CS4ME

CIVIL SOCIETY FOR MALARIA ELIMINATION

Strengthening CSO Understanding of Global Fund Mechanisms

Ivory Coast

The Platform of Networks and Umbrella Organizations Fighting AIDS and Other Pandemics

Context and Needs:

This thematic area addresses the observation that Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) still lacked sufficient knowledge of the Global Fund and its mechanisms, despite the importance of their role in governance bodies such as the CCM. While CSOs frequently hear about the CCM, their understanding of the Global Fund's processes, funding mechanisms, and participation remained limited.

The development of the CS4ME Global Fund Guide titled "What I Need to Know as a Global Fund-Active CSO," along with an appendix titled "My Connection to the Global Fund," thus emerged as an essential initiative and one widely appreciated by civil society—to address these gaps in understanding how the Global Fund operates. To strengthen the capacity of malaria CSOs in Côte d'Ivoire, a five-hour training session was held on April 29, 2025, with the participation of 23 representatives from 13 Ivorian civil society organizations and their partners in Abidjan. This training enabled CSOs to better understand the mechanisms of the Global Fund, particularly their role in the development of HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis grants and the importance of community participation. Prior to this training, the majority of CSO representatives had **limited knowledge** of how the Global Fund operates and its information channels. At the conclusion of the training, the post-test revealed a **significant improvement in knowledge**. Participants demonstrated a better understanding of the Global Fund. This progress is reflected in the average score, which rose from **9.14/20 (low level) before the training to 14.14/20 (good level) after the training**. In the field, the communities visited were also made aware of the Global Fund's strategies and mechanisms in Côte d'Ivoire through the guide.

Desired Change:

This training activity, based on the CS4ME Global Fund guide, aims to sustainably strengthen CSOs' capacity regarding Global Fund mechanisms, particularly within the CCM and throughout the HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria grant cycle. It will foster a better understanding of Global Fund mechanisms, an essential prerequisite for structured and effective engagement in the response to HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis. The expected outcome is that CSOs will strengthen their understanding of Global Fund mechanisms and improve their collaboration with the CCM and partners, enabling them to contribute effectively to the monitoring, development, and transparent implementation of grants for the benefit of communities. This capacity-building is crucial for improving the impact of interventions and the quality of services for key populations.

Your approach:

Given the low level of knowledge among CSOs regarding Global Fund mechanisms, the CSO CS4ME umbrella network platform adopted a phased approach combining capacity building for 13 CSOs, personalized support, and the strengthening of community advocacy. The CSOs first received in-depth training on the Global Fund's CS4ME guide, which they particularly appreciated for its clarity and relevance. This initial capacity-building aimed to improve their understanding of how the Global Fund operates, their role within the CCM, and their role in the implementation and monitoring of grants.

Following this training, a coaching mission was conducted directly with the 13 CSOs to facilitate the internalization of the content and its adaptation to the operational context of each organization. The CESI Project also played a central role by providing a comprehensive training guide on the Global Fund's mechanisms and strategies in print format with an appendix tailored to the context of Côte d'Ivoire, enabling CSOs to better understand the requirements of the grant cycle and strengthen their capacity for community-based monitoring.

This approach has led to several major advances:

- Adaptation to the local context, notably through the development of this appendix titled "My Connection with the Global Fund," ensuring greater relevance of the tools for the country.
- A deeper understanding of Global Fund mechanisms, enabling CSOs to effectively support the development of GC8 grants and identify priority activities.

The establishment of a structured collaboration framework between CSOs and their representatives on the CCM, fostering more strategic participation and enhanced coordination in advocacy.

Changes to date:

The implementation of the CE SI project in Côte d'Ivoire has already contributed to significant progress in strengthening the capacity of CSOs and their representatives on the CCM. The training provided has fostered a better understanding of the Global Fund's strategies and mechanisms, thereby enhancing the competence and confidence of community actors. Thanks to the CS4ME-specific training guide developed as part of the project, CSOs now have a practical tool that helps them better understand how the Global Fund operates and encourages a more structured and stronger engagement by civil society. They use the guide to raise awareness among vulnerable populations at risk of malaria (pregnant women).

These gains will enable civil society representatives to better understand their role within the CCM, interact more effectively during technical discussions, and influence decisions in favor of community well-being. CSOs' improved understanding of Global Fund mechanisms will have a direct positive impact on the quality of implementation of health projects supported by HIV, Malaria, and Tuberculosis grants.

Ultimately, this change will help strengthen community participation, improve the monitoring of interventions, and ensure that the needs of beneficiary populations are better taken into account in governance processes.

Key Lessons and Messages:

This experience has highlighted several key lessons for civil society and partners involved in implementing the CE SI project. Above all, it demonstrates that a well-trained civil society engages more actively and effectively in programs to combat HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis. Capacity building helped improve understanding of the CCM's missions, operations, and governance mechanisms, thereby facilitating more structured and meaningful CSO participation in consultation and decision-making forums.

Among the factors contributing to the success of this initiative are the commitment and motivation of community actors to strengthen their role in Global Fund governance, as well as the availability of educational tools adapted to the local context. These elements have helped build CSO confidence, improve the quality of their advocacy efforts, and foster greater ownership of community monitoring mechanisms.

However, certain challenges were observed, notably the complexity of Global Fund mechanisms, constraints on stakeholders' availability, and the ongoing need for technical support. These difficulties underscore the importance of maintaining regular support and continuing efforts to clarify and simplify the tools. Ultimately, this experience confirms that better-informed and better-equipped CSOs play a decisive role in improving the effectiveness and accountability of health interventions.

Next steps:

For the next steps, efforts will focus on consolidating achievements and sustainably strengthening civil society's participation in Global Fund mechanisms. Plans are in place to intensify collaboration between CSOs and their representatives on the CCM through the establishment and operationalization of a regular and structured consultation framework. This mechanism will aim to improve the flow of information, strengthen the coordination of advocacy efforts, and foster collective and proactive civil society engagement in decision-making processes.

Furthermore, civil society will be fully involved in the development of concept notes for HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis grants to ensure that community priorities are better taken into account from the very outset of intervention design. This early involvement will help strengthen the relevance, ownership, and effectiveness of the programs.

Finally, adjustments are being considered, including the provision of ongoing technical support and the mobilization of additional resources to support the organization of meetings, consultation workshops, and community monitoring activities. These measures will help ensure the project's achievements are sustained and will strengthen the role of civil society in the governance and monitoring of Global Fund grants in the long term.