

Annual Assessment of In-Country Support

OVERVIEW

Recognizing the need to assess the GFF's in-country support model, the GFF is strengthening its Results Measurement Framework by establishing an annual process for assessing the GFF's in-country support. This process aims to ensure that the GFF can systematically identify strengths and weaknesses in its support model in different countries across the portfolio and use that information to improve its support.

ACTION REQUESTED

The Investors Group (IG) is requested to provide feedback on the proposed annual assessment of GFF's in-country support model, as described in this paper.

APPROACH TO ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF IN-COUNTRY SUPPORT

The GFF's Results Measurement Framework, which is described in detail in the IG paper on Strengthening Country Data Systems, includes four interlinked components:

1. Overall performance assessment towards the GFF Strategy (2021-2025) based on the GFF logic model and supported by the Key Performance Indicators
2. Country specific monitoring tailored to country Investment Cases and projects co-financed with the World Bank, based on country-specific theories of change and Results Frameworks
3. Analysis of cross-cutting thematic areas core to the GFF Strategy and relevant to all GFF partner countries
4. Activities to strengthen country data sources, systems and capacities

The GFF will complement these four components through the addition of a fifth component that will be linked with the others, which will specifically examine the GFF's in-country support model. This new component will entail the following three activities:

1. Country Platform assessment
2. 360 feedback on the GFF's in-country support
3. Triangulation with the country-specific values for the new Key Performance Indicators for the GFF strategy

Each of these activities is described further below.

Annual Country Platform Assessment

The GFF has previous experience supporting various Country Platform assessment approaches. The purpose of various assessments that have been conducted has been to generate feedback on what is and is not working well,

and how the functionality and usefulness of the Country Platform can be improved. One approach that has been tried through a few different iterations has been to administer an online survey of Country Platform members. Generally speaking, response rates to previous online surveys were low and the level of feedback too short and high level to have much utility in informing improvements. Another approach that has been tried is to have a facilitated in-depth discussion at an extended Country Platform meeting using a structured tool—for example, this was done in Liberia in early 2020 shortly before the global Covid outbreak disrupted in-person convening. The feedback generated from this facilitated in-depth discussion was rich, though it was noted by some stakeholders that the process required a level of time and effort that may be difficult to sustain.

As part of the new annual performance assessment process summarized in this paper, the GFF proposes to combine elements of the survey-based and facilitated discussion-based approaches tried in the past. To ensure high response rates and enable meaningful discussion, the GFF proposes to administer Country Platform assessments via live polling during a regular Country Platform meeting. This will enable responses to be generated in real time, with facilitated discussion using a relatively light-touch structured tool with follow-up questions and probes that explore the responses generated through live polling with more depth and dialogue. This will allow for meaningful and contextualized exchanges of perspectives on key issues. The instrument will cover the following domains:

- Form
 - Government role in convening
 - Role of Platform (as documented in the Terms of Reference and as it operates in practice)
 - Inclusive membership
- Function
 - Regularity of convening
 - Extent to which the platform is helping to effect change, and how
 - What is working well and not working well
- Enablers
 - Government commitment
 - Linkages between platform and other relevant decision-making structures and processes
 - GFF liaison function
 - Opportunities for improving functionality of platform

These domains are generally aligned with the criteria used to constitute the Country Platform Functionality Index, which is one of 15 Key Performance Indicators adopted for the GFF strategy. The discussion facilitated at Country Platform meetings with the aid of live polling will explore opportunities and challenges, identify follow-up actions and document key points of learning.

360 Feedback on the GFF's in-country support

In conjunction with the annual assessment of the Country Platform, the GFF will solicit 360 feedback on its in-country support model. The target group of respondents will be drawn from Country Platform members and other key stakeholders who engage with the model. Feedback will be solicited through a concise instrument that consists of a combination of scaled ratings and open-ended fields, covering the following domains:

- Communication, engagement and liaison function
- Principle of country-led decision making and action
- Prioritization linked to available resources (Investment Cases)
- Alignment of stakeholders and funding commitments around country priorities
- Mobilization of domestic funding
- Health financing and other systems reforms on critical path to improved RMNCAH-N outcomes
- Quality data/evidence available for decision-making

The questions on each of these topics will have three parts: a) how well is it working in practice at country level, b) to what extent is the GFF support model contributing to performance on the topic, and c) what should be improved.

This 360 feedback will be one source of information on how relevant stakeholder perceive the role and performance of the Liaison Officer, with questions specifically about LO performance and potential areas of focus on their next annual work plan. This will represent one input that feeds into the annual assessment of LO performance through the standard GFF human resources process and the regular process for defining performance objectives for the year, in balance with review of deliverables and other relevant information.

Triangulation with country-specific values for the new Key Performance Indicators for the GFF strategy

The outputs from the Country Platform assessment (including the responses to the live polling as well as the stakeholder discussion on the polling results) and the 360 assessments will be analyzed annually by the GFF together with the country-specific values for the new Key Performance Indicators. Several of the new Key Performance Indicators already assess different aspects of the GFF country engagement model, which provides opportunity to generate additional insights through triangulation. The purpose of triangulation will be to develop a more complete and contextualized understanding of how well the country support model is working and what should be improved or changed. The GFF will also identify best practices to inform improvements to the GFF support model in other countries.

Testing the new approach

The GFF will test the approach outlined here in an initial set of three to four countries in the first quarter of 2025. Countries will be prioritized for the initial implementation and adaptation of the instrument based on dialogue with Government Focal Points, Liaison Officers and other key stakeholders in countries. Based on the learning from the initial country experiences, the GFF will facilitate dialogue with Government Focal Points and Liaison Officers from all GFF supported countries at Government Focal Point workshops that will be convened later this year. Dialogue at these workshops will inform roll out of the approach to the remaining countries in the portfolio. The experience with this new approach will inform how regular assessment of the in-country model is integrated within the 2026-2030 strategy.

Use of the findings

There are two distinct use cases for the new approach to annual assessment of in-country support: 1) at country level, and 2) within the GFF Secretariat. Ultimately this needs to, and will, be a dialogue at country level about

how best to use the findings. The GFF Secretariat will dialogue with Government Focal Points and Liaison Officers at the Government Focal Points workshop about how to most effectively engage Country Platform members in reflective and action-oriented discussion about how to strengthen the Platform and other aspects of the model. Within the Secretariat, the GFF will use the results to inform improvements to its country support model. The Secretariat will also ensure that results are used to inform the GFF's performance management systems and dialogue with staff and consultants to improve the GFF's support to countries.