



NGO Leaders: Distorted Claims About Global Fund Grants Hurt the Poorest

Ottawa, January 26 – Some recent media reports regarding misuse of grants from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria are misleading, sensational and damaging not only to the Fund but to the millions of impoverished and vulnerable people around the world that it has saved.

“The Global Fund has a commitment to transparency and a policy of zero tolerance for fraud,” said RESULTS Canada Executive Director Chris Dendys. “This is the kind of model of transparency that should be praised, not condemned.”

An Associated Press wire story released this week sparked a media firestorm by using a few unfortunate, but isolated, examples of misuse of Global Fund grants. These cases had already been publicly identified by the Global Fund’s own independent Inspector General and the Fund had already taken corrective action. Unfortunately, these reports created a misleading portrait of wide-scale fraud that is simply inaccurate. The impact of this distortion is potentially devastating at a time when foreign aid is already under fire.

“The misuse of funds should never be tolerated, but the truth is that this has occurred in 4 of the 145 countries where the Fund operates,” said Nicci Stein, Executive Director of the Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development. “In total, the Global Fund is demanding the recovery of US \$34 million unaccounted for in these and other countries, out of a total disbursement of US \$13 billion. This is 0.3% of disbursements.”

Isolated examples like those being reported should not overshadow the fact that since its inception in 2001, the Global Fund has invested US\$21.7 billion dollars to support extensive prevention, treatment and care initiatives in 150 countries that has generated an unprecedented record of success.

Thanks to the Global Fund’s grants, 3 million people with HIV are receiving anti-retroviral medicines (ARVs), 7.7 million people have received TB treatment, over 160 million insecticide-treated bed nets have been distributed to protect families from malaria, and almost half a million HIV-positive pregnant women received preventative treatment to halt vertical transmission of HIV. The net results – 6.5 million lives saved.

“Any dollar stolen or wasted is a dollar not spent on prevention, treatment or care of AIDS, TB or malaria, and that is unacceptable,” said Richard Elliott, Executive Director of the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network. “But distorted and sensational reports are not only damaging to the Fund – they create misinformed impressions of development aid overall, threaten future investments, and undermine the potential for progress for the world’s poorest and most vulnerable.”

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