

CIVIL SOCIETY ALERT

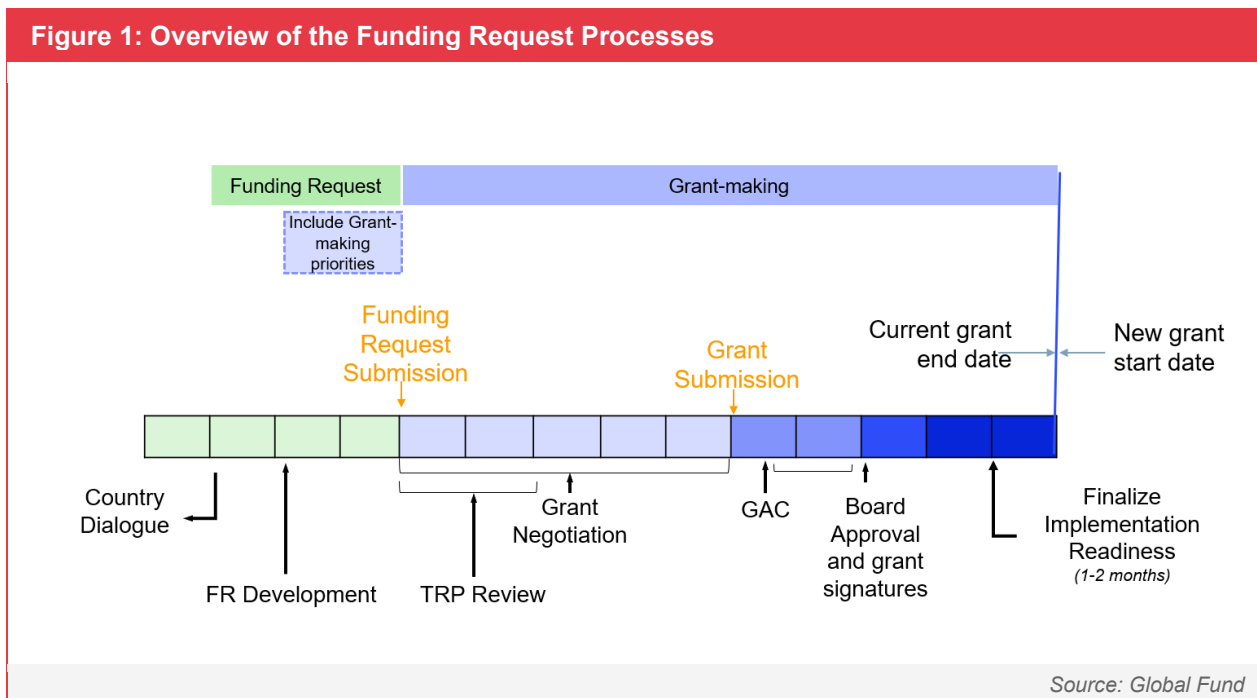
Planning for HIV Prevention: Quick Step Guide to Global Fund's Grant Cycle 8 Engagement

Background

The shrinking fiscal space in Low-and-Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) and a rising debt burden threaten to deprioritize health and the gains made in the HIV, TB and Malaria response. Recently, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria informed countries of significant funding cuts for the upcoming Grant Cycle 8 (2027–2030) and issued individual country allocation letters with provisional budgets showing how much each country is likely to receive and some guidance for the specific countries.

Communities must leverage the Global Fund's to demand that national governments realistically within the proven capacities match international grants with transparent, domestic investments while recognizing the limited fiscal space for domestic resources for health. The GC8 also presents yet another game-changing opportunity: scaling prevention innovations, particularly integrating the bi-annual long-acting injectable Lenacapavir with existing PrEP and PEP options.

This toolkit offers useful tips to help you navigate Grant Cycle 8, including shaping the National Strategic Plans (NSPs) that must be updated before the Grant writing process, and secure funding for HIV prevention and other priorities in your community. Below is an overview of the process and the toolkit will take you through each core step. Often CSOs stop at the funding request submission, as shown in the green shaded bars in the figure below, yet the engagement process should go all the way to grant approval.



