

# STEP UP THE FIGHT

## FOCUS ON BUILDING RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS FOR HEALTH



The Global Fund / Jonas Grazer

Robust health systems are not only essential to ending HIV, TB and malaria as epidemics, they yield broader health outcomes, delivering health services in a sustainable, equitable and effective way. Resilient and sustainable systems for health are necessary for accelerating progress toward universal health coverage, and help countries prepare for emerging threats to global health security.

The Global Fund is the largest multilateral investor in health systems investing US\$1 billion a year to build resilient and sustainable systems for health. This includes: improving procurement and supply chains; strengthening data systems and data use; building an adequate health workforce; strengthening community responses and systems; and promoting more integrated service delivery so people can receive comprehensive care throughout their lives.

The Global Fund Strategy 2017-2022 reaffirms our commitment to invest vigorously in building resilient and sustainable systems for health. We are implementing our current strategy on health systems through grant allocations as well as by supporting special initiatives as part of the new catalytic funding mechanism. Global Fund investments in the treatment and prevention of HIV, TB and malaria improve the response to those diseases, while improving overall health systems by boosting the quality of care, data tracking and services; cross-cutting investments in the health system.

## THE MULTIPLIER EFFECT

Investments in HIV, TB, malaria and strengthening health systems have a powerful multiplier effect not only on people's overall health status, but also on countries as a whole. A 2018 Lancet report showed that larger improvements in human capital (level of health and education in a population) were associated with faster economic growth. The top quartile of countries in terms of absolute change in human capital from 1990 to 2016 had a median annualised growth in gross domestic product of 2.6% compared with 1.45% for countries in the bottom quartile. For years, HIV, TB and malaria placed extreme strain on already overstretched health systems in developing countries. Greater control of HIV, TB and malaria has reinvigorated health and hospital systems, and led to more productive communities. Worldwide, approximately 70% of the decline in deaths of children under 5 since 2000 was due to the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases.

## UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

The Global Fund's work to build stronger systems for health aligns with the priorities of governments by supporting national health strategies and disease-specific national plans. Universal access to health care is a critical component of the mission to end epidemics. In many countries, people cannot access testing and treatment because they are unable to pay, live too far from health services, or are denied access due to discrimination or stigma. The Global Fund and our partners seek to remove those barriers, making health services more readily available and financially accessible, and supporting countries in their progress toward universal health coverage.

In Rwanda, the Global Fund supports expanded community-based health insurance and provides support for performance-based financing, which covers HIV, TB, and malaria. Kenya has worked with the Global Fund to find efficiencies in its delivery of services and health insurance coverage, boosting both coverage and sustainability of its

health system. The Global Fund also partners with the private sector to improve the financial and risk management practices of implementing partners.

## TRAINING AND RETAINING HEALTH WORKERS

Health systems face the challenge of maintaining an adequate workforce. Training health workers through both pre-service and in-service opportunities is key to building resilient health systems. In Zimbabwe, the Global Fund has financed an emergency health worker retention scheme to reverse the brain drain of health care staff from the country due to its economic decline in 2008-2009.

Health workers play the critical role of bringing services to the people – particularly at the community level. In Senegal, community health workers have transformed health care delivery by providing lifesaving treatment in hard-to-reach rural areas where health facilities are either under-resourced or nonexistent.

**Our strategy 2017–2022 outlines seven areas of work in building resilient and sustainable systems for health**

- ▶ Strengthen community responses and systems
- ▶ Support reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and platforms for integrated service delivery
- ▶ Strengthen global and national procurement and supply chain systems
- ▶ Leverage critical investments in human resources for health
- ▶ Strengthen data systems for health and countries' capacities for analysis and use
- ▶ Strengthen and align to robust national health strategies and national disease-specific strategic plans
- ▶ Strengthen financial management and oversight



**In Chad, Mahamat Djibril Moussani is a community health worker who educates nomadic communities about malaria and tuberculosis.** The Global Fund supports the country's efforts to build more inclusive health systems that bring care closer to hard-to-reach communities and help them safeguard their health.



The Global Fund's investments in Senegal support the country's commitment to expanding health services deeper into its underserved communities, an initiative that has deployed more than 25,000 community workers.

In addition, effective health workforce governance and management is essential to ensure appropriate use and impact of investments in human resources for health.

## SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

The Global Fund supports the role of communities in designing effective interventions, implementing and evaluating health services, and in helping reach those who may lack access to health care, particularly the most vulnerable or marginalized. The Global Fund's investments are supporting countries to better integrate community systems and responses in long-term national health plans, with a focus on sustainability.

