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Independent observer of the Global Fund

The Critical Friend: An Effective Local Watchdog

An Introduction to Country Level Accountability in the Fight Against AIDS, TB and Malaria

Watchdog Guide

An Aidspan Publication

THE CRITICAL FRIEND: AN EFFECTIVE LOCAL WATCHDOG

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Authors: Angela Kageni and Kerstin Reisdorf

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

The following is a list of the most common abbreviations and acronyms used in this guide:

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ART	Anti-retroviral Treatment
CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanism
FPM	Fund Portfolio Manager
GFO	Global Fund Observer
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LFA	Local Fund Agent
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoH	Minister/Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIG	Office of the Inspector General (of the Global Fund)
PR	Principal Recipient
PU/DR	Progress updates/disbursement requests
SR	Sub-Recipient
TB	Tuberculosis
TRP	Technical Review Panel

"Complacency by the watchdogs hurts both taxpayers and beneficiaries." *Charles Grassley.*

Giving people the proper tools to report the right way is a great service. *Slade O'Brien, South Florida Sun-Sentinel*

"Engagement of civil society and the private sector is indispensable in holding governments accountable, in ensuring that AIDS response(s) respect human rights, and in advocating for the creation of legal and social environments that protect people from infection and support social justice"

United Nations General Assembly President Joseph Deiss (April, 2011)

"In fact the primary concern facing global companies today is not necessarily any particular country's work culture, but the fact that, globally, we are living in **the era of the watchdog**." *Forbes Magazine, December 2011*

Introducing Aidspan

Aidspan was created exclusively to watch one aid organisation: *The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (*www.theglobalfund.org*)*. Not all watchdogs need to be like this, but their agenda ultimately remains the same: to enhance effectiveness or bring about positive change.

Aidspan's mission is to reinforce the effectiveness of the Global Fund by serving as an independent, critical observer. The organisation finances its work primarily through grants from foundations, and **does not accept Global Fund money**, perform paid consulting work or charge for any of its products. Aidspan and the Global Fund maintain a positive working relationship, but have no formal connection.

The board, staff and other structures of the Global Fund have no influence on, and bear no responsibility for, the content of this guide or of any other Aidspan publication.

In earlier years, Aidspan's work with people at the grassroots level was very limited; we published our electronic newsletter the *Global Fund Observer* and other materials, but we had little in the way of face-to-face dealings with the country-level users of those materials. But in 2010 we started an ambitious programme to identify and mentor people and organisations that could push for increased accountability in the implementation of Global Fund grants.

We call this the *Mentoring Watchdogs Project*.

The project's objective is to stimulate local information-sharing and critical debate in order to improve transparency, accountability and effectiveness in the implementation of Global Fund grants and enhance the efficacy and professionalism of organisations dedicated to monitoring the Fund's effectiveness.

Observers targeted for this work are mostly local NGOs, but in time are expected also to include individuals such as journalists, academics, and parliamentarians. These do not serve as Aidspan representatives, and Aidspan does not fund them. They work independently within their countries, but can call upon Aidspan for mentoring advice.

This guide is a result of that collective work.

The Global Fund

Many references in this guide are made to the Global Fund. **The guide is a useful tool for watchdogs that decipher, analyse, evaluate, build knowledge, and educate others on the Fund's successes and challenges. It provides also a case study that draws lessons applicable to other donor-tracking activities.**

Since 2002, the Global Fund has become the leading international financier of country-level activities to fight AIDS, TB and malaria. Global Fund grants provide two thirds of all international funding to fight

malaria and TB worldwide, and support more than half of the over six million people on antiretroviral treatment (ART). By April 2015, the Fund had approved funding of $31.9 billion for more than 1,180 grants in 129 countries, and to date has disbursed $26 billion.

The Global Fund, founded on a set of principles that are fully described in its Framework Document (http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/about/principles/), has become a standard-bearer for change in health development and is touted as revolutionary in its innovative approaches to aid delivery.

The key elements of that framework are:

- to be a **financing instrument**, not an implementing body;
- to strictly **base funding** on **good performance;**
- to encourage **country-ownership** and the use of existing systems and to rely on local stakeholders to implement and manage programmes;
- to provide **additional** money to complement national health funding;
- to be **transparent and accountable**, i.e. to make policies and practice open to the public, and advocate for recipient countries to do the same.

The Global Fund is used in this guide as a case study for the following reasons. First, the Global Fund disburses large sums of money, often into country systems that are weak and that struggle to met complex grant design, negotiation and implementation processes. The complexity in the flow, use, oversight and reporting of Global Fund money via multi-sectoral platforms provides good education for a watchdog involved in public health. Such entities need to understand these processes and help transfer the knowledge gained in their assessment of the Fund to watching other donors Second, the Global Fund system is made up of several interconnected concepts structures, and roles, all requiring a substantial degree of understanding to effectively engage with. This guide provides that. Third, the Fund is also characterised by frequent changes and evolutions that need to be understood and tracked. In worst-case scenarios, the implementing country systems are compromised by weak compliance, some are corrupted, and many risk funds not being spent efficiently; not reaching intended beneficiaries.

More information on the Global Fund and how it works can be found in "A Beginner's Guide to the Global Fund – 3rd edition" at www.aidspan.org/guides.

WHY THIS GUIDE?

This practical guide provides the answers to the following:

- *What is accountability or transparency?*
- *What is watchdogging?*
- *Who are watchdogs?*
- *Why are these important?*
- *And how do you do this work?*
- *How can professionalism and credibility among health watchdogs be enhanced?*

Rationale for this Guide

If you are reading this guide, you probably feel concerned by how donor and public money is managed where you live. You may be a journalist or are part of an association of people representing affected communities, or are an activist that wants to ensure that funds allocated to your region save or improve as many lives as possible and are urging open and democratic discussions on the performance of programmes by government and non-governmental agencies.

Whatever your motivation, you may feel overwhelmed and may not know how to get the results you want. You may also not know how to address the challenges you would face in seeking the changes you want.

This guide serves as an introduction to "watchdogs[1]", i.e. the individuals or organisations whose purpose is to keep a watchful eye and hold to account recipients of funds or positions considered public. It bases its examples mostly from the Global Fund, the largest multilateral financing agency targeting AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The focus on the Fund as used herein provides examples that any other watchdog may learn from about the role they play, and what value they hold. There are already a number of agencies monitoring aspects of the Global Fund – including the flow of funding to their countries, and the efficacy of grant implementation. Many are looking for ways to help to improve oversight and implementation of programmes, while others try to make implementers and others involved answerable to actions and decisions taken.

What this guide is not:

This is not an evaluation guide, nor is it an encyclopaedia of watchdog knowledge. Neither is it a definitive guide into how to do watchdogging under all possible circumstances.

[1] The term local watchdog in this guide refers to an agency that monitors the effectiveness of the Global Fund at country level, and refers particularly to organisations that track use of Global Fund money and assess the responsiveness and efficacy of the related systems.

Letter from Bernard Rivers

Billions of dollars have been given to the Global Fund. Millions of lives are being saved as a result. Therefore, if the effectiveness of the Fund and its grant implementers were increased even by a tiny degree, the human impact would be substantial. By working to ensure better use of Global Fund money, Aidspan seeks to leverage impact of the Global Fund to an extent that is worth many times the amount of funding given to Aidspan.

Aidspan is a "critical friend" of the Global Fund. It wants nothing more than for the Fund to have the maximum possible impact. But the fact remains that there are many problems within the Fund and with the implementers of the Fund's grants. And many of these problems are hidden from sight. Who would know, looking at the Global Fund's country-specific web pages, that the Fund's grants to a few countries have faced serious challenges? And why is it that when such a situation arises, there is almost no accountability in the country in question, there is almost nobody there who wakes up at night sweating that they will lose their job?

Aidspan seeks to use objective analysis of the Global Fund and its grants to increase awareness of what is working and what is not. Then people in authority and citizens can act to enhance accountability and impact.

In some of the worst-performing countries there is a serious shortage of in-country watchfulness and accountability, leading to a danger that Global Fund money will not have its full potential impact. Aidspan seeks, through this guide, to help concerned local organisations and citizens to close this gap.

Aidspan founder

Bernard Rivers

Chapter 1

1 An introduction to watchdogging

1.1 Defining the term "Watchdog"

A **watchdog** is defined as a person or group of persons that acts as a protector or guardian against inefficiency, illegal practices or other undesirable practices and overall seeks to protect people's rights. A watchdog also provides a check or balance within a system, working to enhance effectiveness, efficiency and integrity.

Watchdogs probe, uncover, check, expose, unveil, question, interrogate and disbelieve until proof of truth is discovered.

All in all, the primary intent of a watchdog is to support and improve the effectiveness of the system monitored, rather than to contradict or police it.

1.2 About watchdogging

'Watchdogging' is used to describe the activities of those who would watch (keep an eye on) people or organisations in positions of influence or power, to ensure that they do not abuse their positions of privilege at the expense of the public's (or a particular community's) wellbeing.

Watchdogging is not new. The emergence of watchdog organisations, as they exist today, is deeply rooted in the development of civil society in industrialised countries since the 1960s. The idea that all government institutions need to be watched is a consequence of democratic thinking in liberal societies.

Free citizens have the right to know what is going on in their countries, especially with regard to public issues and to issues that have a direct impact on individuals. Beyond that, it is about wanting to tell the story in order to change something, or stop something or make something happen that isn't.

Watchdogging is especially common in the United States and in Europe where governments are, in principle, democratic and transparent. To hold them accountable to a high set of standards for governance, transparency and efficiency, hundreds of organisations watch over the public sector, the corporate sector and the environment.

Authoritarian countries offer restrictive environments for watchdogs. Organisations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Transparency International and others have made it their work to advocate for flexibility and positive change in such places. For safety reasons, these organisations are mostly headquartered in developed and democratic countries.

Watchdogging in the development aid sector is closely related to the principles of accountability and aid efficiency. This includes watchdog activities within the health sector where many organisations are already active. In a majority of donor countries, critically observing government aid to developing countries is common. AID/WATCH, for instance, monitors Australia's overseas aid programmes and assists developing countries reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development*, in line with Australia's national interests.*

1.3 Why call for a watchdog culture? Different watchdogs for different roles

Watchdogging benefits the public. A culture of watchdogging cultivates an environment where individuals take responsibility for public service. The best watchdogs do this in ways that broaden consensus and encourage high standards of accuracy and courage. **A watchdog culture** is about balancing perception (understanding what watchdogging is) and reality (seeing examples of such watchdogging and the results). It is about holding institutions or people accountable and this can be done in various ways depending on what the watchdog aims to achieve. Below are a few examples of different types of watchdogs.

An **organisation concerned with human rights** such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch pursues different goals from an NGO that is watching over aid flows or one that observes companies in the manufacturing sector. A human rights watchdog, , tries to protect people from abuse of power by working through authorities to effect safe policies beneficial to the public or by working to uncover abuses by the security forces or guerrillas. This means they have to be informed about what is happening on the ground. They can do this in various ways:

- making their own observations
- following up on reports made by the media
- collecting evidence from eye witnesses i.e. investigations (asking questions)

Such material can then be used to lobby with bodies such as the United Nations (UN), or donor governments, or for media campaigns to raise awareness internationally to seek an end to the human rights violations.

An **environmental** watchdog will work in a different way. The Environmental Working Group (EWG) is an organisation that produces a series of reports every year seeking to draw attention to health hazards and environmental risks, while flagging violations or bad business practices among corporations such as oil companies. Advocacy then follows from these reports, whether for restitution for populations near drilling sites or a demand for financial compensation for clean-up of oil spills. Tactics employed by environmental groups are not dissimilar from human rights watchdogs, including:

- collecting evidence in a certain area (either geographic or thematic) and
- using this information to put pressure on the oil company to stop harmful practices, e.g. by campaigning against this company's products

A **watchdog in the mining sector** may apply a different tactic. For instance, the Transparency Working Group of Canadian mining associations has a framework for mandatory disclosure rules for local extractive companies, which requires them to publish the payments they make to the governments where they operate around the world. These recommendations are equivalent to the mandatory disclosure rules recently adopted by the EU (in the Transparency and Accounting Directives) and passed by the US in 2010 (Dodd-Frank Act 1504).

A **watchdog in the pharmaceutical** such as Rx Watchdog may monitor pricing, legislative, public policies and trends in the prescription drug market place and the impact of those trends on consumers. Similar organisations, say in the **food industry** may use the same tactics to advocate for consumer protection. Here, a watchdog could disseminate research done by scientists who have analysed the raw materials in products and collected data on potential or actual side effects. Other agencies such as the

Drug Industry Document Archive are trying to open the mysterious world of **pharmaceutical manufacture** to more scrutiny. They have proven very effective in uncovering documents during lawsuits against drug companies, made searchable to the public.

All the above could trigger either of the following reactions:

(1) to cause government authorities to restrict the producer's use of adverse substances, or

(2) to cause the producer to change the composition of its products to much safer ones.

Health focused watchdogs also have varied areas of focus. Some seek to track efficiency in service delivery, financing and reporting. Others monitor media coverage of health issues. The common element in all these cases is **going public**. Making the information widely understood plays an important role in getting the right people to listen, and the public pressure created is often a catalyst for action.

You are not a watchdog yet and you want to be. The key things to consider are as follows:

The watchdog checklist:

1. Decide the kind of watchdog to be by considering:
   a. Your resources
   b. Your philosophy or motivations
   c. Your goals
   d. What or whom you're watching
   e. The scope of watching required e.g. community level, national or regional
   f. Your competitors and opponents
   g. Whether you're the best individual or organization to take action
2. Decide the areas you might choose to monitor e.g.:
   a. Government
   b. Corporations and business
   c. Media
   d. The environment
   e. Human rights
   f. Hate groups
   g. American freedoms and civil rights
   h. Public safety
   i. Consumer affairs
   j. The general public good
3. Why act as a watchdog?
   a. Self-interest
   b. Defend those with little political or economic power; balance the scales between community and those that have money, power or connections
   c. Ensure public awareness of goings-on in community and the world
   d. Prevent or mitigate risks that could have negative economic or social impact
   e. Promote social justice and social change
4. When should you act as a watchdog?
   a. When promoting or challenging laws or regulations
   b. When doubting a new public project or process
   c. When public interest is threatened
   d. When you receive information about actual, planned, or likely harmful or questionable actions or practices
   e. When an entity or individual has proven untrustworthy in the past
   f. When simple justice demands it

1.4 Similarities and differences between a watchdog and a journalist

Anyone can be a watchdog, but not anyone can be a journalist. As investigators, journalists also function as guardians. Links can be made between watchdog work and journalism. For instance, both find expression in an objective, factual, and critical reporting style and report not only what is being said by

people in power but also are able to question whether what is being said is based on fact or exaggerations. Links can also be drawn to citizen journalism where citizens show active involvement in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing, and disseminating news and information.

Watchdog journalists also are called "watchmen", "agents of social control", or "moral guardians" (Berger 2000, p.84). Both watchdogs and journalists may begin their reporting by simply **highlighting a problem**, providing an entry point for deeper investigation. Regardless of the depth of reporting done, both journalists and watchdogs do the following: **Fact-checking, interviewing key figures and challenging them with problems or concerns, beat reporting to gather information from meetings or the public, making observations of issues "on the ground" and doing in-depth longer term investigative work**.