Country Allocation Letters

On March 13 2026, the Global Fund Secretariat in Geneva issued country allocation letters reflecting an overall total funding reduction of about 30% compared to previous cycles, necessitating increased domestic co-financing. The letters indicate which components will lose funding, with many expected to end by December 31, 2030. Following the letter, applicants must develop a funding request package aligned with the [GC8 Investment Guidance](#) published in late 2025/early 2026.

Please ensure you check with your Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM reps) if you have not yet seen it. The guidance on accessing your country application pathway and allocation letters can be accessed [here](#), please be sure to check it and see which pathway your country is submitting under.

What to note in the allocation letter?

- A recommendation on how the allocated funds could be divided among each eligible disease.
- Specific co-financing requirements to access the full allocation amount.
- Recommended application approach to use for each eligible disease.
- Some countries may also receive Matching Funds which are additional funds used to increase the impact of specific strategic priority areas. These funds complement the allocation funding and may have additional requirements on how they can be accessed and used. Matching Funds are designed to incentivize the use of country domestic finance allocations for strategic priorities in line with the Global Fund and partner disease strategies.

Specifically look out for and influence how the Matching Funds could be used for the following potential areas such as those recommended by the WHO as; Prevention Innovation coverage- CHOICE options offered (TDF-based Oral PrEP, DVR and or CAB-LA, lenacapavir, condoms, MMC, Lubricants, PEP, Screening of STIs, Viral hepatitis, SRH services offered, counselling and mental health support, including community models of care for HIV prevention.

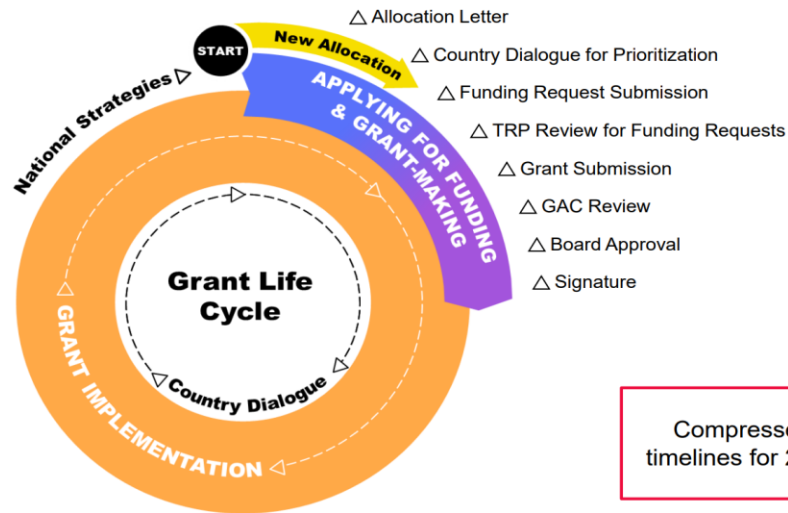
Grant Cycle Timelines, Submission and Review Windows

Most eligible countries will submit their applications in the following three submission and review windows, and further dates for submission windows in 2027 will be shared. Please confirm with your CCM when your country submits its proposal.

Figure 2: Application Submission Deadlines and TRP Meetings

	Funding Request Submission	TRP Review
Window 1	8th June	July 2026
Window 2	27th July	September 2026
Window 3	5th October	November 2026

Figure 3: The Global Fund Grant Cycle, 2026 Compressed Timelines

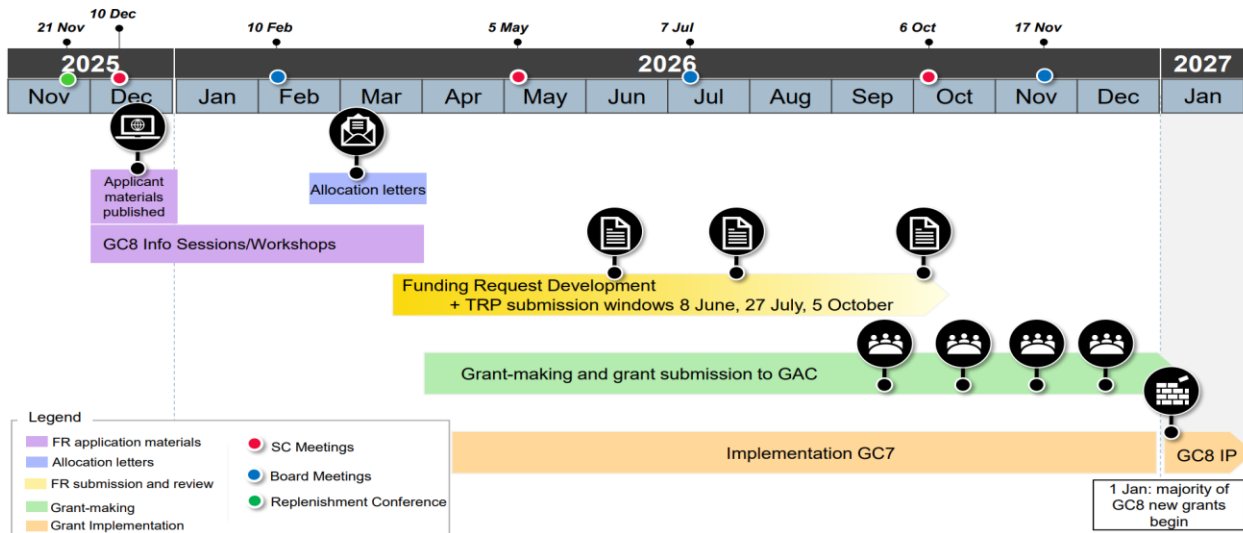


THE GLOBAL FUND

Source: Global Fund: https://resources.theglobalfund.org/media/jy1pqtef/cr_2025-12-15-applying-for-funding-gc8-kickoff_presentation_en.pdf

Figure 4: Grant Cycle 8 Timelines- 2026

Grant Cycle 8 Timeline: 2026

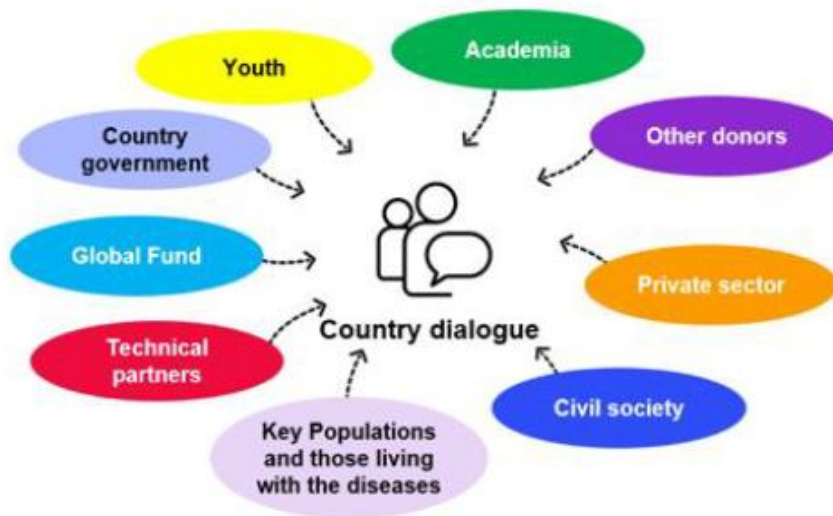


Source: This is the general timeline and submission windows.

Country Dialogues

After receiving the allocation letters, the CCM will share a country dialogue roadmap with key dates and expectations. During this phase, CCMs will lead inclusive dialogues with stakeholders, including government, civil society, and affected communities, to decide how to use the funds. In parallel, ensure that you also develop a CSO prevention roadmap that addresses your activities for each key date, your engagement in the process, and your contributions to discussions on prevention priorities.

Figure 5: Who Participates in the Country Dialogues



Source: https://resources.theglobalfund.org/media/jy1pgtef/cr_2025-12-15-applying-for-funding-gc8-kickoff_presentation_en.pdf

During the country dialogue phase, the CCM Secretariat initiates the process by communicating the specific allocations for HIV, TB, and malaria. This sets the stage for a transparent and inclusive Funding Request development process.

Countries should collaboratively discuss and confirm the program split while conducting a documented and transparent Principal Recipient (PR) selection process. Civil society and community partners must actively engage in identifying programmatic gaps and prioritization needs. Their participation should directly influence Funding Request forms and annexes to ensure robust, community-led HIV prevention interventions are included.