## FOCUS ON THE PERSON, NOT THE DISEASE

The Global Fund increasingly provides HIV, TB and malaria prevention and treatment programs through various facility and community-based delivery points that supply a range of health services. The aim is to address an individual's multiple health needs at different points in their lives, improving overall health outcomes and resulting in a more cost-effective and efficient approach.

The Global Fund recognizes the importance of this integrated approach to improve impact, as well as the vital link between health services and community responses, particularly in efforts to reach key populations and vulnerable people who do not always go to health clinics because of stigma. In Afghanistan, the Global Fund is working with the government and partners to support the expansion of Family Health Houses, which integrate health services such

as antenatal, maternal and newborn care and immunization for children. In Ukraine, Global Fund grants are supporting patient-oriented prevention, treatment and care of people living with HIV and TB.

## FIGHTING ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

More and more, resilient and sustainable systems for health are needed to defend against the growing global menace of antimicrobial resistance. Antimicrobial resistance, including drug-resistant malaria and multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, could erode progress against malaria, tuberculosis, HIV and many other infectious diseases. Containment strategies require a comprehensive approach and strong engagement at all levels of the health system.



**Bacteriologist Valentina Lobik discusses patient data collected in a national TB registry with a colleague** at the laboratory of the Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Pulmonology and Tuberculosis (RSPC PT) in Minsk, Belarus.

## IMPROVING PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CHAINS

Efficient procurement and supply chain systems are a pillar of strong health systems and are critical to achieving universal health coverage. The Global Fund is investing in improving and integrating supply chains and pharmaceutical management, and is developing a supply chain strategy and implementation plan to significantly improve product availability, reduce product waste and supply chain costs, significantly improve forecast accuracy and increase inventory turnover.

To increase our own efficiency, the Global Fund has initiated the Pooled Procurement Mechanism that aggregates order volumes on behalf of participating grantees to negotiate prices and delivery conditions with manufacturers. In 2017, the Pooled Procurement Mechanism managed US\$1 billion in orders, serving grantees in 63 countries. Health products available through the mechanism include antiretroviral drugs, antimalarial medicines, long-lasting insecticidal nets, essential medicines used in HIV programs and condoms, viral load tests and rapid diagnostic tests. Pooled procurement now covers 55% of procurement supported by the Global Fund and saved an additional US\$205 million across Global Fund grants in 2017. On-time and in-full deliveries increased to 84% in 2017, which has significantly contributed to decreasing reports of stock-outs. These efforts are expanding the ability of partners to achieve greater value for money that can, in turn, be invested to save more lives.

## GATHERING AND USING QUALITY INFORMATION

Data is the foundation of a strong health system. The Global Fund has invested in better information systems in implementing countries, working with partners to collect critical sub-national data, including for key populations and specific sub-groups – members of the general population that are simultaneously most affected by the diseases, excluded from



**In Nigeria, the Global Fund and partners are investing US\$20 million to support supply chain integration to address structural problems, reduce cost and speed up response times by improving the efficiency of the health product supply chain.**

appropriate services, and subject to human rights violations. In some countries, it means a network of mobile phones at community-level clinics used to collect diagnostic, treatment and drug delivery information. In others, it means sophisticated laboratory analysis data. The Global Fund supports the WHO TB Supranational Reference Laboratory Network, including funding for biosafety equipment at the newest member of the network, the National TB Reference Laboratory in Cotonou, Benin, which is working to strengthen the capacity of other laboratories in West and Central Africa. Global Fund-supported programs often finance the integration of multiple data collection systems into one national health management information system to improve decision-making. The use of quality data allows governments to respond quickly to an emerging public health crisis and to deliver the highest quality services. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Global Fund and partners are supporting the implementation of a health management information system to boost the collection and use of disaggregated and real-time data. Better use of data empowers countries to inform policies and improve decision-making.

## STEP UP THE FIGHT

Ending the epidemics of HIV, TB and malaria by 2030 is within reach, but not yet firmly in our grasp. After years of remarkable progress, new threats such as stalled funding and growing drug resistance have pushed us off track. We now face a decisive moment. Do we step up the fight, or do we allow ourselves to slip back? The Global Fund's fundraising target for the next three-year cycle is at least US\$14 billion. These funds will help save 16 million lives and cut the mortality rate from HIV, TB and malaria in half by 2023, while building stronger systems for health that will enable the achievement of universal health coverage. It is time to step up the fight.

## ABOUT THE GLOBAL FUND

The Global Fund is a partnership designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics. As an international organization, the Global Fund mobilizes and invests more than US\$4 billion a year to support programs run by local experts in more than 100 countries. In partnership with governments, civil society, technical agencies, the private sector and people affected by the diseases, we are challenging barriers and embracing innovation.

July 2019

[theglobalfund.org](http://theglobalfund.org)