

The EU's partnership with the Global Fund to Fight HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria

What is the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria?

In 2000, AIDS, TB and malaria seemed unstoppable. In many countries, AIDS devastated an entire generation. Malaria killed young children and pregnant women were unable to protect themselves from mosquitoes or access life-saving medicine. Poverty fuelled tuberculosis. As a response, in 2002, a partnership between governments, civil society, technical agencies, the private sector and people affected by the diseases was set up: the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria was born. Since its creation, some of its trademarks have been to put communities living with and impacted by the three diseases at the centre of its work, thereby building a much-needed resilience to respond to new pandemics like COVID-19; to complement HIV, TB and malaria prevention and treatment programs with investments in resilient and sustainable systems for health; and, due to the nature of the three diseases, address health determinants and reduce health inequities.

How does the Global Fund work?

The Global Fund raises and invests funding in three-year cycles. Currently, each year, over USD4 billion is reinjected at country level according to plans developed by Country Coordination Mechanisms (CCMs) and approved by independent experts. CCMs are made of representatives of people affected by the three diseases, governments, civil society, and medical experts.

Since its inception, the Global Fund has spent more than US\$45 billion in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria and for programs to strengthen systems for health across 155 countries. Its programmes have saved 38 million lives and provided prevention, treatment, and care services to hundreds of millions of people, helping to revitalize entire communities, strengthen local health systems and improve economies.

The EU and the Global Fund

The EU played a crucial role in the Global Fund's establishment and has supported it ever since, becoming its sixth-largest donor with a total commitment of €2.65 billion. Together with the Member States, the EU has historically contributed about half of the Global Fund's total funding. In 2019, the European Commission (EC) pledged €550 million to the Global Fund for the period 2020-2022. This represented a 16% increase to the EC's previous pledge, which speaks to the EU institutions' strong support. The EC sits on the board of the Global Fund and is a member of 15 CCMs, thereby contributing to the Fund's good governance, transparency, efficiency and alignment with both country and EU priorities.

Together with other agencies, the EC and the Global Fund co-founded the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A). The Global Fund is a co-convener of ACT-A's Diagnostics pillar and Health Systems Connector and leads the work on the procurement and deployment of the Therapeutics pillar.

What makes the Global Fund unique as a global health actor?

1 Communities at the centre

The central involvement of affected people and communities at all levels of governance and decision-making of the Global Fund makes it unique in the overall global health architecture. Recognizing the central role of communities to reach and link marginalized and criminalized groups to the services they need, the Global Fund provides support to community service delivery, monitoring, and advocacy, thereby strengthening community systems for health.

“The Global Fund provided something unique at the time: a service without judgement; just proper support.”

Anton Basenko, Harm Reduction Advocate, Ukraine

2 Rights, equity and gender

The Global Fund contributes to tackling health inequities and building health systems that leave no one behind through its gender equity, youth-oriented and human rights-based approaches. Through its programmes and inclusive governance, the Global Fund empowers people and communities to speak up for their rights and hold governments accountable.

“Building resilient health and community systems now is the best way to prevent disease outbreaks from becoming pandemics in the future. With a proven track record in this area, and experience building trust and achieving results for the most vulnerable communities, an investment in the Global Fund is therefore an investment in support of pandemic preparedness and response in countries.”

Dianne Steward, Head of Donor Relations at the Global Fund

3 Resilient health systems, resilient communities

The Global Fund is the largest multilateral provider of grants to support sustainable systems for health, investing more than US\$1 billion a year on improving procurement and supply chains; strengthening data systems and data use; training qualified health care workers; building stronger community responses and systems; and promoting the delivery of more integrated, people-centred health services to ensure people can receive comprehensive care throughout their lives.

The Global Fund’s investments in health systems and programmes to defeat HIV, TB, malaria have helped countries develop infrastructure and capabilities that have underpinned their responses to COVID-19 and can play an important role in the prevention, identification, and response to future health threats, contributing to global health security.

Why is it important to continue supporting the Global Fund?

Significant progress has been made in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria since the Global Fund’s establishment, but persistent structural and legal barriers such as stigma, discrimination, criminalisation, gender inequality and other human rights abuses - now also exacerbated by COVID-19 - put progress at risk. Progress could also be reversed due to the knock-on effects of COVID-19 on prevention, treatment, and care: in some places, HIV testing has dropped by 50%, new TB case notifications have decreased by 75%, and mosquito net distributions have been delayed.¹ A July 2020 study estimated that in high-burden settings, deaths due to HIV, TB, and malaria over 5 years could increase by up to 10%, 20%, and 36% respectively, compared to a “no COVID-19 pandemic” situation.²

¹ The Global Fund, Results Report 2020. Available on [TheGlobalFund.org](https://www.theglobalfund.org).

² Alexandra B. Hogan et al., Potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria in low-income and middle-income countries: a modelling study. Available on [TheLancet.org](https://www.thelancet.org).

Increasing the support to the Global Fund will be paramount to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on HIV, TB and malaria - especially on the most marginalized communities - and to help countries build strong and resilient systems for health. This, in turn, will be essential for sustainable COVID-19 recovery.

What can MEPs do?

1 Shape EU policies on global health

- ┌ Call on the European Commission to adopt a **renewed EU Global Health Policy**, which i.a. consolidates the EU's support to the Global Fund.
- ┌ Support the creation of a **health systems strengthening pillar in the EU-Africa partnership** which addresses the continuous threat of HIV, TB and malaria.
- ┌ Engage with the EU's **global health security and pandemic response** agendas to ensure that new pandemic plans:
 - Are enablers for HIV, TB and malaria outcomes (and vice-versa) and contribute to robust, resilient and sustainable systems for health, including community systems, with a view to achieving Universal Health Coverage.
 - Meaningfully engage communities and civil society.
 - Are grounded in core principles of human rights, equity, inclusiveness, solidarity, gender equality, accountability, and a holistic, people-centred approach.
- ┌ Champion the adoption of an ambitious and forward-looking **EP resolution on HIV and AIDS**; take the floor during the plenary session in support of stronger EU leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS, of communities affected by HIV/AIDS, and of the Global Fund. Request the organisation of an EP hearing on HIV/AIDS as a follow-up to the resolution and the adoption of the UN political declaration on HIV/AIDS (June 2021).

2 Influence EU funding for global health

- ┌ In the annual budget negotiations, step up for a **strong budget for human development**.
- ┌ Hold the Commission accountable for its promise to **increase the NDICI's Global Challenges programme by €600 million**.
- ┌ Ensure that the EU contributes its fair share to ACT-A, that funding to ACT-A is additional to funding of existing infectious diseases and that resources are distributed equitably between all ACT-A pillars.

3 Become a Global Fund champion

- ┌ Help us **connect community voices to decision-makers**.
- ┌ Leverage your local and European networks to **raise awareness about the work of the Global Fund**.
- ┌ Ahead of the Global Fund 7th replenishment in 2022, use your voice to **secure an increased EU contribution to the Global Fund**.

