

Statement from GFAN Speaker Timur Abdullaev on World TB Day

The world today is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic that is **testing the limits of our global health infrastructure**. As the world comes to grips with this pandemic and the resulting ramifications, it is important to not lose sight of the three epidemics and the global fight that impacts the lives of millions of people around the world each and every day – and has for decades and generations.

Today on World TB Day, let's take a look at the impact of TB, [a disease that the World Health Organization declared a global emergency in 1993](#).

According to the [Stop TB Partnership](#):

- TB kills over 4000 people every day.
- The world needs more than 2 billion USD annually for R&D (but current funding levels are less than half that)
- 3 million out of 10 million people developing TB are missing from care

The [Global Fund](#) provides nearly 70% of all international financing for TB, with 5.3 million people treated in 2018. The Global Fund has spent nearly 10 billion on fighting TB since its inception and today its funding supports 464 grants, 251 partners, in 124 locations.

The Global Fund is the largest multilateral provider of grants that strengthen health systems. Past outbreaks have shown that disruptions in supplies or diverted health care resources from AIDS, TB and malaria [could result in increased deaths in the three diseases](#). They are also “encouraging countries to reprogram savings from existing grants and to redeploy underutilized resources to mitigate the potential negative consequences of COVID-19 on health and health systems.” By using these types of funds to address the immediate need of COVID-19

we can better manage the impact of the outbreak on the three diseases and give needed support to health systems under strain.

It is critical that we continue to protect human rights and the right to dignity during this pandemic and in the on-going fight against TB. Many of the same key populations that are vulnerable to TB will also be vulnerable to COVID-19, such as migrant and refugee populations. [MSF International](#) has been flagging the critical situation for migrant and refugee camps where close quarters and lack of soap and/or running water could cause disastrous outbreaks among some of the most vulnerable populations in the world.



On World TB Day, in many countries, a large number of us will be practicing physical distancing, self-isolating or being under a quarantine of some sort due to COVID-19. Please take a moment today to think of the many millions of people who are impacted by the world's most deadly infectious disease, TB.

While we fight to end this new global pandemic we cannot forget the epidemics that have been taking their toll on the lives of people around the world for generations and the **need to invest and build resilient and strong health systems in so many countries around the world**.

If measures we are seeing today achieve their goal of reducing the spread and a vaccine for COVID-19 is found in the next 18-24 months as is currently predicted, **the epidemic of TB is and will remain a crisis claiming over 4000 lives every single day: we need on-going, significant investments in health to achieve health for all for people**, regardless of which epidemic, pandemic or disease threatens their well-being and that of our families and communities.

Timur Abdullaev works as a human rights and public health consultant. Most recently, he has worked for UNDP, the World Health Organization and the Global Fund, amongst others. Currently, Timur is a member of the [Stop TB Partnership](#) Board, Global Fund's Technical Review Panel and CRG Advisory Group, Board of [TBpeople](#) – the global network of people affected by TB, Board of [AFEW International](#) and the Oversight Committee for the [TB Europe Coalition](#). He has co-authored a number of publications.

Read more about Timur and his story on our website: <https://www.globalfundadvocatesnetwork.org/campaigns/timur-abdullaev/>