Many countries already have CSO networks leading prevention advocacy efforts. Consider how to collaborate with these partners and engage with the CCM community and other CSOs around the prevention agenda and roadmap. If you are unsure how to engage, consult your CCM representatives regarding CSO participation in the GC8 process and related engagement plans.

a. Develop a Communication Plan

A communication plan should be developed to engage CSOs working on prevention. This includes identifying a lead coordinator, establishing feedback mechanisms, and clarifying roles and responsibilities.

Consider:

- Who communicates with whom.
- How feedback will be collected and shared.

- Preferred communication channels such as email or WhatsApp groups.

It is essential to involve key populations and those with intersecting vulnerabilities, including transgender individuals, MSMs, youth, and AGYWs. Collective coordination around the prevention agenda will strengthen advocacy efforts.

b. Analyze CLM Data

Analyze your CLM data in the past year on more on prevention, what are the issues and trends that consistently came up. Organize Community Consultations on Prevention. In addition, conduct a simple situation analysis of the Grant Cycle 7 Funding Request focusing on prevention as well as the Program Implementation data of the GC7. You will also need to find the national routine monitoring data on prevention in the past year or two or more. What are the main recurring prevention gaps and challenges?

Seek technical assistance from various TA Partners through CRG Regional Platforms and reach out for support. Analyze key annual reports like UNAIDS (see if they have any new data on prevention for you context and also refer to the PEPFAR withdrawal Impact data e.g. see here as analyzed by AMFAR [PEPFAR Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Database](#)). Engage in community discussions to identify gaps and consolidate priorities for national dialogues.

c. Develop an Advocacy Strategy

Develop an advocacy strategy with clear SMART goals and specific objectives, targets and tactics on how you will get those prevention priorities in the NSP and Funding request. You really must be clear about what you are pushing for and be consistent throughout the process. Prevention priorities in the NSP and Funding request. You really must be clear about what you are pushing for and be consistent throughout the process.

d. NSP Engagement

Actively participate in the development and review of NSPs. Advocate for ambitious prevention-related targets and priorities and engage in performance reviews to identify successes and gaps. Encourage stakeholders to establish ambitious targets and develop a high-investment scenario regardless of resource limitations. Targets should not be constrained by current financing levels or commodity availability.

If ambitious targets are included in NSPs, even if they are not fully funded, the remaining gaps can be included in the Global Fund Unfunded Quality Demand Register. This register serves as a reference point for future investments if additional resources become available. Funding can then be directed toward interventions and investments already agreed upon as priorities.

If your country is already in Window 1, ensure that you have contributed to these processes, as NSP priorities will directly shape GC8 targets.

Organize consultations with KP networks, youth groups, and AGYW networks to develop and advocate for the inclusion of core prevention priorities and targets during NSP updates and reviews.

Your NSP should provide a comprehensive overview of the country's status, key program data, gaps, challenges, and resource requirements. Understand what government and other stakeholders consider priorities for HIV prevention. Pay attention to overlooked issues, differing stakeholder positions, and the reasons behind their exclusion.

e. Develop Prevention Priorities for the Funding Request

Based on your situation analysis and consultations outcomes, you should start drafting the Prevention priorities for the Funding Request. In addition to drafting these, ensure that you also coordinate and communicate your priorities to the rest of the CSOs and Communities. Continue to prioritize and review this document many times until submission with the funding request and ensure to share it with the rest of the Communities and CSOs that are coordinating the process at the country level as well as your CCM representatives.

Ensure that you also engage and participate in the priorities that will be included in the Communities and CSOs Priorities Annex – see here <https://resources.theglobalfund.org/en/grant-life-cycle/applying-for-funding/funding-request-documents/> and scroll down to the Community Priorities Annex to download the form. Please ensure that Communities and CSOs fill this themselves and not the government on your behalf. This is required to be submitted with the funding request. You want to have a draft of this document as early as possible so that your

engagements and participation in many of the dialogues and meetings are coordinated, consistent and based on these priorities.

Indicative Module

HIV: Combination Prevention Package for FSWs, Transgender People, PWID, MSMs, and Their Partners in High HIV Incidence Settings

Example Ask

Expand combination prevention interventions, including PrEP, condoms, lubricants, Lenacapavir, PEP, and related services, for female sex workers, transgender people, people who inject drugs, MSMs, and their partners in high HIV incidence settings.