The main differences are as follows:

1. Journalists work primarily to publish their reports via public print or broadcast platforms like radio, television or internet. Watchdogs don't necessarily aim to do this and may seek instead for solutions from the relevant decision makers
2. Journalists, unlike watchdogs, are widely accepted by the public as the eyes and ears of the public.
3. While both watchdogs and journalists may have speciality areas such as business or health, most watchdogs usually stick to a small number of causes to rally behind -- aiming to cause a reaction or see changes. Journalists, while more versatile in reporting on a wide array of relevant news, don't really set out to challenge the status quo in this way.
4. Journalists, particularly those from established media houses, are able to criticize major state policies and individuals even where such criticism is frowned upon or not feasible. Only few watchdogs, usually large agencies like Transparency International or Amnesty International, are able to do this.
5. There is also formal training for journalists which isn't available for watchdogs.

The different forms of journalism. As a watchdog, which one are you most like?

- Investigative journalism – thorough investigations on areas such as crime, scandals or government corruption.
- Watchdog journalism - providing reasonably balanced and accurate information to the public about important public policy issues; serving as a check against powerful interests.
- Lapdog journalism – being uncritical; a complacent mouthpiece for political parties, corporations or other vested interests. The opposite of watchdog journalism.
- Undercover journalism – infiltrating a community to gain trust and access to required information
- Muckraking – investigating and exposing societal issues such as political corruption, corporate crime, child labour, conditions in slums and prisons. This may at times be considered sensationalism and tabloid-like.
- Gadfly journalism – raising novel questions that upset the status quo and stimulate innovation through incessant irritation.

2 About accountability and transparency

Chapter 2

2.1 What is transparency?

Transparency implies openness, communication, and accountability. It implies that sharing full, accurate, timely and useful information increases knowledge, reduces risk and enhances decision making, choice or action by information users and disclosers, particularly on issues that directly affect public wellbeing.

Transparency can be categorized broadly into three forms – opaque, clear or broad, and targeted transparency.

Opaque transparency refers to limited dissemination of information, usually not revealing the specifics of, say, how institutions actually behave in practice, how they make decisions or the exact results of their actions. Such transparency usually provides information that is summarised and incomplete and may turn out to be unreliable.

Transparency: Mutual trust is built where the responsible party provides adequate information to the public, allowing easy access to accurate information when needed.

Examples of opaque transparency include the following:

- Information disclosure practices by corporations may hide services that have either a negative impact on the environment or are currently too expensive to fix or mitigate. This information is intentionally under-reported or more focus paid instead to positive aspects. In more developed countries, the details regarding such services are usually accessible in some non-public archives in line with legal environmental regulations regarding such disclosure. The information is classified as public (i.e. accessible) but is intentionally made obscure and a watchdog would have to do some digging to find these.
- Opaque transparency also refers to situations where the deluge of data and information provided by institutions is too much and may obscure facts. For example, governments that down policy trackers in papers, research and committee proceedings instead of giving them clear information on progress made on implemented policies. This is a common way of deflecting discussions about results.

- An annual analysis done by the Open Budget Index (OBI) showed how few African countries are transparent in sharing information on their public financial management systems and concluded that many countries focus on meeting transparency indicators during budget planning and formulation only to get better scores on OBI and other international budget tracking indices. An analysis[2] done of OBI data showed that 63% of 28 countries assessed had met more transparency indicators during the budget formulation stage than during the budget execution stage. This study concludes that there is less scrutiny paid to budget execution, a stage far more crucial to ensuring proper use of budgeted funds.

Note: It is not opaque transparency when an entity refuses to share information: that is a lack of transparency.

The above examples prove that only making information available is not usually sufficient to achieve full, clear or broad transparency.

Key features of transparency:

- Clarity on how structures are formed at various levels
- Clarity on decision making actors and processes
- Clear objectives that make it easy to monitor, evaluate, track programme and financial performance and results
- Easy information sharing, including data
- Openness to ideas and feedback especially from local levels

Clear transparency refers to sharing of clear, comprehensive and reliable information on policies and programmes or institutional performance, responsibilities and spending. Such transparency may also be referred to as **full** or **broad transparency.** Examples of clear transparency include independent ombudsman reports, expenditure tracking surveys, citizen social accountability reports and civil-society reports and data about human-rights violations. For these to count however, they must be a result of high quality research with evidence that is clearly cited and publically accessible. By making raw data, official documents and proceedings open to public scrutiny, watchdogs work towards increasing transparency and accountability and reducing secrecy.

Targeted transparency is defined as policies legislated by government to improve fairness and quality of public service, to reduce risks to health, safety and financial stability or improve the performance of major institutions. This is used particularly where clear or broad transparency may have negative impacts, mostly in situations where certain choices by the public are needed.

Examples of such transparency include:

- When governments initiate campaigns to mobilise the public to make smart choices regarding their safety when driving, consumer protection policies that set standards for manufacturers and inform consumers on what to look out for, or public health adverts that guide the public on how not to contract or spread contagious diseases such as the flu or tuberculosis.
- When health service providers lie about the nature of a diagnosis or the risky nature of a procedure or selectively refrain from telling the patient about some possible treatment options available in order to steer the patient toward a treatment preferred by the provider. In almost all

[2] http://matthewandrews.typepad.com/the_limits_of_institution/2013/09/opaque-transparency-and-transparent-opacity-in-african-budget-systems.html

such cases the providers believe they are acting for the patient's benefit, not out of intent to harm the patient.

The type of information shared here is not always intended to be open and is not considered opaque either. It is instead a directive aimed at encouraging certain choices.

In targeted transparency, there are good intentions even if information cannot mitigate risk or help advance targeted intentions. For instance, the UK's Information Commissioner's Office is clear that under the Freedom of Information Act, any British citizen may request publicly held information and this includes records about the deceased. This covers information about people who have died. Yet the law allows that some requests may be declined even if valuable to family members. This is if such information is classified as confidential; usually information provided by a healthcare practitioner or social worker in confidence. The system however may allow some requesters to access the information personally e.g. a spouse or child of legal age.

The reality is that in most cases, full disclosure (i.e. clear, full or broad transparency) is a myth. How can a watchdog be effective given such reality?

Transparency is based mostly on varying degrees of openness, which might at times serve public needs and at times not. Also, transparency policies are often limited by political dynamics and are based on compromises that come from problems that need solutions. Most times, such solutions are derived from diverging interests and conflicting values on how much information should be made public, and in what format. Many systems seeking to be more transparent often use incentives that evolve according to these shifting interests and pressures (usually political or economic).

The examples below give both economic and political implications:

- The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is a global coalition of governments, companies and civil society seeking more open and accountable management of revenues from natural resources. EITI has developed a global standard that promotes revenue transparency and accountability in the extractive sector. EITI assesses and enforces the standard among its members who benefit from improved business environments which attract investors and help improve governance and accountability systems. Because of its strong membership, EITI has strong influence in most countries' extractive industries, and may at times influence national policies, rules and regulations.

> Transparency is borne out of real life compromises, rather than "pristine policy analyses"
>
> Fung, Graham & Weil (2007)

- The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) works with its 34 country member states to set up core principles to improve transparency and governance of tax incentives in developing countries. They support most developing countries focused on economic reform to clarify tax incentives offered and transaction processes with international companies helping them address their weak structures and rules. It is the OECD's hope that by following these principles, member countries will have improved investment opportunities and the visibility and benefits earned by member states will influence emerging markets in Africa and Asia to do the same –thus enhancing their own economies and promoting fair trade.

Transparency as a right to public information: Is it a right to know or to understand?

A watchdog questions whether the transparency measures existing in a country really encourage disclosure and if such disclosure truly leads to useful information being shared.

To ascertain to what degree disclosure occurs, a watchdog should build an understanding of the requisite legal frameworks that affect their scope of work. They do this by learning the frameworks that exist and assessing whether these provide a right to know attitude by the public or offices of authority and if these provide useful, real and tangible information that satisfies the need for knowledge and understanding by interested parties. They should also provide strategies for how to handle non-disclosure in settings that provide obscure entry-points via existing legal or policy frameworks.

Studies done on the subject show that **strong transparency policies do not simply increase information - they aim to do more. For instance, they increase knowledge, reduce risks and influence choice, action and the decision making of information users and disclosers (**Fung, Graham, and Weil, 2007). A watchdog could monitor to what degree this is so.

The above issues and considerations form a picture of the real environment within which watchdogs exist. So, what is one to do?

To push for better transparency, one needs first to know what one wants to achieve in their drive for transparency. Next, is an acknowledgement of the obstacles expected such as political issues or other power plays). Next, a watchdog may choose to test their initial ideas before taking action. They may do so via discussions, briefs/papers, seminars and articles that will then help them identify or map out the common characteristics, roots and challenges of the transparency issues they seek to address and their prevailing dynamics. It is good to do this at times to clarify one's objectives, measure tangible outcomes or validate the process or work done. Only then can a watchdog implement action that either seeks solutions or influences change within the targeted policies or audiences.

2.2 What is accountability?

Accountability is infused with different meanings, standards and criteria all based on who is using the term and where the locus of responsibility lies. It however implies **a sense of responsibility for the effects of one's actions and a willingness to explain or be criticized for them**. The term is based also on different interpretations and understanding of who is to be held accountable, by whom, how and for what. This can become too conceptual and difficult to impose at times.

Accountability ensures the following: due process, compliance, enforcement, transparency, answerability, participation in decision making, and in some cases, the ability to seek redress. It can be categorised as follows:

1. **Social accountability** – focusing on holding government and those in power accountable for their actions
2. **Upward accountability** - referring to the responsibility an organisation has to its donors
3. **Downward accountability** - describing the bottom-up relationship that an organisation has with the people or communities it serves, where the power to questions lies with the community served

4. **Horizontal accountability** – describing situations where peers hold each other accountable, particularly where they are of the same stature or level.
5. **Diagonal accountability** or hybrid forms of accountability – referring to where both horizontal and vertical forms are present at the same time.
6. **Financial accountability** – focusing on reporting or tracking the use of money against a set budget or plan.
7. **Performance accountability** – focusing on tracking of results of a programme against set targets.

Note: Accountability can also involve several stakeholders with varying degrees of power or influence, and usually with competing interests.

Key features of accountability:

- Clarity on who is responsible for what
- Responsiveness to scrutiny or inquiry
- The ability, and willingness to be answerable; to be held to account for relevant matters
- Clear communication about questions raised, leading to answers that meet the needs of citizens or targeted beneficiaries

Accountability involves both **answerability** (i.e. the responsibility of office-bearers to provide information and justification for their actions, especially when outcomes are not achieved as expected) and **enforceability** (i.e. the possibility of penalties or consequences for failing to answer accountability claims).

Accountability is also linked to monitoring and evaluation, which provides a way of tracking the degree of compliance and for generating information of how things got to where they are.

What are prerequisites for accountability to happen?

Accountability can be assessed against a standard or norm -- a **benchmark** to denote whether progress has been made.

An **accountability framework** helps to ensure obligations are met and to encourage responsible parties to meet those obligations. Without them, there is a risk that anyone in the accountability chain may engage in opportunistic behaviour.

Frameworks/mechanisms may be reinforced with **rules and sanctions** that govern compliance and punishment, but may also involve **positive remedial actions** such as information sharing, learning and institutional change.

The following are **example of accountability frameworks/mechanisms**:

- Laws that govern citizen health rights make the state primarily responsible for health needs. Thus the state must provide funding, services and oversight. Within health, accountability would mean relevant public officials are responsible (and answerable) to someone, e.g. citizens or reporting agencies, for meeting benchmarks for performance. In this case, accountability implies that some actors within health systems have the right to hold others to these standards, and apply sanctions if they are not met. At the global level, international organisations may both set the standards and monitor performance towards achieving them. The World Health Organisation provides a series of benchmarks and expected targets for performance by its member states, and uses country

assessments to determine how well these are met, using a Country Accountability Framework assessment template. An online planning tool allows country roadmaps to be collated and digitally reviewed by major stakeholders across the globe. While there are no sanctions for poor performers, good performers are congratulated with accolades as well as potential additional funding from donors who want to contribute to these achievements.

- In the aid sector, expectations around **mutual accountability** and **transparency** have grown, particularly since 2005, when many donor governments signed up to principles of accountability described in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (see below). Signatories have become more transparent in reporting and monitoring their own spending and impact. Britain is one such country. In 2010, the government supported the development of an independent watchdog agency called "the *Independent Commission on Aid Impact*" (http://icai.independent.gov.uk/) created to scrutinize the use, effectiveness and impact of the government's aid - this despite DFID, like most other donor agencies, having internal and external auditing mechanisms responsible for tracking all spending and reporting by their beneficiaries.
- For years, donors have asked for an accounting of how resources are used by implementers of their grants and are now demanding more evidence of "results" and performance that can be linked to funding. During the 2008 economic crisis, many development donors found it harder to justify their spending on foreign development projects as their taxpayers wanted that money retained in-country to serve their own national problems. Such donors therefore sought more evidence of measurable results and efficiency in how the money was used; linking these to the benefits drawn by their countries overseas. The Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, mentioned below, provided an accountability framework to push for better results.

Watchdogs aiming to improve transparency and accountability do not operate in a vacuum, but base their work on an aid system that is built on a few internationally agreed frameworks such as those below.

a) The Paris Declaration (2005): Both the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action are founded on five core principles, born out of decades of experience of what works and what does not. The principles are as follows:

1. Ownership: Aid recipient countries are to take the lead and forge their own national development strategies with their parliaments and electorates. Donors then fund those priorities.
2. Alignment: Donors are to support national strategies, based on national plans.
3. Harmonization: Donors are to work to streamline their efforts in-country.
4. Managing for results: Both aid recipients and donors are to develop policies and programmes that achieve clear goals, with progress towards these goals to be monitored.
5. Mutual Accountability: Donors and recipients alike to be jointly responsible for achieving these goals.

b) In 2008, **the Accra Agenda for Action** took stock of progress since Paris with the aim of accelerating advancement towards the Paris targets and proposed the following three main improvements:

- Ownership: That countries should have more say over their development processes through wider

participation in development policy formulation, stronger leadership on aid co-ordination and more use of country systems for aid delivery.

- Inclusive partnerships: That all partners should participate fully - including donors in the OECD Development Assistance Committee and developing countries, as well as other donors, foundations and civil society.
- Delivering results: That aid should be more focused on real and measurable impacts of development.

c) The International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) – 2008: IATI is a voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiative that aims to make it easier to track how much aid is being provided, what it is being spent on, and what it aims to achieve. This helps to ensure that aid is used in the most effective ways to fight poverty. IATI advocates that being transparent about aid flows helps in the following ways:

- Governments can better plan and manage the aid they receive.
- Citizens of developing countries can better understand what aid their country is receiving, so they can hold their governments to account.
- Citizens of donor countries can better understand how their taxes are being used to fight poverty in the developing world.
- Donors and development agencies can better co-ordinate their efforts.
- Parliaments and non-governmental organisations in developing countries can track aid flows and ensure that aid is spent wisely.

d) **Newer accountability methods** are being developed to handle changing global health dynamics. These now compete with the traditional accountability structures above. The following are an example:

- Peer regulation initiatives: where entities similar in calibre or standing develop a set of standards to abide by. These are usually binding and failure to meet usually comes with sanctions.
- Voluntary codes of practice: similar to the initiatives above, but may go beyond sector related issues or go beyond basic standards set by a group of peers. These are seen as best practices and are usually not formally binding.
- Community accountability and transparency initiatives: where citizen groups or social/grassroots organisations develop a set of standards to hold the state and their peers against. Particularly regarding public benefits and services.

