

# Support the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria and the Fund's Response to COVID-19

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For questions email: [Gregory.Adams@mail.house.gov](mailto:Gregory.Adams@mail.house.gov) in Barbara Lee's (D-CA) office or [Caroline.Buyak@mail.house.gov](mailto:Caroline.Buyak@mail.house.gov) in Martha Roby's (R-AL) office.

**\*\*\*Sign-on letter closes Tuesday, April 21\*\*\***

April XX, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

We write in support of a U.S. contribution of \$1 billion to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria's COVID-19 Response Mechanism as part of future COVID-19-related supplemental funding. This allocation would provide emergency support to countries to address COVID-19 and protect fragile gains in the response to AIDS, TB and malaria.

COVID-19 represents an existential threat to ongoing efforts against the epidemics of AIDS, TB, malaria. The Global Fund has already taken several steps to mitigate the damage. On March 4 the Global Fund announced that it was making \$500 million available to implementing countries for crucial COVID-19 response activities. On April 9, the Global Fund's Board unanimously approved an additional \$500 million in existing funding for the new COVID-19 Response Mechanism to help countries fight COVID-19 and mitigate its impact on health systems, particularly AIDS, TB, and malaria programs.

The ultimate amount of external funding needed to help developing countries cope with COVID-19 and mitigate its harm to health systems is unknown; however, the [UN currently estimates that an additional \\$500 billion is needed](#) for emergency health services and related programs. Additionally, [a group of 165 leaders and experts](#) wrote an April 6 letter to the G-20 citing the need for \$35 billion to support countries with weaker health systems and especially vulnerable populations, plus an immediate \$8 billion need to fill gaps in COVID-19 response capacity based on the estimate of the [Global Preparedness Monitoring Board](#).

The Global Fund has enjoyed broad bipartisan support from both the House of Representatives and our colleagues in the Senate. This support has been maintained because the Global Fund has consistently demonstrated concrete progress in saving lives. The Global Fund's primary advantage is that it can rapidly deliver funding to existing local partners in over 100 countries – with all of the same accountability and transparency it has shown in disbursing roughly \$4 billion per year in grant funding. The organization has deep experience in funding the infrastructure and capabilities needed to defeat COVID-19: medical supply chains, laboratories, community health workers, and disease surveillance.

U.S. investment at a time like this does more than fight disease – it helps keep Americans safe. Health security knows no borders and pandemics can bounce back on U.S. citizens. As COVID-19 spreads to developing countries, it threatens to derail years of progress fighting HIV, TB, and malaria by disrupting essential prevention and treatment services and interrupting supply chains for critical drugs and medical supplies. Experience from recent Ebola outbreaks in Africa has shown that unless mitigating action is taken, the additional death toll from AIDS, TB, and malaria could well exceed the number of deaths from COVID-19 itself. COVID-19 is on a trajectory to overwhelm communities and health systems in developing countries with potentially catastrophic consequences.

Because of its results-oriented, efficient and transparent approach, the Global Fund has received high marks in multilateral aid reviews. Independent watchdogs with the highest standards, including the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), agree. [The U.S. government served as the institutional lead for MOPAN’s recent assessment](#), which commended the Global Fund for its clear strategic direction, risk management, transparency, accountability, and “low operational budget.” The Global Fund has a [strong, independent Inspector General](#) office that reports directly to the Global Fund board and has effective [whistleblower](#) and [audit](#) functions.

The Global Fund and the U.S. bilateral programs have worked diligently to increasingly integrate their planning and programming over the years. PEPFAR, PMI, and USAID have come to depend on the Global Fund as a trusted partner in saving lives and strengthening health systems.

Our investment in the Global Fund’s COVID-19 Resource Mechanism will no doubt motivate other donors to contribute, just as our commitments in fiscal year 2020 encouraged countries to come forth with strong pledges for the 6<sup>th</sup> Replenishment.

Importantly, with the establishment of the COVID-19 Response Mechanism the Global Fund is not straying from its core mandate. Indeed, if it does not address the grave challenge presented by COVID-19, the Global Fund, its donors, and their partners risk losing the progress they have fought so hard to achieve.

The U.S. has shown unparalleled leadership in global health. We urge you to maintain that leadership, to set an example for the world, and to invest in defeating COVID-19 and AIDS, TB, and malaria through the Global Fund’s COVID-19 Response Mechanism.

Sincerely,

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Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

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Martha Roby  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chairwoman  
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee