The diverse modalities through which the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) works with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (Global Fund) and other partners to offer countries integrated packages of health and development support

UNDP’s approach to health implementation is grounded in its mandate to support countries’ achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a development agency, UNDP is uniquely positioned to advance progress towards universal health coverage by tackling the social, economic, and environmental determinants of health. This work is informed by UNDP’s broader mission to eradicate poverty, build resilience, and catalyze structural transformations for development.

As countries managing Global Fund grants move across the development continuum, the support required from partners such as UNDP also evolves. In some cases, support continues to be needed across all transaction areas. In others, temporary support is needed in one area to address a gap and lift performance. UNDP is also requested to provide specialized technical assistance on select aspects of programme implementation, capacity building and policy beyond the traditional role as interim Principal Recipient (PR). It continues to provide support to strengthen systems for health in over 60 countries. A major component of this work is its partnership with the Global Fund to help countries implement large-scale health programmes and policies, drawn from a broad pool of expertise to connect the dots across sectors and partners.

UNDP currently provides support to strengthen systems for health in over 60 countries. A major component of this work is its partnership with the Global Fund to help countries implement large-scale health programmes and policies. UNDP has drawn from a broad pool of expertise to connect the dots across sectors and partners.

UNDP’s Strategic Plan 2022-2025 identifies six “Signature Solutions” as areas of comparative advantage in which it is best equipped to deliver integrated responses to complex development challenges. In partnership with The Global Fund, UNDP supports countries towards three directions of change - structural transformation, leaving no one behind, and building resilience - by leveraging six signature solutions that span issues of gender equality, governance, energy, environment, resilience, and poverty and inequality. Each solution contributes to and benefits from UNDP’s work on HIV and health. Whether through efforts to ‘green’ and reduce the environmental impact of the health sector whilst strengthening its resilience, or through technical assistance to ensure that principles of gender equality, human rights, and good governance are embedded in the design and implementation of health programmes and policies, UNDP draws from a broad pool of expertise to connect the dots across sectors and partners.

As based on this comprehensive development approach and outlined in the UNDP HIV and Health Strategy 2022-2025, UNDP’s policy and programme support for health encompasses three core action areas: 1) Reducing inequalities and social exclusion that affect health and drive pandemics; 2) Promoting effective and inclusive governance for health; and 3) Building resilient and sustainable systems for health. Each solution contributes to and benefits from UNDP’s work on HIV and health.

The three areas are closely interlinked and illustrate the need for integrated approaches that address immediate health needs whilst laying the building blocks for strong health systems and addressing barriers to service access.

As countries managing Global Fund grants move across the development continuum, the support required from partners such as UNDP also evolves. In some cases, support continues to be needed across all transaction areas. In others, temporary support is needed in one area to address a gap and lift performance. UNDP is also requested to provide specialized technical assistance on select aspects of programme implementation, capacity building and policy beyond the traditional role as interim Principal Recipient (PR). It combines multiple support modalities, building on its experiences as PR. This includes providing countries with pandemic preparedness and response support, in line with the 2023-2028 Global Fund Strategy.

The following pages describe some of the key partnership modalities and services that UNDP offers according to the context.

As countries managing Global Fund grants move across the development continuum, the support required from partners such as UNDP also evolves. In some cases, support continues to be needed across all transaction areas. In others, temporary support is needed in one area to address a gap and lift performance. UNDP is also requested to provide specialized technical assistance on select aspects of programme implementation, capacity building and policy beyond the traditional role as interim Principal Recipient (PR). It combines multiple support modalities, building on its experiences as PR. This includes providing countries with pandemic preparedness and response support, in line with the 2023-2028 Global Fund Strategy.

As based on this comprehensive development approach and outlined in the UNDP HIV and Health Strategy 2022-2025, UNDP’s policy and programme support for health encompasses three core action areas: 1) Reducing inequalities and social exclusion that affect health and drive pandemics; 2) Promoting effective and inclusive governance for health; and 3) Building resilient and sustainable systems for health. Each solution contributes to and benefits from UNDP’s work on HIV and health.

The three areas are closely interlinked and illustrate the need for integrated approaches that address immediate health needs whilst laying the building blocks for strong health systems and addressing barriers to service access.
UNDP is called upon to implement Global Fund programmes as interim PR of grants in countries facing significant capacity constraints, complex emergencies, and other difficult circumstances. This role is temporary and underpinned by capacity development to facilitate sustainable transitions to national ownership once sufficient capacity is in place and circumstances permit. Since 2003, UNDP has served as PR in 51 countries and 39 of these are of 33 countries, contributing to 7.3 million lives saved.

Key features:
- Extensive experience in fragile/challenging operating environments (COEs): Historically, UNDP served as PR in 21 COEs. In 2022, UNDP is PR in 9 COEs and 8 countries under Global Fund Additional Safeguards Plan.
- End-to-end implementation model with robust frameworks for risk management demonstrated by strong performance: 93 percent of UNDP grants are rated positively (A1, A2, or B1) despite being in high-risk contexts.
- Emphasis on sustainability through integrated approach that combines programme implementation with capacity development and policy support, leveraging UNDP’s development expertise and coordination role.