2.3 The link between transparency and accountability

Is transparency the precursor to accountability?

Transparency focuses on the quality of information. This quality is usually measured based on how open information sources are, if the information provided is in the required format and what the impact generated by that information is. Accountability focuses on the processes and responsible actors that lead to the provision of quality information and the channels for feedback and answerability. *Conclusion: For one to be accountable, one must first be transparent.*

Accountability is not a one-way street. The person pointing has a few questions to answer as well. Thus, it is as important for a watchdog to be accountable as it is for them to demand accountability from others

2.4 The consequences of transparency and accountability

2.4.1 When transparency and accountability hurt

The need for transparency and accountability is based on the assumption that access to (public) information is a citizen's basic right. In democratic societies, this implies also the freedom by citizens to question, investigate, report, publish, critique and reveal publicly held information.

There are consequences to such openness, even in democratic societies. It enhances the citizen's knowledge about various issues thus opening them up to more in-depth and thorough dialogue and discussions that may either improve policy and decisions made by the state or raise uncomfortable questions. Also, some levels of transparency can cause leaks in national security or confuse national responses which may be detrimental.

In all the examples provided above, the benefits of accountability and transparency are clear, including improved performance, participation and involvement, increased feelings of competency and commitment by those involved, more creativity and innovation, and higher morale and satisfaction with the work done. However transparency and accountability can also be seen as euphemisms for "punishment" where non-performers have to face "the consequences". Such perceptions can have unintended consequences and encourage tradeoffs between accountability/transparency on the one hand, and performance on the other hand.

The following are examples of where transparency either didn't work out as intended or was affected due to an event:

- Premature disclosure has affected a number of planned clinical trials and researchers are now less open when detailing their grant or research applications to protect their ideas, opting to leave out critical research protocols that evaluators need to assess viability and ethical and other issues.
- In 2011, the Global Fund (www.theglobalfund.org) faced accusations of fraud and corruption in four of its recipient countries, a fact made known to The Associated Press through the Fund's publicly accessible audits and investigation reports. The Fund, well known for its accountability and transparency principles which it enforces throughout its global and country level grant management and oversight systems, found itself fighting these claims and was forced to restructure its systems to save face. Since then, many observers have noted a decline in its levels of transparency regarding some types of documents, data or official communication provided directly by the Fund or via their website.
- Researchers from Oxford University and Warwick Business School showed that transparency or accountability frameworks that led to media and other public reports had a negative effect on doctors' practice and increased defensive behaviour in doctors and their staff (McGivern et.al,

2010). Managers need their employees to inform them of problems when they occur. However, such free flow of information is guaranteed only when an employee feels safe enough to communicate their observations or fears without recrimination. A Harvard Business School study[3] showed that hospitals that do not punish people for medical errors had better performance and fewer medical errors overall than those that do. This study did not include persistently incompetent or seriously unethical behaviour but the findings prove that non-punitive environments encourage people to reveal information and allow learning that improves the relevant systems.

- In health, patients or their families may sue a doctor for sharing information on their diagnosis, if such information causes the patient severe depression and suicidal thoughts. This might be seen as "harming" the patient which goes against a doctor's professional intentions. However, studies[4] have shown that a majority of terminally ill patients prefer to know the truth about their conditions and seek the requisite support to prepare for death by dealing with finances and spending time with family and friends.
- The aftermath of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks prompted many U.S. government agencies to improve cooperation, coordination and sharing of information but there are many examples of how the U.S. government, in its attempt to fight terrorism, has made deliberate effort to become less open. The following are a few examples:
    - The UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) noted that post 9/11, many U.S. and non-U.S. states have adopted laws that undermine freedom of expression on the grounds of national security. Studies show that the war on terrorism is undermining about half of the minimum standards set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[5];
    - There are cases where information that might be crucial to fully assessing threats is withheld because it is linked to judicial proceedings against individuals charged with activities associated with terrorism or for fear of compromising information sources[6];
    - There are cases where several websites have been shut down by the U.S. government, media professionals licenses terminated or suspended, and requests made by the government to have certain information removed from websites[7]

2.4.2 Lack of transparency and accountability: consequences and action

The following are potential consequences of a lack of transparency and accountability. These are made in reference to health and the donor aid provided to improve health systems.

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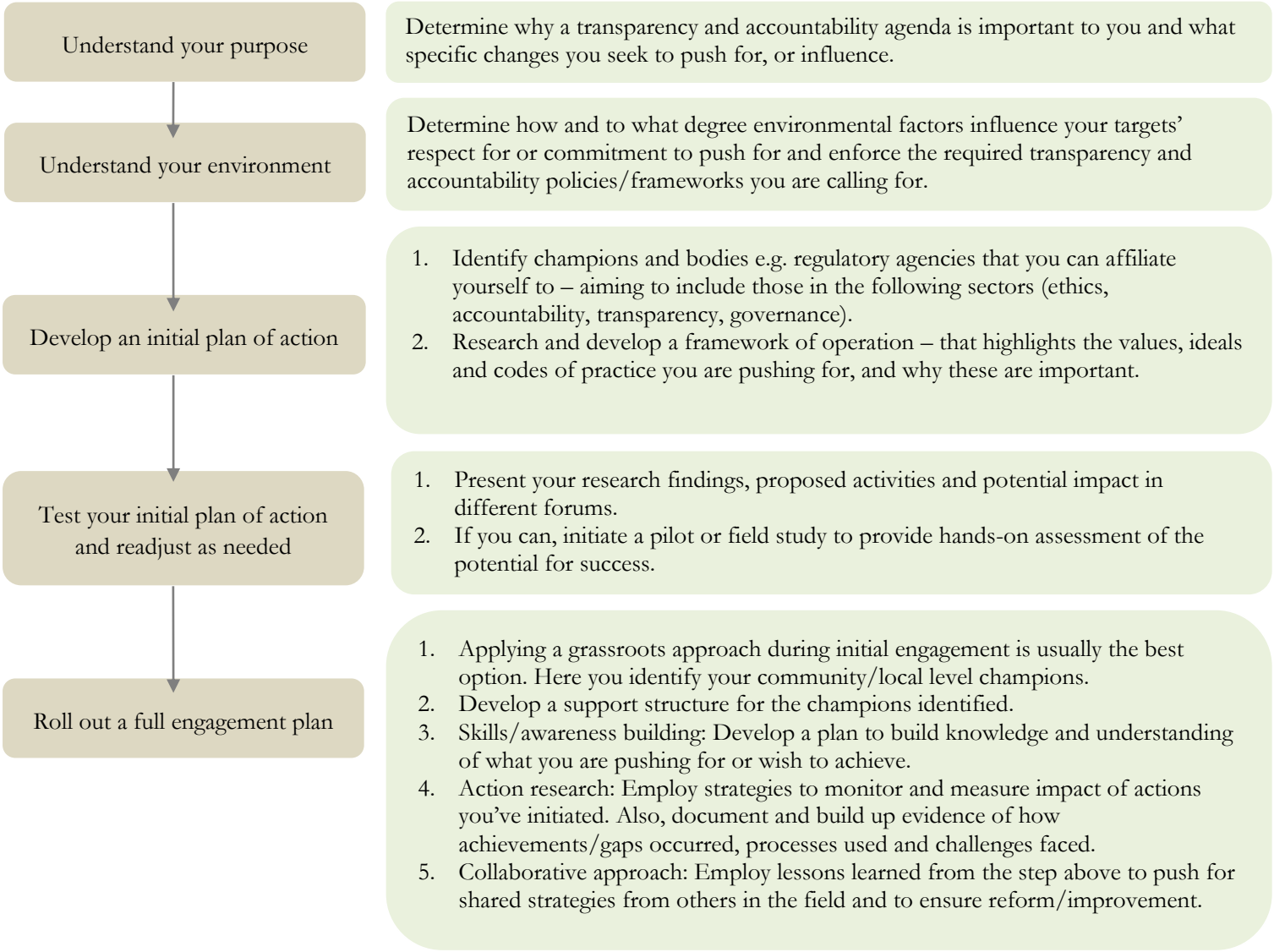
[3] Accountability, transparency and their unintended consequences - http://fcw.com/Blogs/Lectern/2010/10/Steve-Kelman-accountability-transparency-performance-improvement.aspx?m=1
[4] http://ethics.missouri.edu/truth-telling.aspx
[5] 2008, Aidan White, General Secretary, International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)
[6] 2005, Combating Terrorism and Its Implications for the Security Sector by the Swedish National Defence College
[7] https://w2.eff.org/Privacy/Surveillance/Terrorism/antiterrorism_chill.html#usgovrequestsremove

Consequences:

- Budgetary decisions are based on incomplete or inaccurate information, misdirecting meagre resources
- Developing countries miss opportunities to extend their funding because their policies are not evidence-based
- Fewer people access life-saving interventions and the fight against the spread of diseases is hampered
- Donors and receiving governments lack the information needed for effective coordination and subsequent resource mobilisation
- Both recipients and donors are unsure if they are fulfilling their commitments to meet their health-related goals

Obstacles to accountability include, weak reporting, inconsistent performance assessments and lack of political will, human resource constraints, information and technology issues, fraud and corruption, excessive complications in budgets and reporting lines, lack of competence or responsibility and unclear roles at different levels.

A simplified watchdog model for improving transparency and accountability



2.4.3 Case Study 1 Transparency and accountability within the Global Fund

Transparency and accountability are two of the Global Fund's core principles. The Global Fund holds its recipients accountable to strict standards that require programmes to reach specific targets throughout the life of the grant. The public can track the progress of all grants via its website (www.theglobalfund.org), which also publishes independent evaluations of the organisation's own performance and shares documents discussed at Board meetings. The following are various ways the Global Fund is working towards improving its impact on aid transparency and accountability:

- The Global Fund supports the development of national strategies by pushing for clarity on and alignment to national processes. The Fund also applies its performance based focus to push countries to develop better systems for tracking and overseeing grant money and improving data collection and reporting. This helps improve the efficacy of national planning, implementation and reporting.
- Financing goes directly to Principal Recipients (PRs) – entities that sign grant agreements and are held contractually responsible for the grant implementation and reporting. They are overseen by an inclusive multi-sectoral committee that allows critique of the PRs grant by state and non-state actors. PRs can be either from government, private sector and civil society including faith-based organisations. This forces national systems to be as inclusive and cooperative as possible, which allows for more openness and responsiveness.
- **The Fund's business model encourages the building of multiple accountability systems that mitigate risk and ensure investments are used for intended purposes. These accountability systems are as follows:** (1) PRs have their own monitoring and evaluation systems and employ external grant evaluators or auditors, usually external and independent firms; (2) Local Fund Agents (LFAs) provide key grant reporting verification to the Global Fund; (3) the Office of the Inspector General, an independent system that audits or investigates multiple levels of the Fund's fiduciary and programmatic systems and reports directly to the Global Fund board; and (4) the CCMs which provide an oversight role that serves to verify reporting and do trouble shooting. Within the Fund's public-private-partnership model, the multiple categories of stakeholders and technical supporters also provide additional safeguard in critiquing the systems, but only if done in a coordinated, well-intentioned and well informed way.

The focus on accountability by the Global Fund is a key strength.

The Global Fund has succeeded in mobilizing longer-term financing for global health with limited "strings attached" as compared to some other donors. The Fund has tried to minimize the creation of parallel structures, and to build stronger monitoring and evaluation systems to track performance. Donors and other stakeholders can easily find information on how funds have been allocated and are being disbursed. The Global Fund website holds copies of all approved funding applications, signed grant agreements, grant performance reports, board decisions and all policy documents.

However, even though much information is available on the website, it is often not easy to interpret or even locate. Therefore organisations like Aidspan work to make the grant information even more easily accessible and digestible through their own website, or through other work, such as guides, reports and short analyses. To facilitate easier access, an innovative system was developed that allows users access to Global Fund grant data in order to get a better understanding of disbursement patterns and performance of each grant. See http://www.aidspan.org/page/grants-country and http://www.aidspan.org/page/grant-performance-analysis.

Global Fund's Current Accountability Status

In a 2012 report by *Publish What You Fund* (The Global Campaign for Aid Transparency, http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/index/2012-index/, the Global Fund was rated as the third most transparent donor in the world. In 2013 it was down to number 6 and 10 in 2014.

Transparency index reports showed that the Global Fund published and regularly updated disbursement reports on its website, making it easy to track the money the Fund had given out.

The Global Fund's Office of the Inspector General identified a number of weaknesses in the functioning of the Fund, as highlighted in the *OIG's Progress Report, November 2010 to March 2011* available here. According to the report, CCMs lack accountability and suffer serious conflicts of interest that render them incapable of performing their oversight role because they include grant recipients as members. Weak financial management and accounting systems, as well as incompetence among some stakeholders, increase the risk of losses and fraud, and stolen drugs. Also, 37% of the grants were found to problems with the quality of grant-related data.

A 2012 press release by the Global Fund of Analysis of Audits and Investigations showed that, cumulatively, 3% of the funding that was investigated was not spent in compliance with the grant agreements, as follows:

- Ineligible expenses – or activities not covered by the grant agreements – 1.1%
- Inadequately substantiated due to poor or missing documentation – 1.1%
- Fraud – 0.5%
- Failed to report funds as required – 0.3 %.

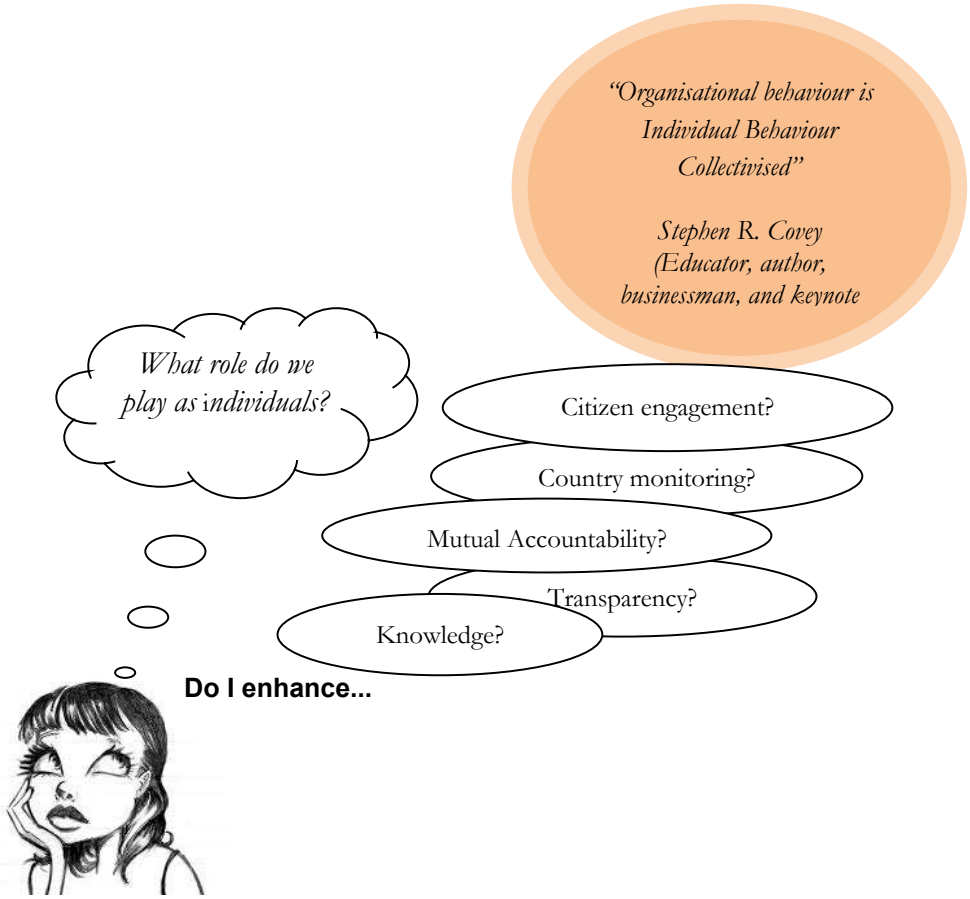
The Global Fund explained that this analysis does not represent a comprehensive accounting of all misspent funds. Also the results are not necessarily representative of general misspending, as audits tend to focus mostly on high-risk countries.

