

November 3, 2015

Dear President Jim Yong Kim,

Dear Members of the GFF Investors Group,

We, members of the Advocacy and Accountability Working group of the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition and civil society partners, call on the World Bank Group (WBG) to ensure that the GFF ensures rights-based and impactful investments in sexual and reproductive health in the country implementation plans and subsequent service delivery. While we appreciate the ambition of the GFF to increase funding for sexual and reproductive health within RMNCH efforts and advance the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's, and Adolescents' Health, we have concerns about the commitment to CSO involvement in the GFF particularly at the country level, and the mechanisms in place to ensure that donors and recipient governments are investing GFF funds in a fashion consistent with the principles and goals of the Global Strategy.¹

In order to ensure accountability and transparency of financing at the global level, **we urge the GFF to put in place transparent systems for monitoring funding for every area of RMNCAH, and in particular on sexual and reproductive health supplies given the well documented history of neglect of SRH in development strategies.** This will ensure that the share of funding for sexual and reproductive health can be independently tracked and monitored over time. This would require that the WBG enhance reporting systems for countries receiving GFF funding, measure baseline levels of investment to monitor progress, as well as disaggregated data to monitor funding by thematic area.

At the global level, we welcome the opportunity to have two CSO representatives on the Investors Group, and applaud the GFF Secretariat for inviting CSOs and a UNFPA representative on the Business Planning Team. As we believe that CSO contributions were critical for developing the evidence-based comprehensive plan which would be responsive to the needs of the intended beneficiaries, we suggest to have additional seats for CSOs observers on the GFF Investors Group. We look forward to continued deliberate engagement between the GFF and CSOs at the global level, especially with the WBG staff working on the GFF.

At the country level, the CSO experience with GFF consultations has been uneven and less productive than called for in the Business Plan. There are tremendous opportunities to formalize the role of CSOs within GFF Country Platforms to make them more inclusive, meaningful and effective. As the second wave of GFF countries become operational, we recommend that the WBG formalize civil society engagement (including in planning, implementation and evaluation at the national level) and ensures this is consistent and meaningful. **We urge the WBG to use its role to strengthen the minimum standards for Country Platforms.**

¹ http://globalstrategy.everywomaneverchild.org/pdf/EWEC_globalstrategyreport_200915_FINAL_WEB.pdf

Specifically, we call on the WBG to ensure that Country Platforms: (1) Are organised in a way that enables them to exercise an independent accountability and quality assurance function as well as an implementation role; (2) Are deliberate about meaningfully engaging CSOs inside and outside of the Country Platform, including through requiring Stakeholder Engagement Plans and CSO observers; (3) Are fully transparent regarding their governance and by ensuring the public availability of documents and data on the performance of GFF investments; and (4) Have access to a global review and grievance mechanism, if the minimum standards are not met. These measures would strengthen Country Platforms and bring them in line with the principles of transparency, accountability, and participation advocated in the GFF Business Plan, Global Strategy 2.0 and the Bank’s own Safeguards.

As manager of the GFF Trust Fund, the WBG is well positioned to ensure that the GFF prioritizes the establishment of robust mechanisms for tracking financial flows for RMNCAH investments, including in sexual and reproductive health supplies, and enhances the meaningful participation of CSOs in the design, implementation and accountability of country-specific Investment Cases.

We appreciate your commitment to sexual and reproductive health and strengthening civil society engagement, and would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters further.

SIGN-ONS





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