

State Dept using Global Fund Procurement Pool in health programs. *Devex*, 26 March 2026

When senior State Department official **Jeremy Lewin** announced the \$4.6 billion U.S. pledge to [The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria](#) at its replenishment last year, he made two things clear: **the fund is a “critical partner”** in advancing the “America First Global Health Strategy,” and **it offers countries a “world-class pooled procurement mechanism.”**

This isn’t just empty rhetoric. The [Global Fund has been in the room](#) for some of the bilateral health negotiations between the U.S. and African countries — at the request of both parties — providing technical information on programs that it supports. And sources tell me the [State Department](#) is also eyeing the Global Fund’s pooled procurement platform. At least two out of seven MOUs I’ve examined mention the Global Fund or its procurement platform, [wambo.org](#).

What exactly the State Department has in mind remains unclear, but health experts want the Global Fund to be more involved as countries move toward operationalizing the bilateral deals and to **ensure no one gets left behind.**

That concern isn’t hypothetical. It’s already happening. In the Kenyan capital of Nairobi, several [PEPFAR](#)-supported drop-in centers for key populations have shut their doors. But services haven’t disappeared entirely — **the fund’s support is keeping lifesaving commodities and care flowing.** And now, “everyone” looks to the Global Fund to keep these services going, **Nguru Karugu**, executive director of the LGBTQI+ and key population-led consulting firm Public Health Innovations, tells me.

Still, plenty of uncertainties remain. At the top of the list: **how the expanded global gag rule might affect the fund.**

Organizations are still figuring out [the sweeping rules](#) that prohibit U.S. foreign aid from being used for abortion, diversity, and “gender ideology.” The rules apply to international organizations — all the way to primary and subrecipients of their funding. The State Department has published a document regarding the policy and a waiver process, and sources tell me **the Global Fund is in talks with the U.S. government on a potential waiver**, although the status and details are unknown.

Those on the ground, however, hope the fund will **stand up for those who may be affected by the new rules.**

“I think with the global gag rule ... it affects mostly our sex workers and key populations. So it should be under the guidance of [The] Global Fund to actually stand up and say, these are populations that should not be left behind,” **Solomon Wambua**, national coordinator for the Key Population Consortium of Kenya, tells me.