To ensure data quality, external service providers with expertise in public health conduct Data Quality Audits on a small sample of grants each year (between 12 and 20 grants). The method used by the Global Fund to audit data quality is based on internationally accepted standards on monitoring and evaluation, and was developed with help from major partners including the World Health Organisation, Stop TB Partnership, Roll Back Malaria Partnership and UNAIDS, amongst others.

Note: Chapter 6 of this guide contains information about where to find key data on the Global Fund website.

3 What is local watchdogging?

Chapter 3



A local watchdog refers to anyone at the community, national or regional level who wants to watch over something of public interest, say funding flows by donor agencies like the Global Fund. In this sense, watchdogging refers to the protection of the primary beneficiaries of grants and projects or patients and community members who would suffer should money be diverted, embezzled or not spent efficiently.

The challenge for watchdogs is striking a balance between reporting on the good work being done at the country-level and reporting on some of what has not or is not working well. This chapter and the next teach one this important skill.

> *This guide uses Aidspan's experiences as a health watchdog, among other types of work done by other organisations, to reach out to local organisations that want to do similar work. The aim is to have more effective training and mentorship in various areas. This includes building knowledge on basic sourcing of information on grants, implementation and effective oversight, and having critical analysis about accountability issues among those concerned.*

3.1 Characteristics of an effective local watchdog

Watchdogs are required to keep track of relevant current affairs, debates and related online/offline communities.

They need knowledge of relevant policies, the political nuances, decision-making bodies and the entities or groups to target. .

Effective watchdogs are characterised as follows:

- **Independent** – operate cooperatively but at arm's length from all targeted stakeholders
- **Neutral** – maintain objectivity and accuracy in all they do
- **Helpful** – share best practice and lessons learned with others and in-country partners
- **Knowledgeable** – learn about the policies and procedures of the Global Fund, and follow best practice in their investigations
- **Responsive** – adhere to the needs of people who bring matters to their attention.
- **Part of the solution** – identify systemic issues, and make balanced, useful and achievable recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness and accountability of the monitored programmes and operations in their country.
- **Confidential** – protect the identity of complainants and keep sensitive material confidential.
- **Aware of issues in-country** – explore what may hinder or provide a suitable environment for watchdogging

How to do a media scan

- Set up subject tags on Google Alerts (and other alerts)
- Select the most convenient from the many software apps that make scanning of news by digital media more efficient. These include social media monitoring tools. Such tools provide automated alerts which are set-up and filtered via key words. Most are simple to use on mobile devices and some can collate all social media platforms onto one platform.
- Subscribe to the digital platforms provided by relevant print or broadcasting media. These add depth and context to news covered and allow feedback from a wide variety of people. A watchdog should identify which of these they need to be part of and subscribe to emails or use RSS feeds.

Note: Media scanning can require a lot of time and commitment, and is usually more easily managed by a group of people with different capacities; even better, by a group of people specialised in the area of interest.

Watchdogs need to present themselves as respectable professionals, not just as activists with their own agenda. They should know how to pick their battles and to find the right approach according to the circumstances and target audience. Their efforts should relate to their objectives, and must be seen as impartial. The strategies provided below are a guide on how to do this.

3.1.1 Five strategic approaches for local watchdogs

The following are five strategies used by local watchdogs. Steps and tools are also provided.

1. ***Assessment and Monitoring:*** *Create a baseline to help measure progress or change as a result of your watchdog work.*

Example of how to apply this:

Do a survey among stakeholders to come up with the necessary baseline information. A watchdog that has the required capacity and reputation can do this. If not, it would be advisable to task a respected institution to do it. By outsourcing the survey, the watchdog also avoids the risk of appearing biased or even meddling with the results, depending of the outcome. However, it should be noted that this option is not easy if resources are limited.

Your baseline should also address the following:

Step One: Be clear on why you are targeting an issue/entity

1. **Broad goal:** What do you want to achieve over the long term?
2. **Specific objectives:** What are the first measurable steps you need to accomplish within the next 12 months to move toward your goal?
3. **Mapping stakeholders, decision makers or influencers:** Who makes your objectives a reality? Who do you need to persuade and to take what specific action?

Step Two: Map your key influencers

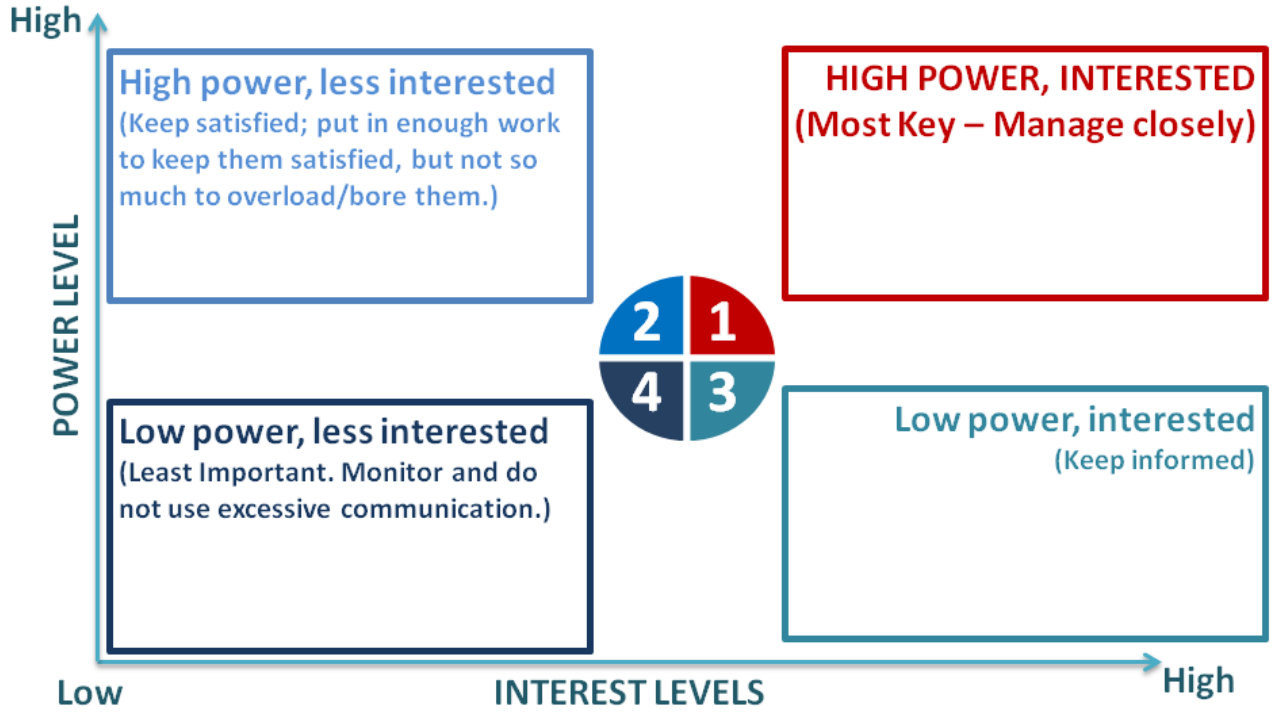


Figure 1: Stakeholder mapping tool

Step Three: Map your environment/context

Internal Scan: What are your organisation's/group's assets and challenges that may impact your watchdog work/project and available resources (budget, staffing skills, resources, reputation, relationships, allies etc.)?	
Assets:	**Challenges:**
External Scan: What is already happening outside your organisation that may impact your strategy either positively or negatively (e.g. timing of the issue, similar events or discussions, potential competitors, barriers that audiences may face to take action, other potential obstacles or opportunities)?	
Assets:	**Challenges:**

Define Your Position: The key is to understand how the issue is currently perceived. Do you need a plan that will frame, fortify and amplify or reframe?

- ☐ Frame (no one is talking about your issue and you need to tell them why they should)
- ☐ Fortify and Amplify (you like the direction the debate is headed and want to push it further)
- ☐ Reframe (you want to change the current direction of discussions about your issue)

2. ***Access to information**: Improving stakeholders' access to information so that they may participate in decision-making more effectively.*

Example of how to apply this:

Here the watchdog may look at how the targeted systems share information. If such sharing is a problem, the watchdog may then advocate for the creation of websites, more open distribution of meeting minutes and advertise how feedback from target audiences may be obtained. They may also advocate for the right of access to information through legislation or through action by government agencies, e.g. the Ministries of health.

Step Four: Access accurate information

The information you have may be interesting, but is it accurate?

a. Start with sources that you know are reputable e.g. internationally or nationally recognised agencies.
b. Assess your sources ensuring they are citable and verifiable. The more citations and links you can provide the better. Often information sources even provide contacts of authors or have formal publishers or a copyright provision.
c. Be wary when authors' credentials do not relate to the topic. They may not be qualified to discuss the subject.
d. Guard against bias by you or your source by comparing several points of reference. For instance, assess if the source is an obvious or historical supporter of the issue being tracked and what counter-arguments are provided from other sources.
e. Ensure the information you've collected is complete and current.
f. Clarify if the data you've provided comes from primary or secondary sources. If you are reporting facts from a research paper, for instance, that is a primary source. The further way from primary sources, the less credible the information becomes.
g. Be alert when obtaining information from for-profit websites which are usually less interested in providing balanced information.

3. ***Ethics and integrity**: Developing or promoting tools that clarify what is expected from professionals. These include developing monitoring mechanisms that ensure the professionals adhere to their commitments and are sanctioned if they break public trust.*

Example of how to apply this:

When monitoring a system and its stakeholders, a watchdog could raise awareness about existing policy documents, for instance, a code of conduct, or a conflict of interest policy. Educating a wider audience about the "rules of the game" will leverage action and push for more standardised processes.

Step Five: Know your stuff

Do your research:

a. Learn all there is to know to be able to explain and discuss the background and history of the issue(s), situation(s), and entities that you're concerned with
b. Gather the facts about the current state of the issue, and/or about the current policies and practices of the entities you're concerned with
c. Build a network and cultivate sources

4. ***Institutional reforms**: Streamlining and simplifying administrative procedures and structural innovations that promote participation and accountability.*

Example of how to apply this:

The local watchdog could use his/her assessment of the functioning of the targeted system with a particular focus on the interactions between the key stakeholders and suggest more effective means of communication (e.g. create a post for a qualified communication officer); and decision-making (e.g. suggest guidelines or standards for meetings or interaction with members).

Step Six: Decide whether to take action

Decide what you're going to do with the information you have. The following are your options:

a. Do nothing
b. Go public
c. Use the information as leverage
d. Take official action (if you have the mandate)

Actions include:

a. Filing requests for information and tracking action taken against these requests.
b. Tracking policy and legal framework that encourage access to relevant bits of information, and educating people on how to use these.
c. Attending public meetings or tracking processes to observe or contribute.
d. Disseminating real-time local news that isn't captured in the media. Provide a platform (online or in-person) for public access to this news.
e. Organise Panel discussions.

5. ***Targeting specific issues: Using specific issues as entry points for improving transparency. These must be important in terms of local development and have the potential to give rise to positive changes in local governance.***

Example of how to apply this in relation to the Fund:

Drawing the attention of all stakeholders to specific issues could unite them towards a common goal. The reaction of targeted audiences depends on a common theme, for instance, highlighting delays in disbursement of public funds due to lack of adequate reporting from a public unit, or inadequate reports of the lack of life-saving medications at a health centre and the possible causes.

Step Seven: Tailor your message for more effectiveness

Tailor the information you have to target those who can cause institutional reform. Consider the following:

a. **Readiness:** Gauge the level of knowledge and potential for action of your key influencers.
b. **Core Concerns:** Compel the audience to move towards your objective by identifying existing beliefs or values to tap into that resonate with your audience; identifying also what might be a barrier.
c. **Approach:** Plan how you will approach your audience with the subject.
d. **Message:** List the key points you want to make with each target audience.
e. **Messengers:** Identify the best connection with the audience – pick from their social reference group, a trusted leader or other entity your audience respects.
f. **Tactics:** Know what you will use to deliver your messages to your target audience(s) (e.g. meetings, Web sites, newsletters, press events, letters, phone calls, paid advertising)?

3.1.2 Being a critical friend – friendly watchdogging

A watchdog's ultimate goal is to make things work better. "Friendly Watchdogging" was developed to reflect this, meaning **watchdog work that strives to support and build, is not adversarial and will not report findings in a sensationalist manner.**

A monitor would have first to determine whether a problem within the system has been caused by human or systemic errors, or by intentional wrongdoing, e.g. attempts to defraud. When inefficiencies or problems are a consequence of mistakes or incompetence, these individuals will try to explore ways of addressing the issue with the people involved, and not always rushing to expose issues publicly. This is what it means to adopt a **friendly watchdog** approach.

Useful tips:

1. Know when to wait before going public, especially regarding controversial or delicate issues that may affect the system being watched.
2. At such times and if the ethical thing to do, offer the organisation being watched an opportunity to respond to the issues raised.
3. Follow up on attempts made by the responsible units to bring about change before the story breaks. Report these efforts as well. .

4. A friendly watchdog's job is not to humiliate, shame or blame but is to achieve necessary changes within the system being targeted in the most effective way. A friendly watchdog wants to help provide solutions to gaps identified, or get others talking about finding solutions.

Note: Being critical while also communicating and helping find solutions behind the scenes has nothing to do with sweeping issues under the carpet or betraying the public. It does not mean letting the party concerned off the hook.

By communicating privately, a watchdog affords the targeted entity the opportunity to discretely correct mistakes or punish wrongdoing, without damaging its reputation. Reputational damage is a consequence a watchdog needs to be acutely aware they can cause. This could happen if the watchdog chooses to publicize a case regardless of the consequences, and as such, negatively impacts on an organisation's capacity to do its life-saving work, especially if erroneous.

