

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.everywomaneverychild.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





Club Initié pour la Lutte contre le SIDA



AAISC / AMSCO



December 3, 2015

Dear Partners of the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition,

Thank you very much for your November 3, 2015, letter to World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim and the members of the GFF Investors Group, regarding the Global Financing Facility and the importance of rights-based investments in sexual and reproductive health being part of the country investment cases and service delivery. We would like to respond on their behalf to the important points you have raised.

We appreciate your recognition of our commitment to ensuring that the GFF is the key mechanism for scaling up financing for the implementation of the UN Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's, Children's, and Adolescents' Health. Please be assured that we greatly value CSO involvement in the GFF and the current representatives of civil society on the Investors Group are actively engaged and provide a strong voice for civil society issues in our discussions. In order to be functional, the membership of the Investors Group has been set at the current balance with a total of 23 members. The composition and length of appointment of Investors Group Members will be reviewed by the members after its initial year of operation in order to refine the model so additional CSO representation can be considered at that stage.

While the representation of civil society in the Investors Group is important, the main locus of activity for the GFF is at the country level. You rightly point out that it is CSO involvement in the country platform which is essential to ensure meaningful engagement in the planning, prioritization, implementation and evaluation of the programs. Discussions on how exactly to organize and constitute the country platforms are ongoing and this will be a key agenda item at the next Investors Group in February 2016. The GFF principle of country ownership is significant in this regard; wherever possible the GFF is trying not to create new entities, new requirements or centralized hurdles that will impede rapid progress in country. We will need to be thoughtful about how we balance this principle with the equally important principle of equity, and ensuring that we reach the most underserved and vulnerable with RMNCAH services. Robust discussions with all stakeholders on prioritization and 'best buys' at country level will be needed to ensure we really are investing in the most impactful interventions. The recent CSO consultation meeting in Nairobi and the subsequent CSO participation in the GFF learning event has been a good opportunity to discuss these issues and integrate the recommendations in the design process of the first round of GFF countries.

One of the main deliverables of the GFF is indeed, the tracking of financial flows to RMNCAH and the broader investments in health at the country level. The GFF emphasis on data and data monitoring, civil

registration and vital statistics (CRVS) and other mechanisms to strengthen data collection and analysis will be crucial to its success. We are also completely committed to transparency and are working on a new website which we intend will become the repository of all information related to GFF investment in country. Exactly what will be tracked, with what frequency, and what mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure this data is available, will be part of the discussion at the next Investors Group meeting and will be a regular agenda item for that Group.

Again, thank you for your letter. We will continue to strive to improve our communications with stakeholders and ensure that important elements of the GFF model are properly explained, transparently shared and responsive to stakeholder concerns. We encourage you to engage with the civil society representatives on the Investors Group, Joanne Carter, Executive Director of Results (carter@results.org), and Dr Mesfin Teklu Tessema, VP, World Vision (mesfin_teklu@wvi.org) with your recommendations and proposals. In the GFF Secretariat, we would suggest you contact Ms. Dianne Stewart (dstewart4@worldbank.org) should you have any additional questions.

We continue to be committed to sexual and reproductive health and rights which must be addressed for us to make progress on RMNCAH, including addressing the challenges in meeting the needs of adolescents and the gaps in reproductive health commodity supply. With your support we hope to make a difference.

With best regards,



Diane Jacovella
Chair, Investors Group
Global Financing Facility



Tim Evans
Senior Director
Health, Nutrition & Population Global Practice
The World Bank Group

Cc:

Ms. Joanne Carter
Executive Director, Results

Dr. Mesfin Teklu Tessema
Vice President (Partnership Leader)
Health and Nutrition
World Vision International