

Global Fund announces first new grants under new model

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JOHANNESBURG, 28 February 2013 (PlusNews) - After spending more than a year reviewing and reforming its grant process, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is back in business, announcing the first handful of countries slated to receive up to US\$1.9 billion in available funding over the next two years.

The Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar and Zimbabwe are among the six countries set to receive funding under the Global Fund's new model, the Fund announced on 28 February.

With up to nearly two billion dollars available between now and 2014, El Salvador, Kazakhstan and the Philippines, as well as three regional programmes, will also receive new funding, including access to an incentive funding pool aimed at fostering ambitious, high-impact and co-funded interventions.

According to the Fund, countries were selected for financing this year based, in part, on whether they would face an interruption of services without new funding and whether they were currently being underfunded based on levels set by the new model.

The new model, part of the many reforms, has introduced a system in which countries are grouped into bands based on a calculation of financial need and disease burden.

Test driving the new model

In awarding the new funding, the Global Fund board also chose geographically diverse countries as well as non-traditional applicants. It is looking to use these new grants as a learning opportunity, according to the new executive director, Mark Dybul.

"The new funding model gives us a special chance to learn and adapt," he said in a statement.

"During this year, we will monitor various aspects of the new funding model process so that we can adapt in real time. We are a learning institution, and we will gain insight and knowledge as we work together."

Historically, the Fund has only accepted applications from country coordinating mechanisms (CCMs), or the bodies in charge of national Global Fund processes. The Fund has now chosen to fund civil

society proposals as well, including those by the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network, a group that deals with the underserved needs of injecting drug users.

According to Global Fund board documents, the Fund will be paying particular attention to how the new model improves services for underserved, most-at-risk populations like injecting drug users.

An additional 50 countries, including Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia, will receive money via renewals and the extension of existing grants, or grant reprogramming, to free up already committed funding.

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