Table 1: How to be a friendly watchdog – examples focusing on the Global Fund

Methods	Activities	Results
Private communications	• emails/ telephone calls, and holding face to face meetings	Allows the Global Fund to correct mistakes or take action against identified issues without damaging its reputation. This allows it to continue saving lives, while addressing wrongdoing or simple errors (human or systemic errors) without public attention that could adversely affect the capacity of the organisation to do its work.
Reporting the positive	• Recognising in publications, articles or in person good work done • Reporting positive actions taken by the Fund to correct mistakes and avoid embezzlement	Increases public awareness of the Fund and its success in fighting the three diseases. It also reminds the public of the novelty of such mechanisms and the need to support learning and development through constructive criticism. We are after all, supporters pushing for the Fund's effectiveness; not its humiliation or alienation.
Reporting the negative	• Ensuring that the public, including the Global Fund Secretariat are aware of an issue • Follow-up on action taken (or not taken)	Contributes to ensuring transparency and open-mindedness about Global Fund issues. Additionally, involves reporting negative issues in an objective fact-based manner that allows room for feedback, and portrays the Global Fund Secretariat and those outside as able deal with critical issues and subsequent criticisms, instead of trying to hide them or be defensive.
Publishing important information	• Ensure clarity during funding applications and other announcements • Developing guides	Increases knowledge about the Global Fund. Analyses and researches from various sources of information, especially when obtained from sources that are considered independent

	• Doing grant analysis and research to inform targeted processes and structures	

Example of watchdog work by Aidspan:

Aidspan's watchdog activities have had a significant impact in a number of ways

- Aidspan published a GFO (www.aidspan.org/gfo) article about difficulties that applicants were having with the Fund's online application form and Fund procedures were subsequently improved.
- A Ugandan GFO reader informed Aidspan of irregularities in the selection of grant sub-recipients (SRs). Aidspan forwarded details to the Global Fund. After looking into the matter, the Fund suspended its grants to Uganda for ten weeks. The government of Uganda also conducted a public inquiry, which produced findings that were highly critical of the Ministry of Health.
- After interviewing several Global Fund employees, Aidspan sent a confidential memo to the Global Fund Board Chair raising a number of concerns about internal Secretariat procedures. The Chair initiated an external audit whose findings motivated the Board to agree on a number of changes.
- Repeated requested for improvements in data quality has led to improvements in completeness of data in a number of the databases on the Fund's website.

3.2 Who can be a local watchdog?

A watchdog can be anyone...

- a **civil society organisation** interested in health or governance,
- a person or **a group of affected people**
- a **journalist** who follows budget or health issues,
- a **member of parliament** dedicated to openness and achieving results,
- a member of a governmental or non-governmental agency that wants **ensure their own organisation performs well**,
- a **policy analyst**, **activist** or other **individual** interested in systems like the Global Fund, health and related issues.

A watchdog may play different roles as seen in Chapter 1 but at country level certain nuances come to play in more distinct ways. These are dictated largely by how a local watchdog positions itself locally i.e. **by being part of the system they are monitoring or by participating from outside the system.**

Conflicts of interest: It is expected that people who are somehow affiliated to the system have a keen interest in watching it as success or failure of the system has a direct impact on their own work as implementers, managers or beneficiaries.

For example, within the Global Fund system, those that receive grants or oversee grants are interested in issues related to the Fund's processes, funding flows, reporting requirements and performance. This is because success at various levels links directly to the success of supported grants or to future funding from the same entity or other sources.

Conflicts of interest occur where watchdog work gets influenced by grant recipients, managers or other actors who prefer not to be scrutinised. This is made worse when the watchdog entity is also a recipient either of money or of some other form of benefit from the system being monitored. **A local watchdog must strike a balance that allows objective and independent watching without being compromised.**

Dealing with conflicts of interest: The following statement is an example of a situation where conflicts of interest pose a potential risk - a compromise of the independence and objectivity of a potential watchdog.

"Since the introduction of dual track financing, Global Fund grants are being awarded to government agencies and CSOs independently from each other. Many CSOs are as a result now more focused on accessing Global Fund money or becoming CCM members to gain more decision making influence. ***As a consequence, they are less able to watch over the implementation of Global Fund grants."***

A watchdog therefore should **possess the necessary independence to do a good job**. They have to be aware of the potential conflicts of interest that will affect their ability to act independently either as individuals, or as employees of an organisation with a certain stand. They have to identify and address possible conflicts with their employer, their colleagues, donors, political or other decision makers, partners, or with the communities they serve. They need to identify what they are willing to do, or are not.

Note: In countries with weak rule of law, it is recommendable that a watchdog does not act as an individual but looks for the relative security of a bigger entity or at least a circle of like-minded individuals. Chapter 4 of this guide provides more on working in hostile or potentially dangerous environments.

The most appropriate and effective watchdog arrangement is one that is built on existing structures and processes, and which is tailored to the specific features of a given country. Such a watchdog should be able to avoid or mitigate conflicts of interest.

3.2.1 The key steps to local watchdogging:

1. Watchdogs find relevant and accurate information, and make it accessible to those interested. To gauge its accuracy the watchdogs may use the tips in the table provided in Chapter 1.
2. Watchdogs are an independent set of eyes, preferably outside the system. By questioning and verifying

information about a system, a watchdog acts as an informal "monitoring and evaluation officer" – but without the benefit of having complete access to detailed information. Therefore to get a basic understanding of the status of the system in question, a watchdog should be keen, questioning, innovative, consistent, well researched and well connected.

3. Watchdogs carry out analyses and comment on events and developments; they ascertain verifiable facts and thus discourage misinformation.

4. Watchdogs establish themselves as trustworthy; able to confirm and disseminate the facts. In this way they create incentives for the involved to tell the truth as well, and to recognise that hiding facts would not be in their best interest.

In order to achieve all this, it is crucial that the watchdog applies the same measuring yardstick (i.e. set of standards) for its own activities. "**One cannot comment about the twig in the other person's eye, without first removing the log in their own."**

The watchers, and the ones being watched, need to build and maintain trustworthiness and fairness by applying the same set of standards they hold others to.

3.2.2 A Local Watchdog's Checklist

Most local watchdogs, particularly those working in the health sector, usually aim to save or improve more lives by maximizing the use of available resources. They do this by contributing to well-functioning systems that promote effective implementation, e.g. of donor or public money.

To achieve this goal, the most basic objectives for a local watchdog are to:

a. improve access to relevant information in the country and enhance discussions and knowledge of stakeholders

b. clarify the relationships between the key administrative structures at the donor agency and key in-country

EXAMPLES OF LOCAL WATCHDOGS

In Uganda, CSOs prefer to work as a group of concerned organisations and individuals. "The government is prone to seeing us as hostile."

In Burundi, CSOs prefer to pool behind one lead organisation, e.g. one recognised in health rights or governance. This allows smaller organisations feel safer to participate.

In Tanzania, a health advocacy organisation (SIKIKA), prefers to do its tracking of public funds to HIV/AIDS primarily through its own team of internal analysts, with support from more established budget monitoring agencies (www.sikika.or.tz)

In Sierra Leone, the Accountability Alert-Sierra Leone's (AA –SL) is established as a legally recognized and registered watchdog agency that monitors other NGOs. It focuses on inadequate accountability and transparency within the NGO sector; a sector that is given significant responsibility to develop the country www.aalert.org

In Kenya, the Transparency International (Kenya) uses a network of community resource people to implement its Citizen Demand project. They do integrity studies and train communities to demand accountability from duty bearers within the social sectors e.g. water, health and education; also working around local governance and decentralised financing.

It is advised that watchdog groups generate visibility with government officials and entities, but maintain an independent spirit. Transparency International: http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/tools_to_support_transparency_in_local_governance

partners in order to strengthen coordination and communication

c. assess how funds are allocated and measure the results that are achieved or expected

d. help others better identify programmes at risk and create early warning systems so that the relevant people at the country level can be informed, for timely action

e. hold itself accountable for its work and actions

3.2.3 Examples of local watchdogging

Local watchdogging can target different issues. The following are examples of tracking and investigating the use of public money at local levels:

Area of activity	**Examples of watchdogging**
Reporting, describing and explaining: collecting, digesting and disseminating relevant information in whatever format, to the relevant target audiences through various means.	• Comparing grant agreements with reporting records, progress updates, minutes of key coordination or planning meetings, or other grant reports. • Interviewing health staff and beneficiaries to assess quality of data provided by grant implementers.
Validating information: setting the record straight on important issues inaccurately covered either in the media or in public debates.	• Briefing journalists and wider audiences on key misconceptions, or correcting errors made in reports about specific funds. • Writing articles and other publications that present the facts and provide an informed basis for decision making, and other types of advocacy. • Inviting stakeholders to open discussions and promoting debate.
Monitoring/investigating: tracking relevant issues to hold accountable those working for or using resources of the agencies being watched, or those who impact on the effectiveness of the funds.	• Interviewing/surveying actors at all levels • Regularly accessing grant implementation data • Making use of social media and internet platforms as sources of information, networking and communicating/testing findings.
Critiquing: assessing strengths and weaknesses, giving praise where and when it is due, providing constructive criticism where it is helpful.	Using various media and the internet to critique the status of grants being monitored and the capacity of key management or oversight structures.
Advocacy/activism: using information to lobby for certain issues to relevant decision-makers at country or regional level.	• Meeting with partners or donors specifically interested in the money being tracked to advocate, for example, to build the capacity of implementers or grant managers or to encourage key officials to be more transparent. • Devising public or private campaigns to build up pressure.
Serving as a channel for whistle-blowers: encouraging people such as those directly involved in implementation or oversight, to report irregularities on relevant issues, while protecting their identity.	• Building trust with all actors, so that they can be encouraged to blow the whistle and feel safe doing it through Aidspan. • Taking necessary precautions to protect them.

Uncovering irregularities: Making known to the relevant people or to the public, issues of malfeasance, corruption, fraud, or gross misconduct concerning relevant processes or grants in a country	• Identifying and getting the right people to hear what's been identified, and give them enough advance notice to implement the right actions.

3.2.4 Case study 2: Local organisation gains access to closed public electronic monitoring systems and monitors Malaria stock-outs in Tanzania

Sikika (http://sikika.or.tz/), a Tanzanian organisation, has been monitoring the availability of 1st line antimalarial drugs since May 2012. They use ***SMS for life***, a short message text based platform for monitoring stock-outs at primary health care facilities in Tanzania. The information obtained is then used to demand prompt and accountable action by the Tanzanian government to stop or reduce drug stock-outs, particularly in programmes funded using donor money.

SMS for life tracks weekly stocks levels of ALu and Quinine (key 1st line antimalarials) in all health facilities in Tanzania. *SMS for life* provides accurate stock data to the relevant local government authorities and Ministry staff. This enables them to monitor the stocks of antimalarial drugs and consequently take quick action on issues raised.

Data is sent to an electronic platform via mobile phone and is made accessible online and in real-time. The system isn't public and users need a password. Sikika was able to gain access to the data through some of the stakeholders who were concerned by the government's slow response in addressing shortages identified by the system. Since then, Sikika has advocated that such systems be made transparent to a wider stakeholder including civil society and other local organisations. This provides an opportunity for civil society and citizens to engage public officials using evidence when calling for action. ALu, a 1st line WHO recommended drug, is to be given free in public health facilities in Tanzania. A majority of the drugs are purchased using Global Fund money – which approved US$ 60,657,059 and disbursed US$ 44,869,885 for ALU (FY 2012/2013). Total approved funds for Malaria by GF is US$ 350,320,838, with US$ 307,675,487 disbursed. Despite these funds (and more), Malaria continues to be a number one killer disease in Tanzania.

Results/Findings

Sikika uncovered a number of stock-outs. For example, in May, 2012, 37% of health care facilities did not have ALu. They concluded that this was caused by **slow response by government** despite re-stocking alerts provided by the system. Other possible reasons for stock-outs identified were **Inadequate placement of orders**, where the systems showed that the government ordered and received only 9,835,560 doses for the period 2011-2012, while need is predicted to be about 15,600,000 doses per year. Another possible reason was **Leakage/theft**: reports by the media showed that more than 20% of ALu is diverted each year (The Citizen, November 15, 2013). The SMS for Life system couldn't substantiate these reports.

The result of Sikika's watchdogging: Sikika held consultative sessions with concerned government officials to discuss the findings, and did press statements which resulted in articles and radio programmes. A review done a year later showed that ALU stock-outs had decreased by 26%.

Source: http://sikika.or.tz/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/ALU-Brief-2-fold-630-x-297-copy1.pdf

3.2.5 Case Study 3: The Global Fund at country level

Ensuring transparency and accountability of Global Fund systems at country level is difficult mainly because, of the complex nature of the system, usually resulting in what is termed "Tricky triangles".

A "tricky triangle" is a term coined by Aidspan staff to describe the intricate nature of the different relationships between different Global Fund structures. These include the Global Fund Secretariat based in Geneva, the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) and the Principal Recipients (PRs) of Global Fund grants in each implementing country. Different sets of relationships formed by contractual obligations, reporting requirements or other factors create different dynamics and relationships. The following are a few examples:

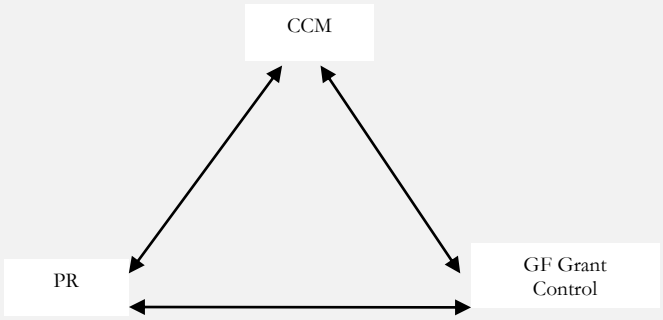


Figure 1: The 'tricky triangle' relationship between the PR, the CCM and the GF Secretariat/grant control.

Side 1 of the "Tricky Triangle": the relationship between the PR and the CCM

The grant control unit within the Global Fund Secretariat and CCMs have to deal with PRs and related grant management or reporting issues. The key problem CCMs face is that PRs are contractually obligated to report to the Fund's grant control unit and while obligated, in theory, to report to the CCM, this is not guaranteed in practice. Furthermore, CCMs have limited ability to take legal action against errant PRs as majority are not legally instituted entities. Problems are compounded when PRs are also CCM members. This can, and usually does, lead to serious conflicts of interest, controversy and lack of credibility if not well managed. The CCM in this case could be likened to a watchdog, albeit a slightly toothless one. The Fund has noted this problem and instituted policies to mitigate conflicts of interest regarding PRs in CCMs.

Side 2 of the "Tricky Triangle"2: the relationship between the PR and the Global Fund Secretariat/country teams

The relationship between the Global Fund Secretariat and the PR is contractually bound and characterised by two-way communication. Such a direct relationship particularly with aggressive PRs sidelines most CCMs which then disengage, lessening their knowledge on grant goings on and diminishing their sense of ownership and authority to require such accountability. This causes tension between the CCM and the Global Fund Secretariat, as well as between the CCM and the PRs. To address

these issues, the Fund has instituted policies and guidelines requiring that PRs report to CCMs and involve them in grant reporting and spot checks.

Side 3 of the "Tricky Triangle": the relationship between the Global Fund Secretariat's country teams, the LFA and the CCM

The Global Fund has contracted Local Fund Agents (LFAs), usually accounting firms, to verify grants reports and assess risks. LFAs may interact with CCMs and other country actors as well but have to preserve their independence. The problem occurs due to their communication with the Secretariat which takes place through separate and direct channels. Problems identified by the LFA are usually shared first with the GF secretariat before seeking clarification from the PR or CCM. The Fund has developed new terms of reference for LFAs (http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/lfa/) to remedy this.

The 3 examples above show how poor management of different relationships may lead to inefficiencies in the supervision of grants at country level. These then become alert areas for watchdogs.

How does the Global Fund benefit from local watchdogging?

a. Local watchdogs expose risks and flaws before they ruin the whole system and do so under tremendous push back from implementers, grant managers, government officials, some development partners and others. This benefit outweighs the seemingly negative side – i.e. victimisation of watchdogs by those in authority for highlighting the flaws.