Country example: As PR of 4 grants in Afghanistan since 2015, UNDP has supported an increase TB case detection by 50%, treatment for 1.1 million people for malaria, and strengthened access through community-based healthcare services, including through innovative partnerships with the private sector.

With its distributed country presence and strong network of governments, civil society, and other partners engaged in national health responses, UNDP brings unique added value to the development and implementation of multi-country grants and other regional initiatives. It has managed five Global Fund multi-country grants as PR since 2003, covering 39 countries in total.

Key features:
- Unique capacity to connect dots across borders for South-South learning, collaboration, and enhanced synergies on regional issues.  
- Strong partnerships with and empowerment of regional civil society organizations (CSOs) and key population groups as key factor for effective implementation and sustainability.  
- Regional efforts reinforce the impact and outcomes of in-country programming.  
- Expertise as neutral convener at regional level to catalyze progress on sensitive policy issues at country level, particularly on policy and legal action on human rights and HIV service access for key populations (see Lessons Learned from regional work with key populations in Africa)

Example: Through a Global Fund multi-country grant, UNDP is working with UNHCR to reach mobile and refugee populations in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan with TB prevention and treatment services. In 2021, 1,153,103 people were screened for TB in the three countries combined.

UNDP is well positioned to support programming in the context of health emergencies. It is a pre-approved administrator of the Global Fund Emergency Fund Special Initiative. It additionally has experience implementing above-allocation funding, re-programming existing funds, and mobilizing complimentary resources in close coordination with the Global Fund and other UN agencies.

Key features:
- Ability to harness the collective capacity of the UN family, including through an MoU with WHO prioritizing joint work on health emergencies. It also works closely with WFP and UNHCR in crisis;  
- Capacity of large human resource base and other resources and established local relationships to address deficiencies in internal control environment.  
- Established services that can be rapidly activated, including for human resource surge support.

Country example: In 2021, Haiti was hit by a 7.2 magnitude earthquake and Tropical Depression Grace, which limited access to early treatment for malaria, causing an increase in malaria transmission. The Global Fund approved nearly $1 million in emergency funding, which UNDP Haiti requested. This will enable coverage of 500,000 affected Haitians spread throughout southern regions of the country and allow malaria supplies and activities to reach displaced and hard-to-reach communities.

UNDP plays a co-PR role in countries where there has been an identified need to strengthen systems and build capacity, where short-term technical assistance is not sufficient to achieve the desired health outcomes. As an interim step towards the gradual transition of responsibilities to national entities, the role is temporary and underpinned by capacity development to facilitate sustainable transitions to national ownership once sufficient capacity is in place and circumstances permit. Since 2003, UNDP has served as PR in 51 countries and 39 of these are of 33 countries, contributing to 7.3 million lives saved.

Key features:
- Co-PR: Emergence response: Co-PR  
- Co-PR: Emergency response: Interim PR  
- Co-PR: Interim PR: Full implementation support  
- Co-PR: Full implementation support: A CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT  
- Co-PR: A CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT: Snapshot of UNDP support options based on the context  
- Co-PR: Snapshot of UNDP support options based on the context: Key principles that underpin UNDP's approach to health implementation and the identification of the most appropriate mechanisms through which to deliver it include:
UNDP can support the financial management processes of the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) as a CCM funding recipient, as well as manage Global Fund support to Board constituencies as a Constituency Representatives (CR). Through risk assessments, UNDP can support the financial management processes of the CCM, including through joint UN market power.

**Key features:**
- As a CCM funding recipient, UNDP is designated as the entity responsible for receiving and managing funds to support administrative costs incurred by the CCM. Similar arrangements can apply to regional coordinating mechanisms and steering committees.
- The MPS enables UNDP to provide flexible management and support services, such as ICT support, that contribute to a government’s programme results.

**Example:** In Tajikistan, as CCM Funding recipient for the 2017-2019 and 2020-2022 grant rounds, UNDP has helped to enhance coordination and functional capacities of the CCM, including through oversight and planning support, training for CCM members on core skills, and support to ensure equal representation and full engagement of civil society members and key population representatives.

**Financing agreements**

Leveraging expertise gained through the Global Fund portfolio, UNDP is increasingly requested to support countries in accessing and delivering quality, affordable health products and strengthening their procurement and supply chain management systems. Financing agreements draw either on governments’ own health budgets, or Global Fund resources managed by governments. As of August 2022, UNDP has financing agreements to support health procurement for HIV, TB, malaria as well as for non-communicable and other diseases.

**Key features:**
- Integrated approach: health procurement support coupled with capacity development of national procurement and supply chain management systems to ensure sustainability;
- Specialized expertise and end-to-end support across the procurement process and supply chain, including on IT and regulatory issues, quality assurance, logistics management systems;
- Value for money: established global procurement architecture allows countries to tap into economies of scale, reduce risks, and achieve cost savings;
- Sustainability: support to strengthening procurement, including through joint UN market power.

