

Civil society strengthening linked to Global Fund grants

CROSS-CUTTING PROJECT EVALUATIONS



INITIATIVE 5%
SIDA, TUBERCULOSE, PALUDISME



**EXPERTISE
FRANCE**

THE 5% INITIATIVE

Since 2011, the 5% Initiative has been working with countries, French-speaking countries in particular, to facilitate access to grants from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF) and to support program implementation and monitoring.

This mechanism is France's indirect contribution to the Global Fund, led by the French Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs (known as MEAE). It aims to increase the impact of Global Fund grants by providing short-term technical assistance to eligible countries and by funding capacity building projects of 2 to 3 years.

The 5% Initiative is managed by Expertise France, who have a dedicated team within their Health Department.

5
projects evaluated

9
countries reached
by the projects

28
implementing
partners

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Cross-cutting evaluation of long-term projects

The 5% Initiative releases two calls for proposals each year as part of its Canal Projects mechanism, from which around ten projects are selected. All funded projects are subject to an external final evaluation. The 5% Initiative has established a thematic cross-cutting evaluation mechanism for projects in order to capitalize on this exercise. This enables to justify spending of MEAE funds, to demonstrate the 5% Initiative's value, facilitate learning to capitalize on practices that contribute to the fight against the three pandemics, and to guide the 5% Initiative's future activities.

KEY FIGURES

Total budget of projects:

€ 3,216,540

THEMES EVALUATED:

- HIV: **2** projects
- Health systems strengthening: **3** projects

5
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Projects evaluated

Breakdown of projects by country and by project holder

Since its inception, the 5% Initiative has financed 80 long-term projects totaling nearly 65 million euros. In 2018, 14 new projects were selected through calls for projects with 10.7 million Euros committed.

HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL MALI 2015-2016

Improving governance for the inclusion of people with disabilities in the national HIV response in Mali

PARTNERS

FEMAPH, ARCAD-SIDA

CARE FRANCE CAMEROON 2014-2016

Strengthening civil society to improve the quality of Global Fund grants in Cameroon

PARTNERS

AFASO, ASFU, Colibri, Garoua Eveil, Alternatives Cameroun, HFC, ACAFEM, APROFEM, Horizons Femmes, ASVOCOMKO, UNOADD

MÉDECINS DU MONDE FRANCE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO 2013-2015

Strengthening and promoting the role of civil society in coordinating Global Fund supported HIV/AIDS programs in North Kivu

PARTNERS

UCOP +, FOSI

FRENCH RED CROSS LAOS 2015-2018

Promoting good governance mechanisms as part of CCM reform in Laos, for state actors to work more closely with civil society

PARTNERS

Lao Positive Health Association - APL+/LaoPHA, the National Assembly's international relations department, Lao Red Cross, IRD

MULTI-COUNTRY INTERVENTION

COALITION INTERNATIONALE SIDA/COALITION PLUS BURKINA FASO, CÔTE D'IVOIRE, MALI, SENEGAL, BURUNDI, MAURITIUS 2015-2018

Position six civil society organizations from 6 African countries as key financial management actors (Principal Recipient or Sub-Recipient) in the implementation of Global Fund grants

PARTNERS

Sidaction, PILS, ANCS, ALCS, ANSS, CSAS, ARCAD-SIDA, REVS+

This document presents a synthesis of the results from a cross-cutting evaluation of five projects funded by the 5% Initiative to build civil society capacity around the Global Fund.

The 5% Initiative launched a call for projects in 2013 on governance and civil society engagement in all Global Fund activities and governance. The call was to select projects to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to give them greater influence in Global Fund decision-making processes and grant implementation.

As part of this call for projects, five projects were selected. Here we present a summary of the results from the cross-cutting evaluation of these projects.

Glossary

The capacity of an organization can be considered as its potential to be successful; to fulfil its goals and achieve its overall mission. Capacity can be at many levels: individual, organizational, inter-organizational and societal levels.

Capacity building therefore aims to improve an organization's potential performance.

The interrelation between different levels of capacity mean that a capacity building process must take into account capacity at all levels in order to achieve real change.

METHODOLOGY

This evaluation was conducted between April 2017 and July 2018 by COTA. The evaluation team consisted of two international experts (a public health expert and a specialist in evaluating civil society support projects), supported by two regional experts (public health, civil society).

It involved:

- An individual evaluation of each field project, between August 2017 and March 2018, as part of 5% Initiative accountability;
- Analysis and cross-referencing of results to draw lessons from the combined experience and to identify best practices around civil society strengthening, to provide learning and improve the quality of projects funded by the 5% Initiative.

Area 1

Compatibility of capacity building initiatives with population need

“The peer review flagged weaknesses among CSOs. They then committed to building their capacity”

FATOUMATA SINABA CAMARA,
Head of FEMAPH's Planning and Project Management department (AGIR Project / Handicap International)

In all the projects evaluated, beneficiary civil society organizations confirmed the relevance of target groups selected for capacity building activities. These participants were people involved in the day-to-day management of the target issues.

Overall, projects were considered both relevant and consistent with health policies of the countries involved and with Global Fund strategies.

In general, the 'learners' and the organizations they work for were positive about the content of training and other capacity-building activities provided, and recognized the skills they gained as useful and adapted to their contexts. According to these stakeholders, their needs were well met.



Compatibility of initiatives

Effectiveness of initiatives

Sustainability of methods used

Strengthening the links

The more participatory the approach used, the more likely themes and content of capacity building programs are to be relevant [see boxed text].

Developing human resource skills requires a strong understanding of the technical gaps and consideration of the local context (tasks to be performed, norms, the legal and cultural environment, where the member of staff sits in the organigram, etc.). For most of the projects evaluated, the capacity building needs analysis was done based firstly on the project implementer's knowledge of the issue at hand, and then the local context was taken into account.

Recommendations

- Before any new project is approved, ensure that an in-depth capacity and needs assessment of implementing partners is carried out so as to better guide the type of support needed.
- The 5% Initiative to consider a pre-financing agreement system to allow for financing of preparatory activities (project formulation or conceptualization workshops) or capacity building activities for the grant holder and their implementing partners. These preparatory activities would be supervised by external experts who would then make a final recommendation on the overall financing of the project.

GOOD PRACTICE

A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO THE HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL PROJECT (MALI)

The approach used by the Handicap International project was truly participatory from start to finish. An organizational capacity assessment tool (OCAT) was used. Each civil society organization (CSO) identified their strengths and weaknesses, assessed their organizational and managerial capacities, and proposed informed solutions to strengthen them. Training was provided in French and Bambara. Training was organized on site, which allowed a maximum number of people to benefit, maximizing the result and impact to initiate real change within the CSO. This participatory approach to capacity building enhances ownership by relevant stakeholders.

Area 2 Effectiveness of capacity building initiatives

“South-South sharing allowed us to see our strengths and weaknesses and develop our skills.”

ASTOU ESSOUI,
Project Manager Centre
SAS - Coalition Plus

Civil society actors involved in the projects evaluated have gained many skills. Thanks to this, they are able to better manage their organizations and the projects they implement.

There appears to be improved governance in most CSOs involved. This includes basic organizational documents being established or revised, mandates not overlapping, improved definition and distribution of tasks, improved knowledge of the voluntary sector and the role of different bodies, improved compliance and general management.

As part of the multi-country project led by Coalition Plus, beneficiary CSOs have gained significant skills in administrative and financial management. As a result some CSOs have moved from cash accounting to accrual accounting, now have certified accounts and forecast budgets, have created grant monitoring dashboards, have created working groups between finance staff and project staff, have updated their administrative procedures and financial resources manual and have established a cash flow plan.

However, the duration of capacity building projects is often considered too short for this type of intervention. Indeed, capacity-building projects aimed at changing behavior require time. A single three-year project without other parallel or subsequent support does not appear to be sufficient to consolidate achievements and strengthen practices. In general, for all the projects evaluated, it was felt that training courses were not long enough and refreshers were not provided. Post-training monitoring is not systematically carried out, yet it is considered a crucial component to ensure effective and sustainable capacity building.