   The proverb "it all comes out in the wash" illustrates that it is mostly futile to want to hide potentially damaging facts. They always find a way of getting out.

b. A watchdog will help scare away wrong-doers before anything harmful happens. This may even motivate those scrutinised to perform better and to share information, not only to get recognition but also make sure they do not take the blame for any exposed flaws.

c. By regularly monitoring data, watchdogs can identify programmes at risk and provide early warning to the relevant people. This will ensure quick action, and help avoid or mitigate damage.

d. When information is accessed quickly, easily and cheaply, commitments to greater transparency and good governance are better fulfilled and more health goals can be achieved.

e. Indirectly, watchdogs lower coordination costs between structures, are an added layer of scrutiny and pressure them to improve their flow of information.

f. Watchdogs can help grant implementers better understand their own functions within the system, and to see that communication with other stakeholders is both necessary and constructive.

3.2.6 Case Study 4: Conflict of interest: Focusing on CCMs

Conflict of interest (CoI) is a key issue facing CCMs in all countries seeking funding from the Global Fund. CCMs are the primary grant oversight bodies in recipient countries. These are voluntary and multi-sectoral, comprising of state and non-state actors.

A number of CCM members are Global Fund grant implementers. Many have argued that it is unavoidable to have CoIs in CCMs particularly where implementers such as ministries of health are allowed to be key members. CCMs are required to have CoI policies, which are usually found inadequate at mitigating **COIs that may affect the quality of decisions made by CCM members.**

A watchdog monitoring the CCM may wish to assess CCM strategies for coping with CoIs. They can do this by tracking which members are grant implementers, and how efficiently and openly they communicate about their own their functions and performance. An assessment can then be made to determine, for instance, the quality of decision making as CCM members, how open they are when asked about their projects, grantees or asked to provide, publicly, grant performance reports or meeting minutes; how they vote (are they biased or independent); and if they recuse themselves when there is a conflict of interest on the committee agenda..

What is a watchdog to do?

Once a watchdog is able to identify potential CoIs, they can approach the concerned organisations as well as the CCM itself in order to seek clarification, action or possible mitigation. See country level action first before involving the Global Fund. If there is no feasible explanation for why evident CoIs that are limiting performance are not being addressed, then the watchdog can choose to act. The following options can be explored:

1. Bring the matter to the attention of relevant Global Fund officials to address themselves. The relevant units are the country's Fund Portfolio Manager, usually highlighted on that country's grant page on the Fund's website; or relevant civil society officers under the External Relations and Strategic Investment and Impact units at the secretariat). CoI with particular potential for fraud/corruption can be reported to the Fund under the whistle-blowers' policy – See http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/oig/reportfraudabuse/.
2. Create public awareness on the issue using relevant national and civil society platforms, putting pressure on the CCM to acknowledge or rectify the issue in some way.
3. A well researched petition done by several concerned organisations showing sufficient hindrances towards the effective use of Global Fund money due to CoI may prompt action by the Fund.
4. Use the media to highlight the key COIs if all other options don't pan out.

Challenge: Evidence that shows the effect of CoIs identified is difficult to collect with no access to CCM documents e.g. meeting minutes and policy documents. It may also not be clear how the watchdog can effectively advocate for less CoI in a system that is inherently predisposed to CoI by allowing intimate decision making with grant implementers. It is also difficult to get CCM members and grant implementers to open up regarding how best to avoid CoIs.

Resources

The Community Tool Box, a practical guide published by the University of Kansas, names two key motives for watchdogging that also apply to all watchdogs:

"To defend those with little political or economic power, and help them learn how to gain and use that power. A watchdog group can speak on behalf of those who haven't yet gained the skills to know when and how to speak for themselves. They can mould those skills, and can recruit budding leaders from that population so they too can act as watchdogs.

To prevent bad consequences that could cost the community, economically or socially. By pointing out circumstances that need to be corrected, a watchdog can help a community avoid the possibility of a lawsuit, an environmental cleanup, racial conflict, or other results that could be costly, or even disastrous.**"**

Source: Community Tool Box - http://ctb.ku.edu

Lessons learned by the Partnership for Transparency Fund (see Chapter 6)

Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF) is a Washington-based international NGO working with citizen groups to foster transparency, efficiency and accountability in public service provision.

> *"CSO initiatives, if they are to have impact, need to be sharply focused on a specific abuse and need to be custom designed and using suitable tools to address that abuse. Well-targeted measures can often yield enormous returns for quite small expenditures."*

The example below is a useful point of comparison when observing the relationship between the CCM and the PR. It allows one to get a sense of what is going on in terms of grant implementation.

> *"CSOs need to locate and seek the cooperation of key influential officials and public agencies that are sympathetic to their cause. Tackling inefficiency, incompetency or corruption is likely to give rise to strong counter actions by officials who would lose out. Therefore gaining the support of key officials and reform-minded agencies is often essential if the measures promoted are to be successful.* " (Also see chapter 4 on challenges.)
>
> *"Persistent follow-up is essential to achieve a lasting impact. One-off actions can be very effective, but to achieve a sustainable change in [a] bureaucratic culture and the related behaviour of public officials requires a sustained effort, including building up, over time, local CSOs' capacity."*

Source: http://iacconference.org/en/archive/document/partnership_for_transparency_fund/

3.2.7 Pointers for the local watchdog focused on the Global Fund

Monitoring, observing or critiquing the Global Fund begins with understanding it.

Three main areas of work are important in this:

- *Providing information, analysis and advice on the Global Fund:* Gather and analyse information related to the Global Fund; disseminate the information, analyse it, give advice to relevant audiences.
- *Facilitating discussion on the Global Fund's policies and procedures and on how to increase the impact of its grants:* Organise events, mentor and support local watchdogs, support CCMs' communication by critiquing their websites and have online discussions and in person consultations.
- *Advocating for increased impact of the Global Fund:* Publish commentaries about the Fund, interact with key actors within the Global Fund system, and talk about the Fund's achievements and challenges.

A watchdog doing the above would expect to achieve the following:

- That there is *more knowledge of the Global Fund:* Global Fund stakeholders have a better understanding of the Fund's policies and procedures, and know more about the impact of individual grants.
- That there is *increased discussion on the Global Fund's policies and procedures:* engaged and fruitful debates can help all stakeholders to make informed decisions and apply best practices.
- That, ultimately, *there is greater impact of Global Fund grants*: when the efficiency and success of Global Fund grant implementation increases more lives will be saved.

Key questions to consider in watching the Global Fund

- How useful are the Global Fund website and other information channels to the public? How accessible is the Global Fund Secretariat? Is the media interested in this kind of information?
- If someone believes that something is going wrong, what do they do and whom do they contact?
- How accessible is information from country level systems and who are the most trustworthy information sources? How willing are these sources to go public or to be quoted where evidence is required?
- How can public accountability be strengthened to make sure that grant implementation stays on track, and benefits the intended people? Does the public does not know who is entitled to what under such grants? How can it hold the necessary agencies accountable?
- How can one influence the decision-makers in the country? Does it help to be better informed than they are? Does one use a more confidential approach or does one go public with the information they have?
- How does one avoid putting oneself in danger in countries where the rule of law is weak, and where a lot of money might be at stake? (see the next chapter)
- How can concerned parties oversee processes related to various funds when information on grant implementation and management is mostly inaccessible or piecemeal?

- How can citizens' participation in and oversight of in-country monitoring systems be strengthened? Need they be involved?

This guide doesn't provide all the answers. One may also do research from the Global Fund website, a CCM website (if functioning); through interviews with Global Fund stakeholders at the country-level or by reading various documents, such as Aidspan's Beginner's guide (http://aidspan.org/page/guides-global-fund).

Watchdogs may use the following to assess the level of transparency within CCMs:

- The CCM is subject to an independent audit or performance assessment
- Meetings are open to the public
- Other formal entities that are members of the CCM are accountable to and have to make progress reports to the CCM
- Gifts/hospitality registers are maintained
- The CCM openly provides formal publications including policy and process documents, contracts, member and staff TORs with deliverables, tenders, annual budgets, expenditure accounts, etc.
- The CCM has communication and code of conduct policies that allow engagement with external entities

Some elements of grant implementation and performance have to be scrutinised more than others.

These include:

- Lack of (or lack of access to) CCM or implementers' grant performance reports (particularly financial and programmatic data regarding all country level implementers working under PRs)
- Indicator creep, i.e. frequent changes of measurement indicators during grant implementation, usually without any obvious rationale and record keeping
- Overly long delays between grant approval, negotiation, signing and first disbursement, or between disbursements
- Frequently delayed or incomplete Progress Updates and Disbursement Requests (PU/DR) – Key progress reports submitted by PRs to the Fund
- Clear and fair salary levels at country-level to make sure that GF funding goes to the people who need it most, not to over pay PR staff.

Chapter 4

4 Being an effective watchdog – the challenges

There are a series of challenges inhibiting country-level attempts to do monitoring work.

The most critical include:

- **Lack of recognition** from the entities being watched;
- **Difficulties accessing information** from key sources;
- **Hostility** from high-placed or well-connected individuals or organisations adversely mentioned by the watchdogs.

4.1 Lack of recognition

Lack of recognition can lead to difficulties in accessing information. In order to overcome this challenge, it is necessary to first **understand why recognition has not been given**.

Those who take on watchdog roles ideally should have clearly defined roles in society - roles that give them justification for their investigations. This is, however, not always the case. Watchdogs have to earn recognition through the work they do; making it clear that their actions benefit not just the targeted system but also the system's beneficiaries or even the public.

Note: It is not as easy as it sounds to get targeted systems to open up to such scrutiny.

One should identify how a targeted system will be held accountable before putting it under scrutiny. Such accountability lies not only with the watchdog's primary audience (i.e. the decision makers), but also with a wider audience, either within the system or the general public.

Example:

Based on the Global Fund's principles of accountability and transparency, any country stakeholder has the right to hold the oversight systems and grant implementers in-country accountable for the money given to them. Health programmes at the local and national levels are dependent on the performance of such grants. Government budgets and broader development of the country are also linked to these outcomes. These arguments provide useful leverage for a local watchdog to push for **acceptance and relevance**.

The following may also be useful tips for such watchdogs:

1. Build your reputation in the eyes of both the general public and Global Fund implementers by always providing accurate information on the performance of systems or grants.

2. Once you have your facts, initiate opportunities for discussion on how to improve the impact of grants. This helps others recognise your value as a local watchdog.
3. Gain recognition by:
    a. Adhering to clearly articulated ethical standards of operation or a strict code of conduct that complies with existing country laws and regulations.
    b. Being **fully transparent about one's own actions and be accessible to anyone asking**, be they government, media or fellow CSOs.
4. Enlist the support of local media leaders, other supporters or co-sponsors who may provide useful communication or dissemination channels, cover expenses for certain tasks or provide needed expertise for free or at subsidised rates. Make use of existing libraries, colleges, research institutions and civic groups who can help with space, logistics and publicity.
5. Involve local opinion leaders – invite them to meetings or discussion panels. Find themes that they will resonate with that help promote their own agendas.

A whistle-blowing policy helps bolster an organisation's credibility. Review the following examples:

- A critical reflection on the role and the future of private not for profit health service providers and international NGOs: What does it need to make NGOs part of the solution and not the problem? http://www.medicusmundi.org/en/contributions/events/2011/third-peoples-health-assembly.
- An example can be found with the Partnership for Transparency Fund http://ptfund.org/about/internal-governance/code-of-conduct-ethics-policy/.

4.2 Difficulties accessing relevant information

If you forget everything else, remember this...Constant research is unavoidable for a watchdog! Gather information about the current state of affairs, current policies and practices, building networks and cultivating sources of information

Watchdogging can be very challenging in environments where silence or bureaucratic 'red-tape' is used to block access to information. However, thanks to evolving principles and culture of transparency and accountability, one can gather a lot of information on many things.

Example of further research: The Global Fund gives public access to a large volume of first-hand information on the progress of grants in each country. To get access to such data visit this link: http://web-api.theglobalfund.org/.

A watchdog can however get more information through interviews with field officers and intended beneficiaries of grants -- these can add valuable information on grant performance. Also, a Global Fund watchdog would need direct interaction with the CCM, PRs or SRs.

Additional tips for such a watchdog are:

- *Enhance interaction by mingling frequently with official sources such as grant managers and communication officers*
- *Build a network of outspoken CCM members, technical advisors and grant implementers.*
- *If no direct contact is possible, one can build relationships with employees or whistle-blowers that are willing to share information 'off the record'.*
- *Regardless of how one builds their network, contacts must be respected and protected.*

4.3 Facing Hostility

When one becomes so well-informed that they could expose waste, unethical practices or corruption of powerful individuals, one may end up in a difficult situation. The guilty parties or their conspirators may be influential and the authorities capable of handling the issues might be reluctant to act upon the information being revealed. It may become difficult to get this information published or to get the right kind of attention and action. In the worst cases, the knowledge raised could jeopardise a watchdog's safety.

In such instances, it may helpful being part of a group or a consortium behind which to hide. Another alternative is to take cover while ensuring that the information finds other channels out, for instance through stronger more established organisations.

The perception that watchdog groups or institutions are merely naysayers and faultfinders can limit or even hinder their effectiveness. **Knowing how to strike a balance between reporting on the good work being done at the country-level and reporting on some of what has not or is not working well, is an important skill to learn.** This is why it is important to put a strong accent on being "friendly" and objective (see page 23).

It is important to distinguish between criticism for criticism's sake – i.e. negative criticism and constructive criticism. A 'friendly watchdog' sees how things can be improved and not how they can be torn down.

Focus has to be given to constructive criticism – aimed at 'weeding out' inefficiencies in the system and exposing instances of waste and mismanagement.

Dealing with hostile reactions

- Stay friendly: criticise when absolutely necessary and give credit where due. A watchdog is expected to 'bark' i.e. highlight faults as well as 'wag its tail' i.e. acknowledge what has been done well.
- Remain calm and focused: avoid strong language, remain objective, state the facts and ask the other party for its perspective.
- Be generous: offer the 'injured' party the right to reply to accusations and to defend itself.
- Remain neutral: do not pronounce anyone as being innocent or guilty. That isn't your job.
- Be self-critical: you are supposed to live up to the same high ethical standards that you demand of the institutions you are watching (see page 20).
- Be accessible: work with other watchdogs and like-minded organisations or individuals. No watchdog can work alone. Collaboration, partnerships and strategic alliances are critical.

Not just hammering for the sake of hammering

Advocating for accountability requires a lot of respect and evidence tracking.

How to avoid putting oneself in danger in countries where rule of law is weak and a lot of money might be at stake?

- Decide how far you are prepared to go - if you are willing to risk public defamation, bullying, imprisonment, one's health or even life
- Keep a paper trail, and store information safely and in duplicate. Cloud or internet based backing sites are particularly useful.
- Never be the only person to know the facts. Share.
- Work with someone trusted. Be part of a group
- Take threats seriously. Put in place safety measures
- Make clear that you have taken precautions. Deposit proof in a safe place
- Act as an anonymous whistleblower to avoid revealing your identity. Keep smart, keep safe.