Supporting Data

Include all available supporting evidence:

- National data.
- Program data.
- CLM findings.
- Community narratives and lived experiences.

Proposed Expansion

In GC8, prioritize expansion of key prevention interventions from current New Funding Model 3 coverage levels to proposed targets for specific key populations.

Potential Indicators

- Number or percentage of individuals accessing PrEP, PEP, lubricants, and condoms.
- Number or percentage increase of KVPs receiving any PrEP product during the reporting period.
- Number or percentage of sex workers reached through HIV prevention programmes.

Suggested Interventions

- Community- and key population-led awareness and demand creation initiatives for combination prevention and PrEP.
- Community-led linkage and psychosocial support for individuals at high risk requiring PrEP services.
- Differentiated and demedicalized PrEP service delivery models combining facility- and community-based services.
- Simplified PrEP refill systems for AGYWs, key populations, and serodiscordant couples.
- Integration of HIV prevention services and the full PrEP menu within family planning, antenatal, postnatal, STI, and key population services.
- Development of clinical and operational guidelines for new PrEP products.
- Registration support for new PrEP products.
- Human rights sensitization and training for law enforcement and healthcare providers.
- Creation of safe spaces for AGYWs and key populations to access information and services.

Once your priorities are finalized, actively engage in country dialogues and seek representation on the Funding Request Writing Team. Select strong representatives who can effectively advocate for prevention priorities.

Engage strategic partners including UNAIDS, the CCM, Writing Teams, consultants, National AIDS Commissions, HIV departments, WHO, and other stakeholders. Ensure they understand and support the prevention priorities being advocated for.

Funding Request Development and Review

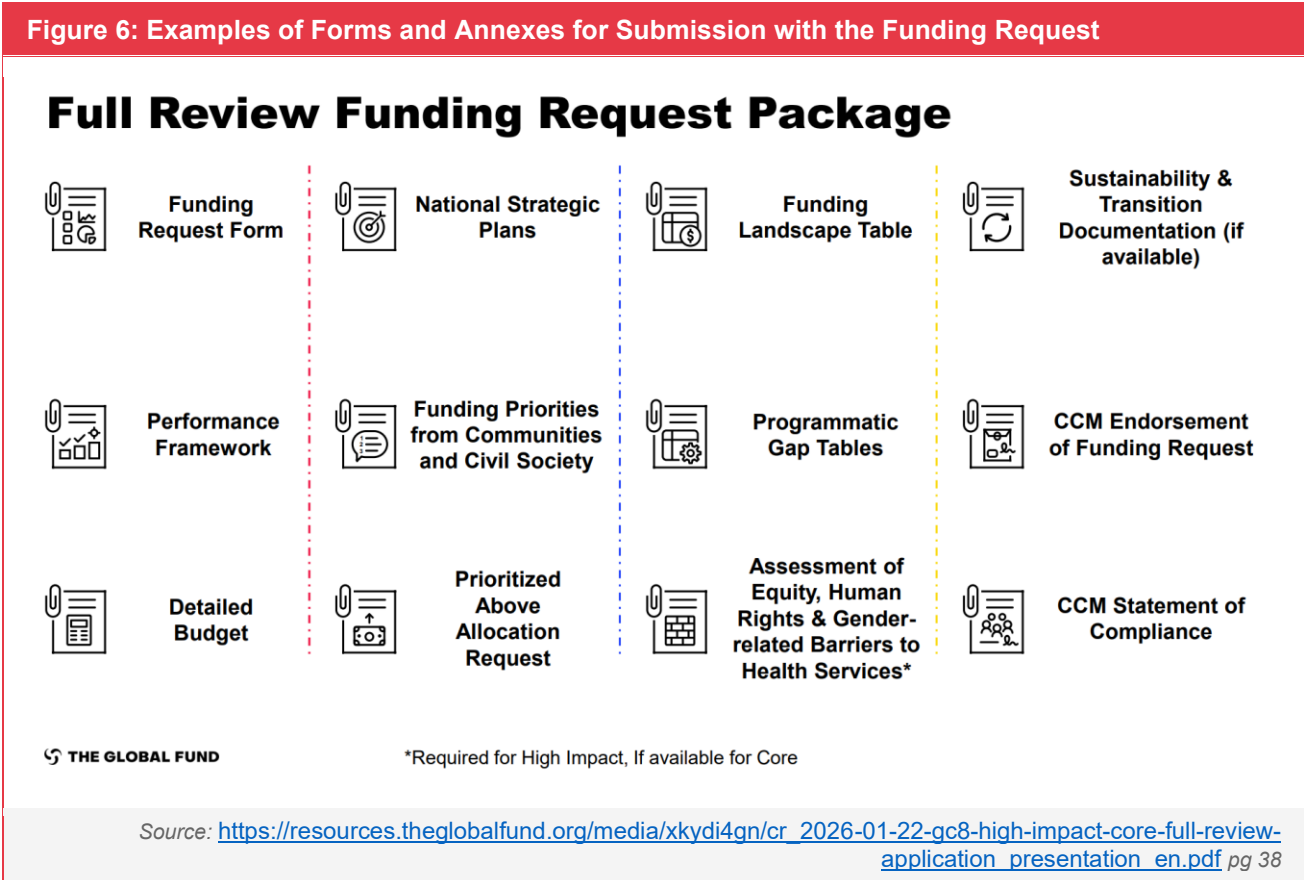
Applicants develop and submit Funding Requests to the Global Fund. The Technical Review Panel (TRP) assesses submissions for strategic focus, technical quality, and sustainability.

