollback Malaria partnership were identified as coordination and harmonization mechanisms.

There are many other ways to improve coordination like participating in Global Fund board meetings, providing policy advice and running knowledge hubs.

^{xi} A good example would be the sustained mantra regarding the need for national AIDS commissions, despite ample evidence of their dysfunctionality in many places, which is a chronic source of consternation within UNAIDS at country level.

^{xii} Attawell K & Dickinson C (2007). An independent assessment of progress on the implementation of the Global Task Team recommendations in support of national AIDS responses. May. HLSP. Available at http://data.unaids.org/pub/ExternalDocument/2007/hlsp_gtt_assessment_item4_3_en.pdf

^{xiii} For example:

- The Performance Review of the West and Central Africa recommended that regional synergies should be sought between the new mechanisms for funding HIV control programmes, technical assistance and the development of activities to avoid duplications and splitting of activities. Furthermore, with the other regional partners, such as the Global Fund, define the countries and priority areas to accelerate the implantation of programmes and facilitate universal access. Finally, that the RST, including all relevant regional advisers, should assume a more strategic role in supporting the capacity development program, e.g. the TSF and the RST together planning the TSF's annual capacity development work plan.
- The External Assessment of the TSF-SEAP recommended that the TSF-SEAP with other key partners, such as World Bank, Global Fund, PEPFA and the Asian Development Bank, prepare future activities, identify priority countries and vulnerable groups for harmonization and intensification of technical support towards Universal Access.

^{xiv} Author:Dr. Julia Katzan. Sonderinitiative Mainstreaming AIDS in der deutsche Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (EZ).

^{xv} UNAIDS (2007). Guidance note on intensifying technical support to countries. December. Geneva at 11-12.

^{xvi} Meanwhile, efforts to achieve harmonization have been complicated also by the proliferation of NGOs and CBOs in recent years, partly a consequence of health sector decentralization and of the influx of HIV funding. The uneven capacities of these organizations and the variable quality of their projects and programmes have added them to the ranks of TS consumers. It has also made an integrated and coherent process even more difficult to achieve (GTT Working Group, 2006).

^{xvii} Further noting that a variant of this approach might be to focus on Global Fund-financed programmes.

^{xviii} Regional Technical Support Providers (N=10)

Multilateral and multi-country mechanisms: WHO Regional Offices EURO and EMRO and inter-country team West Africa; Regional HIV Knowledge Hubs AFRO and EURO and SEAMEO Tropmed; and UNAIDS Technical Support Facilities East Africa, South-East Asia and the Americas.

Thematic temporary partnerships: TA Hubs for Global Fund Round 8 proposal development on SRH/HIV linkages: Friends of the Global Fund Africa.

Private sector: Global Business Coalition Africa.

Global Technical Support Providers (N=16)

Global / Multilateral: GIST members (Chair, Vice chair, GIST secretariat) and WHO member.

Multilateral: WHO Headquarters and UNAIDS Headquarters.

Thematic partnerships: Stop TB Team, Rollback Malaria Partnership, and AIDS Strategy and Action Plan (ASAP), World Bank.

Bilateral organizations: Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAG) and BACKUP Initiative (GTZ).

International NGOs: International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Malaria Consortium, Civil Society Action Teams (CSAT), Open Society International (OSI) and International HIV/AIDS Alliance.

^{xix} Developing Health Sector Capacity in Cambodia; The Contribution of Technical Cooperation: Patterns, Challenges and Lessons, FINAL REPORT, May 2008, Anthony M. Land - an independent study commissioned by the Cambodian Rehabilitation and Development Board of the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CRDB/CDC) on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia and in collaboration with the Joint Technical Working Group (TWG) on Partnership and Harmonisation and TWG for Health.