Examples Of Challenges: Voices From the Field: Uganda

At a workshop for local organisations in Uganda, participants voiced the following challenges they faced:

- There is no common understanding of what the watchdog roles are;
- There is no respect for watchdogs;
- Some CSOs do many other things that distort the essence of their watchdog role;
- Some CSOs have limited capacity for watchdogging;
- Some CSOs fuse with entities they watch;
- There is a lack of coordination among watchdog players;
- Some CSOs are themselves not accountable;
- Sometimes the engagement in watchdogging is not evidence-based which may lead to alarmism;
- There is unhealthy competition among CSOs which may also lead to 'turf wars' i.e. fighting to protect individual interests or agendas;
- Some findings are at times not implemented and the lack of action is not motivating;
- CSOs may be seen by the government as opposition agents or rebels.

Quotes:

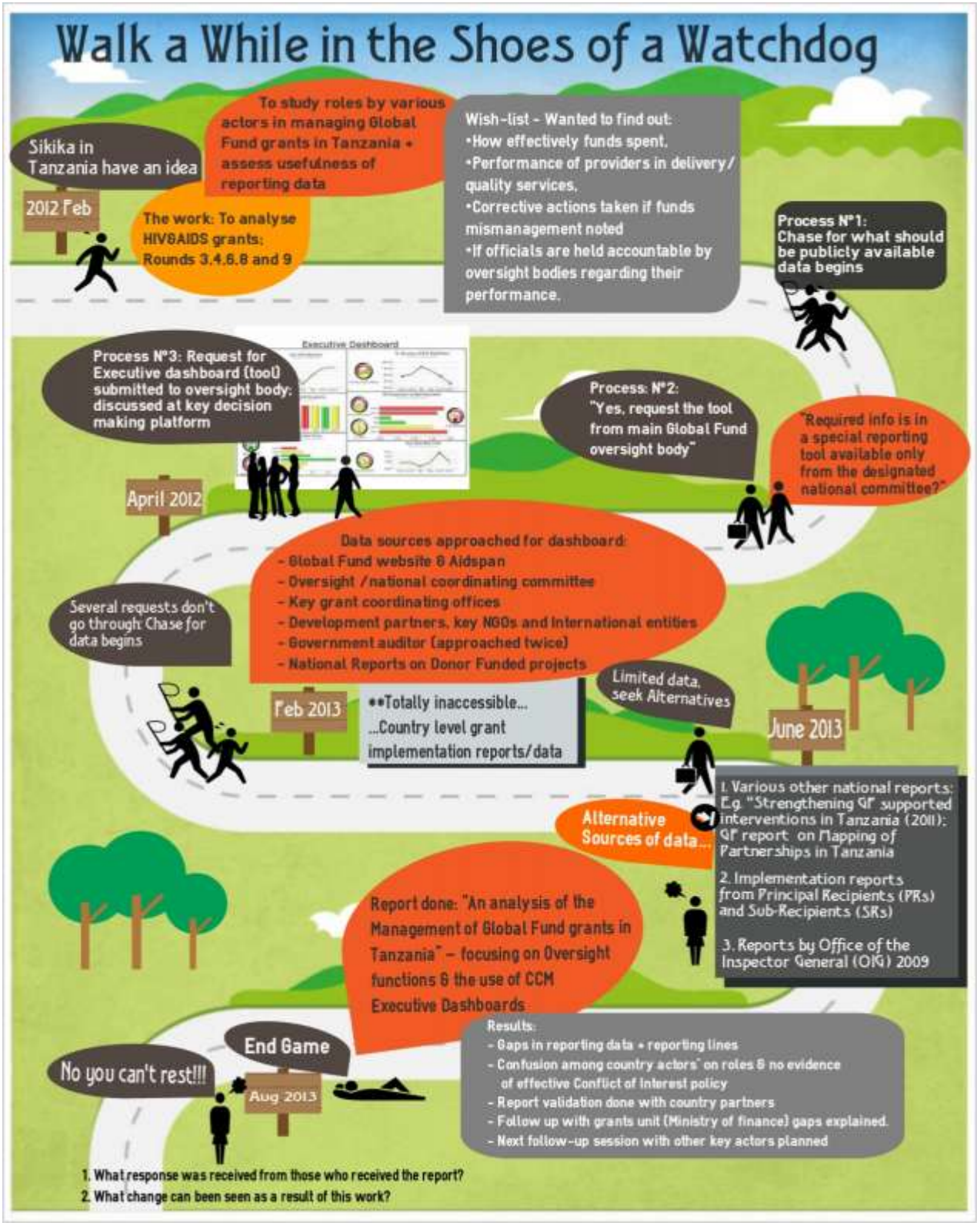
"There is lack of coordination and focus where there is more than one organisation monitoring an issue"

"International organisations like Aidspan don't fear the consequences of their statements. We do, even when right."

"There is a new generation of watchdogging practices, activism and advocacy. I think that the strategies that worked 30 years ago are not appropriate today. And they may not be appropriate to the local situation. What works in the US may not be appropriate for us here in Africa where there is a lot of political intimidation. If anybody speaks out, then they risk having their certificate not renewed."

"Opposition from many fronts can be strong. Monitoring and critiquing needs to be done tactfully, ensuring the involvement of e.g. government allies as GF issues touch on their authority."

"Many [CSOs] are too focused on service provision. They don't know how to do effective advocacy and participate in critical dialogue...they need to be helped to rethink how they can be more effective contributors."


Walk a While in the Shoes of a Watchdog
Sikika in Tanzania have an idea
2012 Feb
To study roles by various actors in managing Global Fund grants in Tanzania + assess usefulness of reporting data
The work: To analyse HIV&AIDS grants: Rounds 3.4.6.8 and 9
Wish-list - Wanted to find out:
•How effectively funds spent,
•Performance of providers in delivery/ quality services,
•Corrective actions taken if funds mismanagement noted
•If officials are held accountable by oversight bodies regarding their performance.
Process N°1: Chase for what should be publicly available data begins
Process N°3: Request for Executive dashboard (tool) submitted to oversight body; discussed at key decision making platform
Executive Dashboard
April 2012
Process: N°2: "Yes, request the tool from main Global Fund oversight body"
"Required info is in a special reporting tool available only from the designated national committee?"
Data sources approached for dashboard:
- Global Fund website & Aidspan
- Oversight /national coordinating committee
- Key grant coordinating offices
- Development partners, key NGOs and International entities
- Government auditor (approached twice)
- National Reports on Donor Funded projects
Several requests don't go through: Chase for data begins
Feb 2013
**Totally inaccessible... ...Country level grant implementation reports/data
Limited data, seek Alternatives
June 2013
Alternative Sources of data...
1. Various other national reports: E.g. "Strengthening GF supported interventions in Tanzania (2011); GF report on Mapping of Partnerships in Tanzania
2. Implementation reports from Principal Recipients (PRs) and Sub-Recipients (SRs)
3. Reports by Office of the Inspector General (OIG) 2009
Report done: "An analysis of the Management of Global Fund grants in Tanzania" – focusing on Oversight functions & the use of CCM Executive Dashboards
Results:
- Gaps in reporting data + reporting lines
- Confusion among country actors' on roles & no evidence of effective Conflict of Interest policy
- Report validation done with country partners
- Follow up with grants unit (Ministry of finance) gaps explained.
- Next follow-up session with other key actors planned
End Game
No you can't rest!!!
Aug 2013
1. What response was received from those who received the report?
2. What change can been seen as a result of this work?

5 Measuring performance – knowing whether you are effective or not

Chapter 5

Think: ***"I did all that, but was it really me all by myself?" How did others contribute to this success?? Have we achieved what we set out to do?***

It will not always be easy to assess the impact of watchdog work done when change occurs.

There are no universal indicators for measuring success in watchdogging. Success will depend on what is being watched, who is doing the watching, and their goal. Also, quantifying results will be difficult. Therefore, one will only be able to claim partial credit to certain achievements. Full attribution will be difficult to prove.

The key challenge watchdogs face when measuring success is **attribution**, i.e. proving what is a direct result of their work or is strongly attributed to it.

For example, a watchdog sees changes in the number of corruption cases directly related to a public office they have been watching. These changes, whether positive or negative, may (or may not) be attributed to that watchdog's work. The watchdog has to find out the specifics to make any claim. For instance, an increase in corruption cases reported might mean different things: That there is an increase in corrupt activities because (1) no efforts have been made to address those reported – meaning that the watchdog's work to have such activities addressed was unsuccessful or (2) there is increased tracking and reporting about corruption from insiders or external watchdogs resulting in an increase in reported cases – a success

for the watchdog involved. Attribution in this instance can only be assigned where the watchdog is the only player or a major player in unearthing or reporting these cases.

A roadmap to ensuring attribution:

1. Monitor and evaluate: Identify a baseline by ascertaining the economic, social, political and environmental status in one's country or regarding the topic of interest before the intervention.
2. Formulate a plan of action: develop clearly defined objectives for one's watchdog activities as these will enable tracking of progress of such work.
3. Develop activity tracking indicators for measuring progress: The table below shows a list of hypothetical objectives and indicators to track the effective implementation of Global Fund grants. In addition to the examples of measures of progress below
4. Measure change caused by tracking decreases (or increases) in problems noted prior or improvements in services provided. Refer to the Case study 2 on Page 29 where one can argue that Sikika caused a drop of 26% in stock-outs. While this is not a conclusive claim, it very likely is a result of their watchdog.

THE KEY QUESTION REMAINS: IF THINGS IMPROVE, CAN THIS BE ATTRIBUTED TO YOUR WORK AS A WATCHDOG?

Table 2: Example of useful indicators

Objective/Outcome	Activities	Key performance indicator
Improve communication about grant implementation	**Meetings with CCM members** Meetings with other stakeholders from PR to FPM	• **number of CCM minutes/Funding applications/grant documents distributed among CCM members & their constituents** • number of CCM minutes/documents accessed by you • existence of a functional and accessible CCM website • frequency and quality of updates on the website • number of key documents circulated by PR/SR/SSR • number of cases where you are approached by people with information about problems • access to information by those who are not CCM members or implementers • the CCM/PR/SR openly distribute grant progress reports, are accessible for questions
Increase public awareness about grant implementation	**Briefing for journalists** Interviews with beneficiaries at health centres	• **number of newspaper articles that describe grant related issues** • number of journalists trained in health reporting • number of Global Fund-related problems identified by beneficiaries

Improve oversight role by CCM	**Trainings either by the watchdog or by others to enhance knowledge and expertise of CCM members on their oversight role** Campaigns or activities to increase knowledge of CCM's oversight roles among people not on the CCM	• **number of meetings/communications between CCM and PR** • number of site or field verification visits carried out by the CCM • number of CCM meetings dealing with PR performance • number of people who are not CCM members aware of PR grant performance • number of key documents provided to CCM (and those outside the CCM) by PR.
End delays in disbursement of funds to PR, through SR to beneficiaries	**Completed and shared analysis of progress on implementation**	• **number of months the PR has experienced delays** • number of stock-outs of medication and devices • number of interruptions of prevention measures/activities
Ensure smooth grant implementation by alerting CCM/FPM to lack of capacity of PR/SR	**Completed and shared analysis of PR capacity assessment**	• **regular communication between watchdog and CCM/FPM** • CCM/FPM take watchdog's information seriously and acts on it • number of technical capacity building measures triggered by watchdog's interventions

To evaluate your impact, determine how frequently partners communicate about certain issues, for instance how many times CCM, PR and other partners communicate on issues regarding e.g. oversight.

Caution: Even these quantitative indicators do not give a full account of the effectiveness of the Global Fund system. They merely hint at some outputs being produced. They cannot measure how much of the change is a consequence of the watchdog's activities.

Example of other indicators for Global Fund watchdogs:

The following are examples of indicators that may help evaluate the impact of a local watchdog's work as a monitor of the Fund. Particularly where such impact is either non-attributable or semi-attributable:

1. Percentage of surveyed PR and SR employees who feel that their understanding of Global Fund grant disbursement and reporting policies and procedures has increased as a result of better information flow by the CCM – e.g. an improvement that came from training and technical support that your organisation gave to civil society organisations on the CCM.
2. Percentage of surveyed CCM members who feel that funding applications submitted by their CCM comply better with Global requirements as a result of your publications.
3. Extent to which Global Fund policy and procedure changes recommended by you are subsequently endorsed in Global Fund board meetings or reflected in revised GF procedures and guideline documents.
4. Extent to which recommendations by you are subsequently endorsed in CCM meetings or reflected in revised CCM procedures and guideline documents.
5. Extent to which early warnings by you lead to action e.g. by LFA, FPM, CCM, PR or others. This could be, for example, that a warning of lack of capacity of a PR/SR that could endanger adequate grant implementation is taken up by the CCM and the FPM, and leads to decisions to improve the situation before it escalates further. This could also be in the form of trainings done, hiring of competent staff, pressure on the PR to change its SR, or even cancelling of the grant agreement and getting a new more capable PR.
6. Surveys among stakeholders such as CCM members, PRs, SRs and beneficiaries can help assess how far the communication, understanding of each other's work, and satisfaction with each other's performance have changed over a certain period of time.
7. Surveys among journalists and other relevant watchdog agencies can help assess the willingness of CCM and PR to release information to external parties by tracking how many times requests for information to the CCM or PRs was denied/honoured and the quality and usefulness of information provided.

5.1.1 Case Study 5: An example of how to measure progress in a situation where attribution is difficult

Using the Value Creation Model to measure performance and potential of a group of stakeholders

It has been a while since the idea of a community of practitioners on social accountability in health (COPASAH) emerged from an enriching discussion on citizen accountability methods in 2011. A group of social accountability experts felt the need for a platform that enhanced learning from tangible practical applications of effective citizen-focused accountability frameworks, promoting peer learning and producing practice-based knowledge.

What is practice-based knowledge? Acquiring new knowledge and learning through a collaborative model that applies real-life, practical experiences.

How to measure progress under such platforms: COPASAH members did the following to reflect on the progress of their platform

Measuring immediate value: Members tracked significant events, projects and enquiries undertaken in the process of learning. They assessed the training they provided that had targeted issues pertaining to accountability practices in health, collective brainstorming sessions and cross-continental forums (both formal and informal). These trainings drew an immediate value by providing tangible recordable events.

Measuring potential value: The group then measured both tangible and intangible results of the trainings above, such as documents, insights, relationships, issue papers and the case studies, the newsletters and increased member motivation and expectations. These showed the potential value derived from the learning experience. They then reviewed their communication platform to assess whether the learning tools provided therein and exchanges done through list-serves and other channels generated energy and new insights and regarding rights-based community monitoring. The shared literature and exchanges offered the possibility for future discourse among experts and enhanced the potency and usefulness of the community.

Measuring applied value: The group then tracked the new practices, collaborations, different approaches and other changes that had occurred as a result of the learning process. They also reviewed the results of the debates held on community-based accountability and traced the key points that emerged as a result, particularly those linked to improved methods for achieving social change. Also reviewed were the contributions made by members in regional and global discussions and the number of collaborative actions such as technical support provided between members, the number of abstracts developed jointly by members for regional and global symposiums and the tools shared in such forums.

Measuring realised value: The group then assessed what they learned from challenges and failures faced. Members sought better performance indicators or outcomes of their work. Measures would be drawn from the unique contribution by the group, how they improved access to knowledge and learning and improved communication -- this is realised value.

Measuring transformative value: COPASAH's emerging identity as a unique space for continued learning and social action could be referred to being transformative – i.e. being a tool that feeds new

practices into the learning cycle. The community of practice has been able to provide a framework for challenging the more technical focus by accountability experts and instead providing a more grounded experience on community monitoring, social action and learning that upholds community empowerment and change. Through this perspective, COPASAH offers a more grounded and bottom up discourse on accountability that could have a transformative breakthrough of seeing accountability as being nurtured through empowerment and democracy and not just by fear of governance and corruption.