At the conclusion of the country dialogues, the Funding Request is endorsed and submitted.

Before submission, review every version of the Funding Request carefully. Continue advocating for inclusion of community priorities throughout the drafting process. In the final version, verify:

- Which priorities were included.
- Where they appear in the document.
- Whether the language accurately reflects community priorities.
- Whether any changes have been made.

Continue engaging through your representatives on the Writing Team.



Once the FR is received by the Global Fund, it goes through a robust review process by the Technical Review Panel.

Figure 7: Explaining the TRP Process



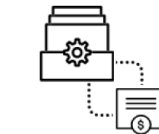
The Technical Review Panel (TRP) is an independent, impartial team of experts recruited to review funding requests. Review approach for GC8 is being updated to ensure greater differentiation and alignment with key changes in GC8.

The TRP assesses the extent to which funding requests demonstrate:

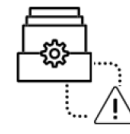


TRP Review Criteria are tied to the 2023-2028 Global Fund Strategy.

Following the review, funding requests are either:

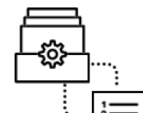


Recommended for Grant-making

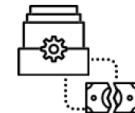


Recommended for Iteration

The TRP also identifies:



Issues and Actions to be Addressed



Items from PAAR assessed as Unfunded Quality Demand (UQD)

Source: *Applying for Funding GC8 Kickoff* https://resources.theglobalfund.org/media/y1pgtef/cr_2025-12-15-applying-for-funding-gc8-kickoff_presentation_en.pdf

Once the review is complete, the TRP will recommend one of two outcomes:

Outcome 1: Grant-making

If the TRP decides that a Funding Request is technically sound and strategically focused, it will recommend that the funding request moves to grant-making. The TRP may recommend adjustments or request clarifications to be addressed during grant-making or implementation.

Outcome 2: Iteration

The TRP may decide that a Funding Request is not yet ready to proceed to grant-making. In this case, the TRP will provide feedback to applicants who will be asked to revise the request to address the points of feedback and to resubmit the request for another review. This is called iteration.

Ensure you are part of the Team that responds to the TRP Review comments and questions and be part of developing the responses around the key Prevention related questions and comments if they come.

Grant-Making

Once a country receives a recommendation to proceed to grant-making, this phase begins. It is an equally important stage in the process.

Grant-making is a negotiation period between the Principal Recipient and the Global Fund. During this stage, the Funding Request is translated into implementation-ready grants.

Global Fund Country Teams work with Principal Recipients to finalize:

- Implementation plans.
- Budgets.

- Performance Framework targets.
- Responses to issues raised during technical review.

It is critical that CSOs remain engaged throughout this phase. Ensure that prevention interventions included in the Funding Request remain in the final grant documents and receive adequate budget allocations.

