The Formulation of HIV-related Proposals for Submission to the Global Fund: Contrasting Intentions with Realities - The Peru GHIN Study

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**Background**
- Out of nine Global Fund (GF) funding rounds so far, Peru has applied to five, and has obtained funding on rounds II, V, and VI (approximately US$ 77 million), failing on rounds I and VIII.
- Criticisms have been made concerning the procedures through which some of such proposals were developed, particularly regarding their evidence base, relevance, consistency, and performance indicators.

**Study Aim**
We aimed to analyze the relevance and consistency of processes leading to the formulation of proposals to the GFATM, in order to support future local processes, as well as to inform global discussions around strengths and weaknesses of GF procedures.

**Methods**
We analyzed the contents of the official texts of four HIV-focused proposals submitted to the GFATM (on rounds II, V, VI and VIII). Four best case-scenario hypotheses were posed to assess how the proposals addressed:

1. Evidence around the epidemic context.
2. Identification and prioritization of needs.
3. Internal and external consistency.
4. The use of appropriate means of verification.

**Findings**

- **Epidemic Context and Use of Evidence**
  Analysis of the epidemic context was generally poor, partly as a result of lack of recent, good quality data - while many estimates are available from academic research, their utility is limited by representativeness and availability issues.

- **Identification and prioritization of needs to develop interventions**
  Despite the high concentration of HIV on MSM, there is no priority setting across various loosely defined "vulnerable groups". Moreover, interventions only replicated traditional health sector activities and did not address vulnerability per-se nor reflected evolving international standards-of-prevention.

- **Internal and external consistency**
  Limited efforts were made to describe the impact of previous GF grants and articulate the importance of new projects. Activities may offer opportunities for synergies involving scaling up or complementarity, but most of them are external to each other.

- **The use of appropriate means of verification**
  M&E systems were usually weak, with poor selection of indicators, often not clearly operationalized, targets of limited utility, and lack of established measurement routines.

**Conclusions**

- The characterization of the epidemic in these proposals is mainly done with epidemiological data, but a social problematization of the epidemic and a theoretical framework cannot be clearly identified.
- Generally, proposals show substantial weaknesses that limit their potential impact.
- Processes of preparation of GF proposals should be substantially strengthened in Peru and other countries.
- Various mechanisms, including training and technical support, are needed to strengthen GF-funded HIV programming globally.