Other questions that COPASAH needed to answer to ascertain their effectiveness:

1. What are COPASAH's strengths, challenges and opportunities?
2. Has COPASAH fully exploited the potential of collective strength and solidarity? Has it been successful in reaching out to various practitioners in specific regions to embolden and to enrich discussions on health accountability?
3. What are the challenges faced and what lessons are drawn from what has not worked?
4. What strategies could be employed to sustain a high degree of engagement in the future?

These and such other critical questions will help COPASAH members make this global learning community stronger and more vibrant.

Source:

1. *E. Premdas Pinto, (CHSJ), South Asia Region Coordinator - COPASAH www.copasah.net*
2. *Wenger-Trayner, Etienne and Beverly, Evaluation Framework, available at http://wenger-trayner.com/resources/publications/evaluation-framework (accessed: 21 Mar 2014).*

6 How to find relevant information

Chapter 6

6.1 Navigating the Global Fund website

Many do not know about the information provided on the Global Fund website. This chapter serves as a roadmap to its most relevant sections.

In addition to what is highlighted in previous chapters on the CCM, the OIG and the LFA, there are a few other sections worth attention. These are as follows.

The Technical Review Panel http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/about/structures/trp/

The Technical Evaluation Reference Group (TERG)
http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/about/structures/terg/

Download Grant Data http://portfolio.theglobalfund.org/en/DataDownloads/Index

One can also customise grant data according to selected variables on this link:
http://portfolio.theglobalfund.org/en/DataDownloads/CustomizeReportDownload

Core documents such as the Global Fund's **Governance Handbook** can be found here:
http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/library/documents/

Operational policies and guidelines such as those below can be found here: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/library/guidelinestools/

- Guidelines for Budgeting in Global Fund Grants
- Fiduciary Arrangements for Grant Recipients
- Guidelines for Annual Audits of PRs and SRs' Financial Statements

General contacts at the Global Fund Secretariat:
http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/about/secretariat/contact/

The links below also provide a wealth of information, each leads to a thematic sub-site of the Global Fund website:

- Country Coordinating Mechanisms: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/ccm/
- Local Fund Agents: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/lfa/
- Monitoring & Evaluation: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/me/
- Pharmaceutical procurement and supply management: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/procurement/

The Office of the Inspector General section on the Global Fund website is an important source of information:

http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/oig/
http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/oig/reports/

The Library of independent evaluations also includes a whole series of useful documents:
http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/library/evaluationlibrary/

6.2 Other sources of information for watchdogs

Aidspan:

The **Aidspan website** provides a lot of useful information on various aspects of the Global Fund. For instance:

The grants pages: http://www.aidspan.org/page/global-fund-grants

Aidspan news articles about the Global Fund: http://www.aidspan.org/gfo

Various guides on the Global Fund: http://www.aidspan.org/page/guides-global-fund

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AIDSspace is one of the main online communities that connects people, shares knowledge and provides services for millions of people living with HIV and those engaged in the AIDS response. Here one finds documents such as "Are you on the right track? Six steps to measure the effects of your programmeme activities or Document and communicating HIV/AIDS work: A toolkit to support NGOs/CBOs." As individuals can become members, this website also offers opportunities to find support for aspects of watchdogging work. http://www.aidsspace.org/

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Community Tool Box is a service of the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas. It includes a very useful chapter on "Acting as a Watchdog". http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/chapter31_section8_main.aspx

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The **Stop TB Partnership** has dedicated a section of its website to Global Fund grants with a list of relevant contacts that can be accessed by clicking on the respective countries on the right side: http://www.stoptb.org/global/tbfriends/

See example for Afghanistan here: http://www.stoptb.org/global/tbfriends/cp_afghanistan.asp

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The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** website has a section on the Global Fund that contains guidance notes on various issues: http://www.who.int/globalfund/en/

Especially useful is the guidance paper "*WHO support to countries in accessing and utilizing resources from the GFATM*" http://www.who.int/globalfund/guidancepaper_gfatm.pdf

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The **Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM)**, hosted by WHO, has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Global Fund that commits it to sharing relevant technical information at country-level. Therefore it can be a valuable source for research, both at country-level and on its website: http://www.rbm.who.int/

Useful documents on the RBM website are:

Global Fund Application Assistance Tools:

http://www.rbm.who.int/toolbox/tool_GFapplicationAssistance.html

Instructions from the Global Fund for Grant Consolidation:

http://www.rbm.who.int/toolbox/tool_GFgrantsConsolidation.html

Instructions for Global Fund Grant Signing:

http://www.rbm.who.int/toolbox/tool_GFgrantSigning.html

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The **Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)** provides technical support to the Global Fund by engaging in Global Fund grant implementation and CCM oversight activities. Do a word search on the Global Fund to see new tools and information about this relationship.

http://www.unaids.org/en

UNAIDS also offers a publication on the technical support it provides the Global Fund

http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2011/JC2141_UNAIDS_GLOBAL_FUND_en.pdf

Frequently updated and detailed data on HIV/AIDS that can be customised by each user on the respective UNAIDS data page:

http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/tools/aidsinfo/

http://www.aidsinfoonline.org/

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The **HIV/AIDS Alliance** offers a good practice self-assessment tool for NGOs – called ***GP-SAT***. Although the tool is designed to measure and document adherence to the Alliance's *Good Practice HIV Programming Standards*, the guidance and examples provided may inspire individuals or groups who do not have a lot of experience in watchdogging.

http://www.aidsalliance.org/publicationsdetails.aspx?id=90592

6.3 List of aid watchdogs and other useful links

AIDS Accountability International (AAI) is an independent non-profit organisation developing tools with which advocacy groups, organisations and individuals can hold their governments and other leaders

accountable. They base their work on a three-step framework for accountability consisting of transparency, especially for people living with the disease; dialogue, i.e. integration of civil society; and action, meaning that governments take responsibility for performance and if needed act to improve it. AIDS Accountability provides a list of partners that can be used by a watchdog as a resource of support. http://aidsaccountability.org/

Accountability Alert – Sierra Leone (AA-SL) aims to work with partner organisations on raising effectiveness of service delivery by NGOs. http://www.aalert.org/home.html

Aidflows is a platform developed by World Bank Group together with Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development(OECD). It aims to make global data on aid funding more easily accessible. It provides information about the volume and structure of aid funding made available by donor countries http://www.aidflows.org/

AID/WATCH is an independent Australian membership-based watchdog on aid, trade and debt, working with communities in the Global South. http://aidwatch.org.au/

Bretton Woods Project is an ActionAid hosted project that serves as an information provider, watchdog, networker and advocate. It challenges the World Bank and IMF and promotes alternative approaches to monitoring these two systems. It operates on primary principles of democracy, transparency, accountability, responsiveness, justice, equity, human rights and environmental sustainability. http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org

Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, is an independent institute and think-tank that does policy analysis. They develop policy recommendations in collaboration with policymakers, experts and stakeholders in each area and regularly brief government officials, legislators and other decision-makers on their conclusions. http://www.chathamhouse.org/

Corruption Watch is a South African, not-for-profit organisation that gathers and analyses information from the public; builds alliances; and helps people take a stand against corruption. The organisation was initiated by the office bearers of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), who had been seeing a significant increase in complaints from members and from the public about corruption in South Africa. http://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/

Development Gateway provides software and advisory services to improve the efficacy of aid and development efforts. Their aim is to increase access to critical information, build local capacity and bring partners together for positive change. http://www.developmentgateway.org

Development Initiatives is an independent organisation working for poverty elimination. Active since 1992, it has a particular expertise in analysing, interpreting and improving information about international aid and development and making it more transparent and accessible. http://www.devinit.org/

Development Initiatives serves as an umbrella for the following organisations:

> The **Aidinfo** team works to accelerate poverty reduction by making aid more transparent, believing that aid will work better when information about it can be accessed quickly, easily and cheaply. http://www.aidinfo.org/

The **Budget4Change** programme aims to map, monitor and mobilise analysis of donor government budgets against official development assistance (ODA) financing.

http://www.budget4change.org/

International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) is a multi stakeholder-led global initiative which aims to make information about aid spending easier to access, use and understand. http://www.aidtransparency.net/

Commit4Africa is an online, searchable database of commitments made by heads of state and government representatives under the auspices of international institutions and groupings. http://commit4africa.org/

The **Global Humanitarian Assistance** programme works to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of the humanitarian response by further increasing access to reliable, transparent and understandable data on humanitarian assistance.

http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/

Other organisations focused on provided open and more accessible data on donor aid, plus advocating for this to happen more frequently are:

Open for Change network is an international Network started by Dutch organisation to advocate for Transparency, Collaboration and Impact in Development. They work by pushing observation the global development sector to embrace open access online. http://openforchange.info

Publish what you fund campaigns for aid transparency– more and better information about aid. In partnership with IATI, Publish What You Fund urges donors to disclose their aid information regularly and promptly, and in a standardised format that will be comparable with other countries and accessible to all. The starting point for ensuring that aid makes a difference is having timely, comprehensive and comparable information on who is giving what, where it is going, and the impact it is having. Information on aid needs to be regularly published and freely available if it is going to help effective spending, evaluation, and accountability. http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/

The AidData programme works with partners on a number of initiatives to make aid information more comprehensive and transparent. http://www.aiddata.org/content/index

Germanwatch is an independent development and environmental organisation that lobbies for sustainable global development. It focuses on advocating for fair trade relations, responsible financial markets, compliance with human rights, and the prevention of dangerous climate change with adverse impacts on health. Using science-based analyses, Germanwatch for example informs consumers how they can support Germanwatch goals through their own actions. http://germanwatch.org/en/

Global Health Watch – GHW aims to promote human rights as the basis for health policy, shift the health policy agenda to recognise the political, social and economic barriers to better health. It improves civil society's capacity to hold national and international governments, global international financial institutions and corporations to account (including WHO and the World Bank), strengthens the links between civil society organisations around the world, and to provide a forum for magnifying the voice of

the poor and vulnerable. It uses the concept of an alternative world health report to promote the involvement of as many individuals and civil society organisations as possible. http://www.ghwatch.org/

Global Policy Forum is an independent policy watchdog that monitors the work of the United Nations and scrutinises global policymaking, which includes health policy. GPF has consultative status at the UN and works particularly on the UN Security Council, the food and hunger crisis, and the global economy. The non-profit group was founded in 1993 and promotes accountability and citizen participation in decisions on peace and security, social justice and international law. http://www.globalpolicy.org/about-gpf-mm/introduction.html

Global Witness was formed 19 years ago to carry out hard-hitting investigations of the economic causes of conflict, corruption and environmental destruction. The information they publish exposes to the public particularly to intentional, mostly economic actions in oil, gas and mining sectors that undermine human and economic development and environmental sustainability. http://www.globalwitness.org/

The **Government Accountability Project** is the US leading whistleblower protection and advocacy organisation. It aims to promote corporate and government accountability by protecting whistleblowers, and empowering citizen activists. Internationally it watches the World Bank, regional development banks, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations, and also says it assists all types of whistleblowers throughout the world. http://www.whistleblower.org/

The Open Data Institute (ODI) is an organisation that seeks to improve access and use of open data in the United Kingdom to effect economic, environmental, and social change. The UK based organisation bases its work on the British government's open data policy and employs innovative technology-based initiatives to show the value of open government data. They seek to unlock data supply, generate demand and create and disseminate knowledge to address local and global issues. http://theodi.org/

Haiti Aid Watchdog (the Group or HAW) was formed to monitor the impact of international aid, humanitarian assistance, and the government's action plan in Haiti. The Group scrutinises the impact of aid efforts and facilitates communication and coordination among partners, encouraging dialogue between the international community, the government, and Haitian civil society to ensure Haitian citizens are informed of services being provided. http://www.haitiaidwatchdog.org/

Independent Commission for Aid Impact is the independent body responsible for the scrutiny of UK aid. ICAI focuses on maximising the impact and effectiveness of the UK aid budget for intended beneficiaries and the delivery of value for money for the UK taxpayer. http://icai.independent.gov.uk/

Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc. (IRE) is a grassroots non-profit organisation dedicated to improving the quality of investigative reporting. IRE was formed in 1975 to create a forum in which journalists throughout the world could help each other by sharing story ideas, newsgathering techniques and news sources. IRE provides members access to thousands of reporting tip sheets and other materials through its resource centre. http://www.ire.org/

The **National Democratic Institute** is a US-based non-profit, nonpartisan organisation working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. Its mission makes it a possible source of support for watchdog activities, as the NDI aims at promoting citizen participation, for example in budget processes. http://www.ndi.org/

New York University, Development Research Institute Aid Watch initiative demands accountability from aid agencies and seeks to shed light on their programmes. It draws public attention to the good *and* the bad in aid. The essential insight of Aid Watch is that the more people are watching aid, the more aid will reach the poor. The blog ended in May 2011, but can still be accessed via the archive. http://aidwatchers.com/

NGO Monitor is an agency that provides information and analysis, promotes accountability, and supports discussion on the reports and activities of NGOs claiming to advance human rights and humanitarian agendas. A key focus is on Arab-Israeli conflict and NGOs working in the Middle East, but a wider focus is welcomed. http://www.ngo-monitor.org/

Ngoperformance is a site about managing the performance of NGOs and monitoring their effectiveness. http://ngoperformance.org/2011/03/22/advice-for-the-new-aid-watchdog/

Partnership for Transparency Fund mobilizes expertise and resources to provide advice and small grants to civil society organisations to engage citizens in actions to remove corruption in the public sector. http://ptfund.org/

Social Watch, a network that today has members in over 70 countries around the world, was created in 1995 as a "meeting place for non-governmental organisations concerned with social development and gender discrimination." Social Watch has published 16 yearly reports on progress and setbacks in the struggle against poverty and for gender equality. These reports have been used as tools for advocacy on a local, regional, and international level. The basic methodology of Social Watch still remains the same: to make governments accountable for their commitments and thus promote the political will to implement them. http://www.socialwatch.org/

Transparency and Accountability Initiative is a platform based in the UK and developed to improve collaboration among donors working to expand the impact and scale of transparency and accountability interventions. The focus of work is on enhancing learning about accountability and transparency, harnessing the potential of new technologies and pushing for policy innovations. The initiative is led by a diverse group of eight leading international funders which includes private foundations, a leading bilateral donor and NGOs. http://www.transparency-initiative.org/

Transparency International is committed to advancing accountability, integrity and transparency, including in its own operations. Founded in 1993, TI has now more than 100 national chapters worldwide and an international secretariat in Berlin. TI works with partners in government, business and civil society to put effective measures in place to tackle corruption. http://www.transparency.org/

WHO Watch seeks to generate support for a reformed WHO and to democratise the decision making within WHO, in particular supporting delegations from smaller countries. http://www.ghwatch.org/who-watch/

The World Bank's **Independent Evaluation Group** (IEG) has been charged with evaluating the activities of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), and the work of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in private sector development for more than 40 years. The purpose is to assess the performance of Bank Group policies, programmes, projects, and processes (accountability) and to learn what works in what context (lessons). http://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/content/ieg/en/home/about.html

World Bank Sanctions Board publishes cases of corruption and fraud http://tinyurl.com/cm6vd4o

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