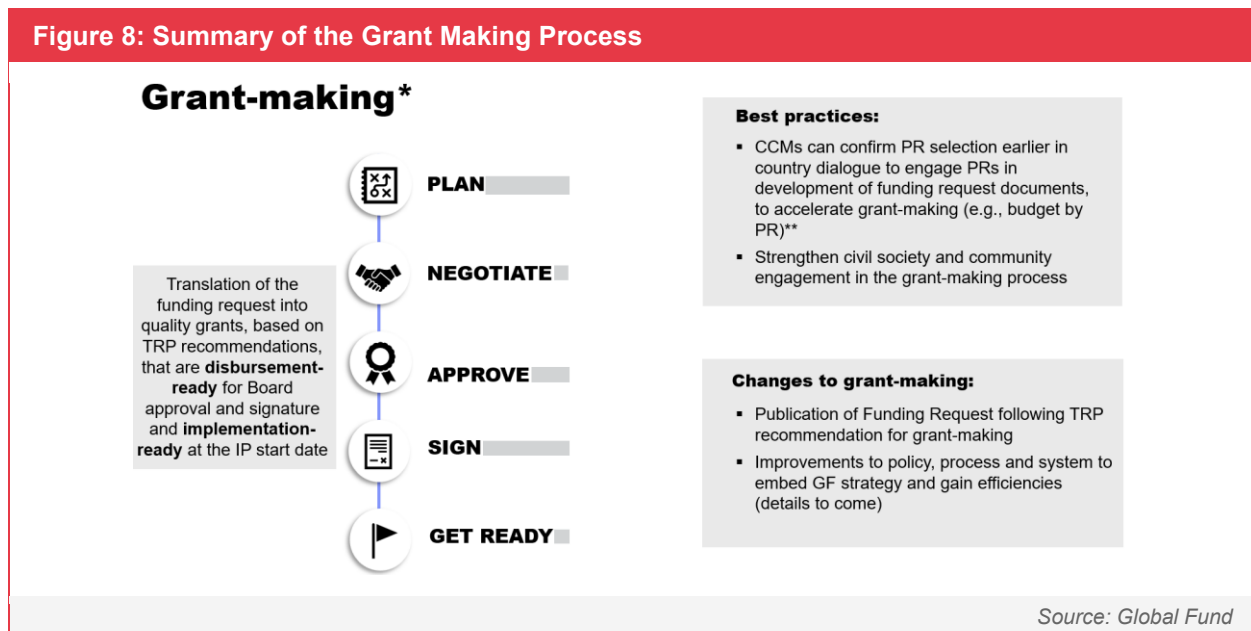
This is often the stage where activities are reduced, removed, or underfunded to balance budgets. CSOs are frequently surprised during implementation when interventions have been modified or omitted. Active engagement can help prevent this.

