

## ACTION SHEET

# Write a World TB Day Letter to the Editor Supporting the Global Fund

World TB Day on March 24 is an annual global recognition in honor of those affected by tuberculosis (TB), shining light on the ever-present need to fund the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of this deadly disease. Tuberculosis both exploits and exacerbates poverty. Each year, this worldwide killer sickens about 10 million people and causes roughly 1.4 million deaths. World TB Day reminds us that the fight to curb the damage of this disease is not over.

We do know that tuberculosis can be prevented, treated, and cured? Across the globe, we were seeing heartening trends in addressing TB pre-COVID. The 2020 Global Tuberculosis Report stated that 1.4 million more people got care for tuberculosis between 2015 and 2019, and the world was working toward the ambitious but achievable end of the TB epidemic by 2030.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered disastrous healthcare disruptions, including care for tuberculosis patients. The results have been devastating for people and will continue to be so unless we act. The Stop TB Partnership suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic could contribute to 6.3 million additional cases of TB and a doubling of TB deaths over the next three years.

This is why 2022 is particularly important. Later this year, the Global Fund to Fight Tuberculosis and Malaria will have its seventh replenishment effort, and the replenishment conference will be hosted by the United States. The time for our leadership is now. The Global Fund has a proven, 20-year track record of effectively working with over 120 countries to address pandemics. In its 2021 report, the Global Fund celebrated a 46% reduction of overall deaths due to AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in partner countries since it began its work. The Global Fund is the global leader in combatting the global scourge of tuberculosis, and we must build the political will to support the Global Fund now, in advance of the replenishment conference later this year.

Just last month, 137 representatives signed onto a potent, bipartisan letter to the Biden Administration calling for a bold, three-year pledge at the replenishment. The Global Fund needs at least \$18 billion to continue its work, and the U.S. must pledge a third of that amount in order to motivate other nations to help meet this ambitious target. So we need to keep the pressure on the Administration and Congress to be bold.

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**Take Action Now:** A letter to the editor is an impactful way to keep the momentum going on the Global Fund. Please write and submit a letter to the editor asking Congress – and your legislators by name – to support \$2 billion for the Global Fund in fiscal year 2023 as the first installment of a \$6 billion, three-year U.S. pledge to the Global Fund. A demonstrated U.S. commitment of one-third of \$18 billion needed to replenish the Global Fund will lead to a successful replenishment conference.

Additional resources:

1. RESULTS blog post on the Global Fund – <https://results.org/blog/how-the-u-s-can-transform-the-fight-against-tb-prevent-future-pandemics/>
2. Global Fund investment case - <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/fight-for-what-counts/>

## Sample Letter in EPIC Format

Consider organizing a group letter-writing activity by inviting RESULTS group members and people in your Action Network to write to your local papers about why U.S. leadership on the Global Fund matters to each of you and why you want your congressional legislators to take action this World TB Day. Write and share your letters with each other, then submit your finished letters. See the sample meeting agenda on the next page to guide you in enrolling others into action.

Subject: U.S. Leadership During Global Fund Replenishment

**Engage:** As we approach World TB Day on March 24, I am heartbroken that the last two years have seen major setbacks in the fight against pandemics like tuberculosis as resources were diverted to COVID-19.

**State Problem:** Tuberculosis sickens about 10 million people and causes roughly 1.4 million deaths annually. According to the Stop TB Partnership, twelve months of the COVID-19 pandemic reversed a dozen years of progress in fighting TB in lower-income countries with the highest TB burden.

**Inform:** We have to get back on track, while also continuing the fight against COVID-19. Supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is the way to do that. Over 20 years, the Global Fund partnership has saved 44 million lives and strengthened health systems around the world. The Global Fund has a three-year plan to make up for

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ground lost and save an additional 20 million lives, but they at least \$18 billion to execute it.

**Call to Action:** The U.S. is hosting the Global Fund replenishment conference later this year and we traditionally provide one-third of Global Fund funding. I urge President Biden to include the first U.S. installment of \$2 billion in his FY23 budget request and Congress to appropriate the same amount for FY23. It will send a signal to other nations that they must do their part in funding the Global Fund at the gathering later this year. World TB Day is a reminder that the fight to end the tuberculosis pandemic is far from over and that we must act.