
13 December 2010

OPEN LETTER TO THE BOARD OF THE GLOBAL FUND TO FIGHT AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND MALARIA:

As international, regional, and national non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations that focus on a broad range of health issues, we strongly urge immediate action to fully fund the current mandate of the Global Fund; to strengthen the Global Fund's engagement in maternal, newborn, child, and reproductive health (MNCH); and to mobilize additional resources to support such engagement. Strategic support by the Global Fund to address key gaps in MNCH programs and progress will contribute to:

- Catalyzing additional funding, policy, and program commitments from a range of stakeholders and partners
- Encouraging more integrated delivery of health services, in keeping with national health strategies, and achieving greater efficiency and responsiveness to people's needs
- Facilitating increased coordination of the international community's efforts to improve global health in support of country-led approaches
- Scaling up access to selected high-impact, proven, cost-effective maternal, newborn, child, and reproductive health interventions and services.

We join a range of stakeholders in expressing support for a stronger Global Fund role in supporting MDGs 4 and 5, and echo the 2010 African Union Summit Declaration, which called for the Global Fund to "create a new window to fund Maternal, Newborn and Child Health." Momentum is building for such a step among donors, governments, and civil society, and it is critical that this momentum be translated into decisive action.

In much of the world, maternal, newborn, and child death and disability rates remain unacceptably high. Hundreds of millions of people do not have access to essential maternal, newborn, child, and reproductive health care, or to prevention and treatment for HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. National health structures often lack the capacity to address people's health needs in a comprehensive, integrated, efficient, and effective manner. The UN Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, launched in September, highlighted an international consensus around the key policy, health system, and programming interventions required to accelerate progress on MNCH. More than US\$40 billion in financial commitments were announced at the launch event for the Global Strategy. It is crucial that these be converted into concrete, effective policies and programs consistent with national priorities, and that the significant funding gap still remaining be addressed through additional, substantial, and well-focused financial commitments.

In April of this year, the Global Fund Board acknowledged the urgent need for a more integrated approach to global health in its Decision Point on MCH, which stated that achievement of the health MDGs "can only be approached in an integrated manner and the success of one MDG depends on progress on all others." We agree. The challenge is how best to marry the successes of targeted approaches to funding and delivery of services, as demonstrated by the Global Fund's efforts against HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria, with a broader approach to strengthening health service delivery capacity and meeting the needs of women, children, and marginalized and vulnerable groups. Establishing a dedicated global financing mechanism through which funding commitments for maternal, newborn, child, and reproductive health can be channeled will help achieve that objective.

We strongly believe that the Global Fund is well positioned to help address this need. Establishment of such a mechanism within the Global Fund will create an effective repository for present and future commitments to the Global Strategy, and will – together with the Health Systems Funding Platform – enable the effective implementation and tracking of funds for proven MNCH interventions that are channeled through the Global Fund. It will also, importantly, be a clear and unambiguous expression of the global health community's recognition of the pressing need for an integrated, efficient approach to achieving the health-related MDGs.

We stand ready to support this process with our unique insight and experience; to work closely with the Global Fund and international and national partners to implement a new, integrated mechanism; and to continue advocating strongly for the additional funding needed for achievement of our common goals.

The time for action is now. Many millions of women, men, and children – including the most vulnerable – deserve no less.

Signed,

Family Care International

Academy for Educational Development

ActionAid International

Action Canada for Population and Development

Africa Public Health Alliance & 15%+ Campaign

African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF)

American Public Health Association

amFAR, the Foundation for AIDS Research

BRAC

CARE USA

Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute

Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE)

Centre for Development and Population
Activities (CEDPA)

CORE Group

EngenderHealth

FHI

German Foundation for World Population (DSW)

Global AIDS Alliance

Global Alliance to Prevent Prematurity and
Stillbirth (GAPPS)

Global Health Council

Guttmacher Institute

Health Alliance International

Health GAP

HealthRight International

Health Workforce Advocacy Initiative (HWAI)

HENNET (Health NGOs Network/Kenya)

International Civil Society Support

International Community of Women Living with
HIV and AIDS (ICWGlobal)

International Confederation of Midwives

International Council on AIDS Service
Organizations (ICASO)

International Federation of Gynecology and
Obstetrics (FIGO)

International HIV/AIDS Alliance

International Initiative for Maternal Mortality and
Human Rights

International Pediatric Association (IPA)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

IntraHealth International

Ipas

Japanese Organization for International
Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP)

KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation

Management Sciences for Health

Marie Stopes International

Maternal Mortality Campaign

Merlin

Osservatorio sull'Azione Globale contro l'AIDS

Oxfam

Partners in Health

Partners in Population and Development

Pathfinder International

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR)

Population Action International

Population Council

RESULTS

Save the Children

Stop AIDS Alliance

Stop AIDS Campaign

Treatment Action Group

Uplift International

White Ribbon Alliance Global Secretariat

WHO CC for Training & Research in Newborn Care,
All India Institute of Medical Sciences

World Vision International