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Recommendations

- Improve integration of gender considerations in evaluated projects, by clearly defining the concept, training women in leadership in CSOs and defining specific gender indicators.
- Learn from the positive experiences of Care and Handicap International and encourage post-training coaching (see boxed text opposite).
- Set out a proper project monitoring and evaluation plan, strengthen data collection techniques, organize more frequent monitoring and evaluation meetings.
- Systematically organize a mid-term evaluation of funded projects in order to better identify additional support in terms of capacity building.*

* The 5% Initiative has since taken this recommendation into account and is funding systematic mid-term evaluations

GOOD PRACTICE

POST-TRAINING MONITORING IN CARE'S CAMEROON PROJECT

Post-training monitoring is a crucial element in ensuring effective and sustainable capacity building. A dedicated budget is needed for these activities. As part of Care's project, post-training coaching of leaders from umbrella organizations was an important phase of the CSO monitoring and capacity-building process: it led to the emergence of organizationally strong CSOs that are good at management and experienced in supervising community health activities. By sharing knowledge within an informal network of CSOs established by the project, leaders improved their knowledge and skills in governance.

Area 3 Sustainability, replicability and impact of methods used

“The work experience allowed us to strengthen our skills to be better equipped to manage Global Fund grants as secondary beneficiaries.”

PROSPER TRAORÉ,
REUS+ Finance Manager
(Coalition Plus project)

The level of capacity transfer within CSOs varies from project to project.

As part of the project led by Care, a true CSO partnership was established by creating a cascade capacity building system. Umbrella CSOs that were larger, better structured, and chosen based on their ability to engage with health system actors, oversaw peer CSOs and shared their experience with them. Peer CSOs in turn oversaw and strengthened community level workers.

These CSOs are now able to put forward their strategic vision to improve the quality of care. They have become spokespersons and are considered true care partners at the majority of health centers where the project has been implemented.

Compatibility of initiatives	Effectiveness of initiatives	Sustainability of methods used	Strengthening the links
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The transfer of skills acquired through these projects by beneficiary organizations remains a crucial issue, due to weaknesses in human resource management. More structural support with regard to institutional and organizational development is therefore needed for these CSOs.

Capacity building activities are a sustainable way of strengthening civil society, particularly when a multi-stakeholder approach is used. The projects evaluated have carried out - to varying degrees - a series of activities and consultation frameworks that have fostered more consolidated and strengthened relations between CSOs: group trainings, peer evaluation, work experience / South-South exchanges, annual reviews, learning and sharing workshops, etc. Civil society actors that were previously working separately now see the benefit of collaborating so that their strategies and activities complement each other and can be replicated.

Recommendations

In addition to the OCAT tool used by the HI project in Mali, other practices can be replicated and are worth building on:

- The COPE tool (Care project), strengthens the quality of health services and is based on a self-assessment tool that assesses how well services are functioning. It has been a success in the health centers involved, which demonstrates its relevance for projects focused on local changes.
- The peer review was highly appreciated by the beneficiaries that took part. This approach made it possible to demonstrate the value of different stakeholders, to strengthen relations between CSOs and to encourage the sharing of experiences and skills.



GOOD PRACTICE

THE COALITION PLUS PROJECT'S UNIQUE APPROACH

The Coalition Plus project is a multi-country project that prioritizes the creation of exchange frameworks between Global Fund Principal Recipients (PRs) and Sub-Recipients (SRs). These exchange frameworks allow partners to strengthen their skills, to enhance their performance, and to mutually agree on the relevance of creating a new position or service. Although the exchanges are focused on administrative and financial management, they enable partners to learn from each other's experiences and to share good practice in terms of running organizations or service delivery strategy. This project also demonstrates that it is possible to fully engage partners in planned activities without providing direct funding.

Area 4 Strengthening the links between civil society and stakeholders

“The project has enabled us to get closer to the population and become a respected spokesperson, which means they now approach us directly.”

PROSPER TRAORÉ,
REUS+ Finance Manager
(Coalition Plus
project)

In general, the projects enabled links between civil society and the Global Fund, national authorities and other actors to be strengthened.

Capacity-building for CSOs has increased and strengthened their capacity to be credible partners in the implementation of Global Fund programs. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as part of the Médecins du Monde project, the concept of a ‘community observatory’ was adopted by the General Assembly of the Global Fund’s Country Coordinating Mechanism and was an integral part of the country’s GF proposals.

The link with national authorities has also been strengthened. One of the major achievements of the HI project is the increasing integration of disability in HIV/AIDS interventions in Mali, including the development of an operational plan for inclusion of disability in the national HIV strategy.

In addition, the projects also strengthened the credibility and accountability of partner organizations with other technical and financial partners. For example, as part of the Coalition Plus project, CSAS (Côte d’Ivoire) was able to tender as main partner on a European Union bid, based on the certification of their accounts, made possible by the project.

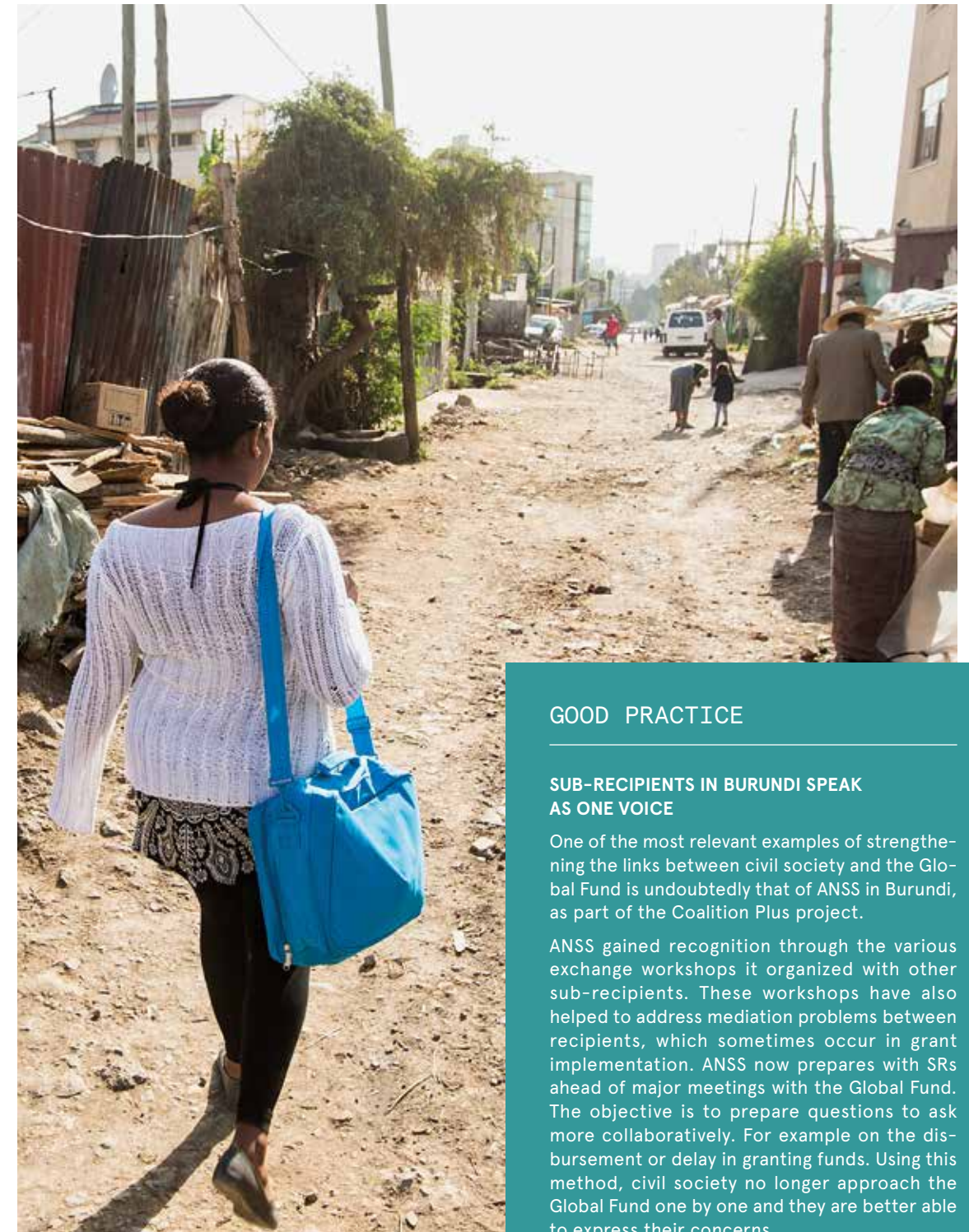
Recommendation

→ Implementing multi-country projects can provide added value but there are various factors to consider: adapting to different contexts, sufficient capacity building for all partners, sufficient budget, progressive accountability of implementing partners.

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SUB-RECIPIENTS IN BURUNDI SPEAK AS ONE VOICE

One of the most relevant examples of strengthening the links between civil society and the Global Fund is undoubtedly that of ANSS in Burundi, as part of the Coalition Plus project.

ANSS gained recognition through the various exchange workshops it organized with other sub-recipients. These workshops have also helped to address mediation problems between recipients, which sometimes occur in grant implementation. ANSS now prepares with SRs ahead of major meetings with the Global Fund. The objective is to prepare questions to ask more collaboratively. For example on the disbursement or delay in granting funds. Using this method, civil society no longer approach the Global Fund one by one and they are better able to express their concerns.

Conclusion

This cross-cutting evaluation on civil society strengthening linked to Global Fund grants demonstrates that the projects evaluated are in line with the GF. The capacity building components of the projects are fully consistent with the GF strategy. In addition, the 5% Initiative has allowed for areas and activities to be covered that were previously neglected by other more traditional projects implemented by Global Fund sub-recipients. For example, consideration of disability, peer assessment, pooling of skills in a multi-country approach, focus on local reporting changes between providers and CSOs, or the relationship between finance staff and project staff.