**Example:** UNDP’s financial agreement with Azerbaijan’s Ministry of Health to procure quality-assured Antiretroviral (ARV) pharmaceuticals resulted in savings of about $181,400 USD. This success will allow Azerbaijan to procure ARV pharmaceuticals.

**Through financing agreements with ministries of health, including those funded by complementary funding, and strengthen domestic financing.**

**Key features:**
- A support role based on national ownership and government demand for specific services that will strengthen the resilience of core health system building blocks;
- Ability to promote synergies with existing programmes (Global Fund and others), mobilize complementary funding, and strengthen domestic financing.

**Example:** UNDP provides health infrastructure support to Mozambique’s Ministry of Health, which acts as PR of the Global Fund HIV and TB grants, to strengthen the health products supply chain in the country. The first milestone was reached in July 2021 with the completion and inauguration of the Chimbo regional warehouse in the Manica Province, which is fully equipped and can supply 72 Health Units in the district of Chimbo and surrounding districts.

**Other technical assistance**

As countries graduate from Global Fund assistance, UNDP can provide support as a technical partner during and post-transition, even in the absence of a formal agreement, to enhance the enabling environment for effective and equitable service delivery. Leveraging a cross-cutting health policy expertise, country presence, and development coordination role, UNDP offers services such as:

- Support to conduct an HIV or TB Legal Environment Assessment;
- Coordination support for civil society, with a focus on strengthening existing networks;
- Policy guidance to address legal and other human rights barriers to health service access;
- Technical assistance to strengthen the mobilization and use of domestic financing for the diseases;
- Support to establish governance mechanisms after the CCM ends.

**Example:** After Panama became ineligible for Global Fund grants, UNDP worked to ensure funding would continue for CSOs to carry out essential activities to respond to HIV and TB, particularly for marginalized populations. Through a social contracting mechanism, which enabled the Ministry to channel domestic funds to CSOs for interventions to support prevention, diagnosis, and treatment among those most in need.
In its capacity as a government-to-government partner, UNDP has helped the MoHCC to pilot a new eProcurement system, which has significantly streamlined the procurement process. This has resulted in substantial savings and has improved the transparency and accountability of health sector procurements.

In addition to its role as PR of the Global Fund HIV grant, UNDP advises the Ministry of Health and Child Development (MoHCD) on how to strengthen its capacity as PR through its role as a Fund Administrator, and bolsters the capacity of the CCU as CCU fund recipients. As PR, it provides comprehensive technical assistance, working closely with the CCU to address socio-economic and cultural barriers to adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) through catalytic funding, its Solar for Health initiative has. In 2020, UNDP continued to provide technical assistance to help reduce sectoral vulnerability to corruption. It has supported several countries to pilot corruption risk assessments that are targeted mitigation measures against commercial exploitation of health care in remote areas. UNDP also assists nations to strengthen internal audit and other accountability systems.

As part of the Steering Team, UNDP continues to develop its capacity for health implementation, capacity development, and policy support tailored to the country context. The examples on this page illustrate some ways that UNDP brings together partnerships, policy, and other areas of comparative advantage. This includes WFP’s logistical support, UN Volunteers’ mobile populations in challenging contexts, and UN Volunteer’s Evidence generated through this collective effort has informed the AGYW catalytic fund, supporting the capacity of the Malaria Programme on Vector Control, UNDP signed an agreement with the University of California and the MoH focusing mainly on the biology of African Malaria mosquito species.

Expanding partnerships: São Tome and Príncipe

After transitioning the PR role to the Ministry of Health (MoH) in 2020, UNDP continued to provide support to the MoH in various domains. This support is complemented by technical assistance in the newly established Programme Management Unit in the implementation of Global Fund grants. With the French Development Agency (AFD), UNDP helped the MoH deploy five international UN Volunteers (IUNVs) to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. UNDP is also helping the scaling-up of District Health Information System 2 (DHIS-2) to the remote areas through on-job training of health personnel.

In addition to its role as PR, UNDP works closely with the MoH in establishing two smart facilities at national TB centres. The Institute for Innovation and Knowledge to enhance health systems and deliver essential health services. The examples on this page illustrate some ways that UNDP brings together programmes through a Memorandum of Understanding, implementing a sustainable procurement approach, and building the resilience and sustainability of systems for health.

UNDP embeds innovation into its health implementation support to help countries achieve inclusive and efficient services and useful innovations. In particular, it has helped numerous countries to leverage mobile and digital technologies to strengthen the effectiveness and transparency of public finance management. It is also working closely with the MoH in establishing two smart facilities at national TB centres.

Harnessed partnerships.

Expanding Partnerships

Sustainable procurement

UNAIDS

BRINGING THE PIECES TOGETHER

Complementing the PR role: Zimbabwe

Scaling-up DHIS-2 to remote areas

UNV

Solar for Health