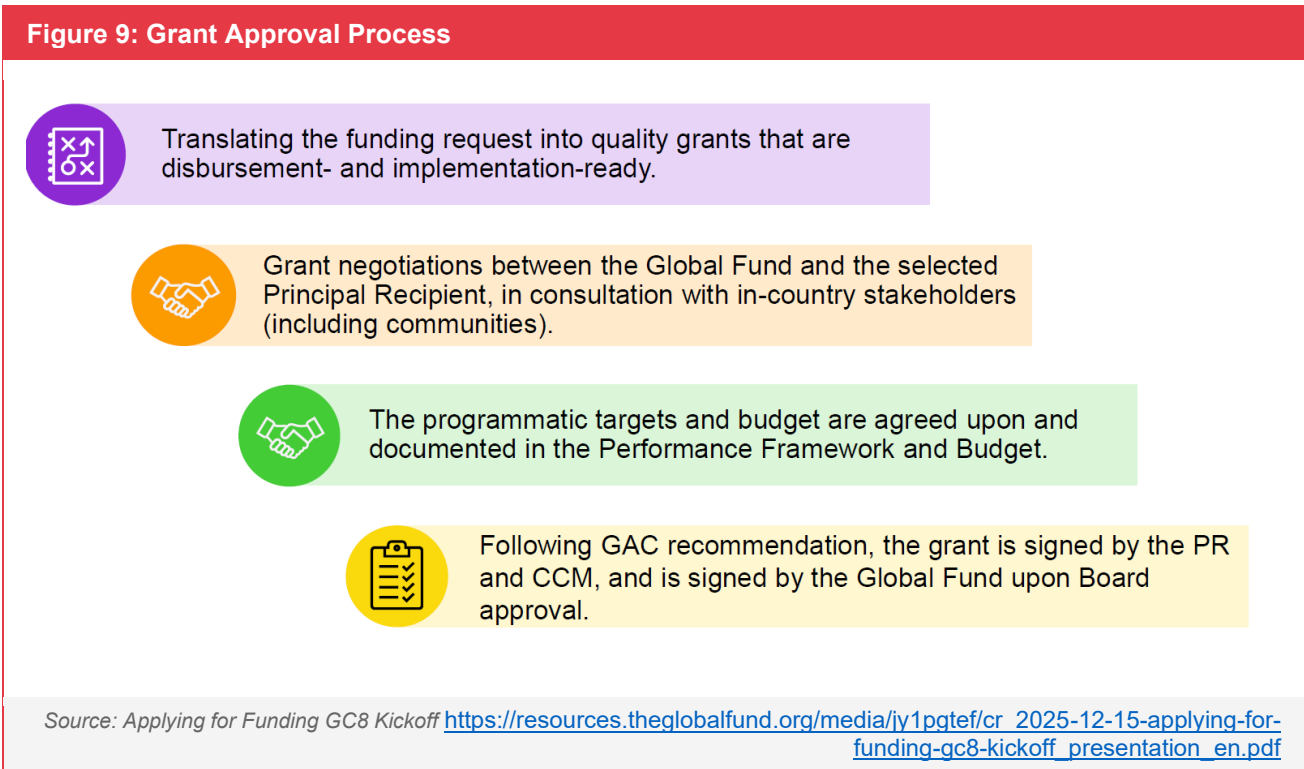
Approved requests are converted into detailed grant documents, including the Performance Framework and budget. The Grant Approvals Committee (GAC) reviews the final package before submission to the Global Fund Board for approval.

Following Board approval, grants are signed by Principal Recipients and implementation can begin.

Lastly, document what was achieved, including:

- Interventions that were included and costed.
- Priorities that were not achieved.
- Remaining unfunded gaps.
- Lessons learned.





Following the submission of the final grant documents, the proposed grants are reviewed by the Global Fund’s internal review body, the Grant Approvals Committee -or GAC. The GAC assesses the scope and strategic focus, implementation plans, budget, as well as risk and mitigation plans. If the GAC determines that the grant is implementation-ready, it will recommend it to the Global Fund Board for approval. Once the Board gives its approval, the grant can be signed, and the first disbursement can be made. At this stage there is no more room to influence the Funding request decisions. But below is Figure 9 that gives an overview of the process as still key to understand what is going on at this stage.

Lastly, write up of what you achieved i.e. interventions included and costed and what was not achieved, what remains as gaps and unfunded what lessons learnt.

Implementation and Monitoring

Principal Recipients implement grant activities. Continuous monitoring occurs through progress reports, regular reviews, and site visits conducted by Local Fund Agents (LFAs) to assess performance and results.

A close-out process takes place at the end of the grant cycle.

This is where Community-Led Monitoring becomes especially important. Reach out for CLM resources and technical support related to monitoring Global Fund implementation.

References and Additional Resources

- Applying for Funding GC8 Kickoff https://resources.theglobalfund.org/media/jy1pgtef/cr_2025-12-15-applying-for-funding-gc8-kickoff_presentation_en.pdf

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- Country Subsections where you can find all key Documents in current and previous Grant Proposals- see example for Malawi below <https://data.theglobalfund.org/location/MWI/access-to-funding> - to access this page for your particular country, please go to <https://resources.theglobalfund.org/en/grant-life-cycle/applying-for-funding/> and click on the status of the funding process tab on your right of the page and use the scroll down button to find your country.
 - All information resources developed by the GF- Slides and Webinars in a number of languages are available on this page <https://resources.theglobalfund.org/en/information-sessions/> click on any tab you're interested in and explore the slide decks and or webinar recordings – this toolkit has tried to pick out and summarize core essential ones.