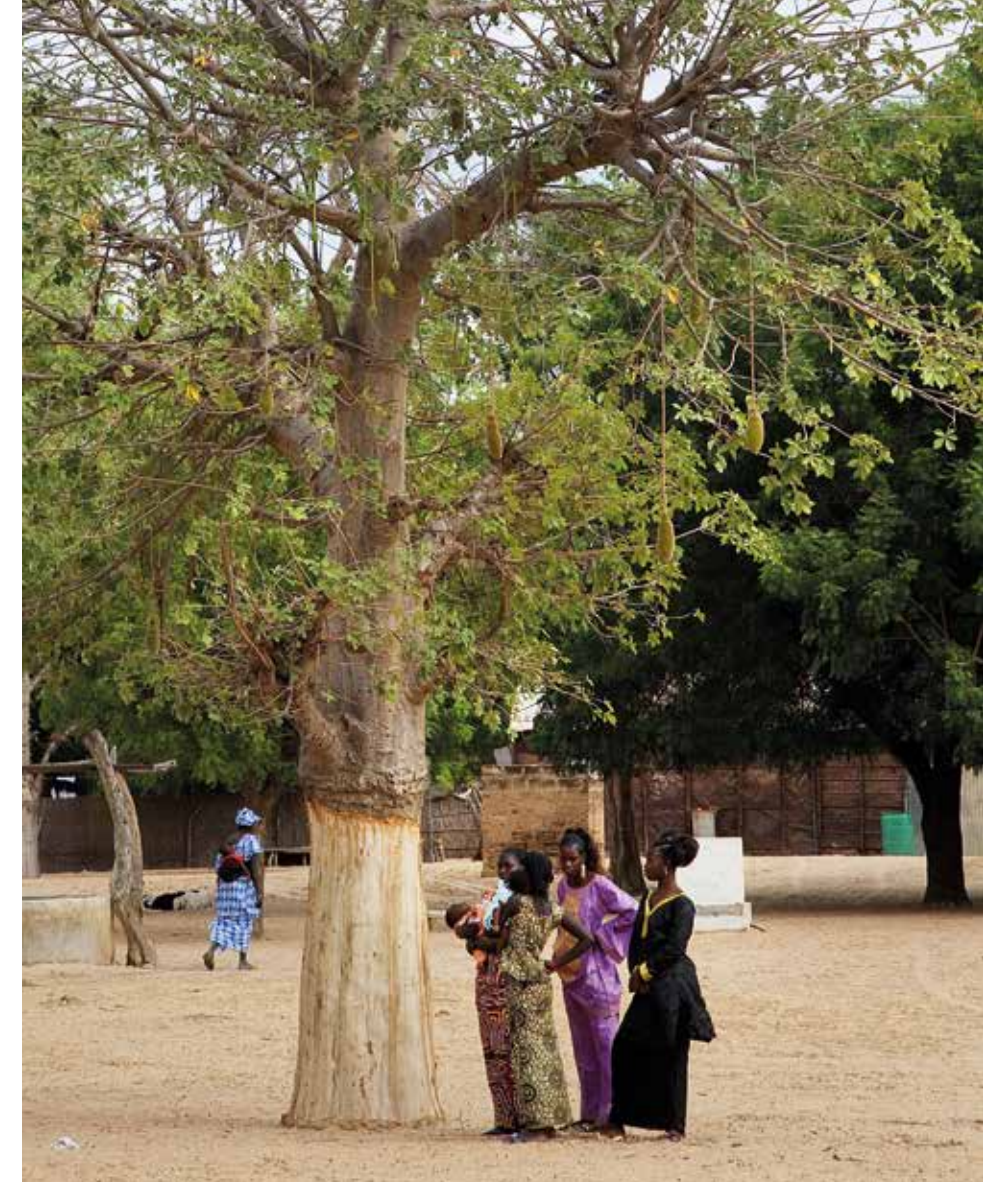


INSIGHT

Strengthening civil society remains a strong focus of the 5% Initiative, in line with France's global health strategy. Other projects, including technical assistance assignments, are underway to strengthen these actors, who play a central role in the fight against the three pandemics. For example, in 2017, the 5% Initiative selected two projects to fund aimed at structuring the community response to improve access to care for key populations: drug users in Côte d'Ivoire with Médecins du Monde and the young people from four African countries with ANCS.

ACRONYMS

ALCS	Association de Lutte contre le Sida (Morocco)
ANCS	Alliance Nationale des Communautés pour la Santé (Senegal)
ANSS	Association Nationale de soutien aux Séropositifs et malades du Sida (Burundi)
ARCAD - SIDA	Association de Recherche, de Communication et d'Accompagnement à Domicile des PVVIH (Mali)
CAR	Central African Republic
CBO	Community-based organization
CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanism
CSAS	Centre Solidarité Action Sociale (Côte d'Ivoire)
CSO	Civil society organization
DOTW	Doctors of the World
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FEMAPH	Fédération malienne des associations de personnes en situation de handicap
FOSI	Forum Sida
GF	Global Fund
HI	Handicap International
ICN	Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM)
NAP	National AIDS Program
OCAT	Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool
PILS	Prévention Information et Lutte contre le Sida (Mauritius)
PLHIV	Person Living with HIV
PR	Principal Recipient
SR	Sub-Recipient
UCOP+	Union Congolaise des personnes vivant avec le VIH



This cross-cutting evaluation was carried out by four COTA evaluators: Stéphane Vancutsem (lead), Sylvie Sargueil (associate consultant), Mariam Diallo and Jean-Marie Tshibanda (regional experts)

It was coordinated at Expertise France by Elsa Goujon-Migue, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer in the Health Department.

The analysis and conclusions presented in this document were written by the authors and do not necessarily reflect Expertise France's official standpoint.

The full cross-cutting evaluation report and the related project evaluation reports can be accessed through the 5% Initiative, as well as on their website.



INITIATIVE 5%
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Expertise France
73, rue de Vaugirard
75006 Paris - France
+33 1 70 82 74 47
www.initiative5pour100.fr

