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## **1.1 Million Lives Saved Through Global Fund Supported TB Programs**

**GENEVA** – On the occasion of World TB Day on 24 March, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria announced that an estimated 1.1 million people are alive today thanks to efforts in 102 countries receiving Global Fund support to battle tuberculosis (TB).

“It is heartening to learn that Global Fund resources have provided so many people across the globe, once suffering from this terrible disease, with renewed hope”, said Dr. Carol Jacobs, Chair of the Global Fund Board. “These people are alive thanks to the hard work of national TB programs who receive our funding and are supported by strong partners like the Stop TB Partnership, the Global Drug Facility and the Green Light Committee.”

In just five years, the Global Fund has become the largest international donor in the fight against tuberculosis, providing nearly 70 percent of all international funding for TB. To date, 133 TB programs, worth more than US\$ 1.9 billion, have been approved in 102 countries.

With the help of Global Fund resources, two million people have so far begun treatment under Directly-Observed Treatment, Short Course (DOTS), the internationally recommended strategy for TB control, contributing 34 percent to the global cumulative number of TB patients being treated under DOTS.

TB remains a major cause of death among people living with HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that one-third of the 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide are co-infected with TB. Sub-Saharan Africa is hardest hit with the HIV-fuelled TB epidemic with anti-tuberculosis drug resistance threatening to wash away a large part of the progress made so far in HIV/AIDS treatments.

The Global Fund has major concerns about the threat that drug-resistant strains of TB present to efforts to control tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. The organization believes the best way of preventing the spread of these strains is to ensure well-managed and properly funded national TB programs.

Since the Global Fund's inception in 2002, the organization has been committed to containing and treating emergent strains of both multi-drug (MDR-TB) and extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB). More than half of all current TB grants funded by the Global Fund, worth nearly US\$ 750 million, address multi drug-resistant TB. So far, Global Fund-financed programs have treated 8,600 people for MDR-TB.

“Global Fund-supported TB programs are bearing fruit”, said Sir Richard Feachem, outgoing Executive Director of the Global Fund. “Tuberculosis, however, still kills two million people each year. We must step up the fight by mobilizing even more resources in order to expand and improve the

quality of existing programs to treat ordinary tuberculosis and drug resistant TB, and make greater investments in HIV/TB co-infection interventions. Research also has to bring us radically better diagnostic tests and drugs for drug resistant TB, so that countries can finally turn the tide on tuberculosis once and for all.”

To date, tens of millions of people have been reached with lifesaving services provided through the Global Fund. In addition to treating two million people with effective tuberculosis medications, programs benefiting from Global Fund resources have provided antiretroviral treatment to 770,000 people with HIV and distributed 18 million insecticide-treated bed nets to protect children and families from malaria.

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*The Global Fund is a unique global public/private partnership dedicated to attracting and disbursing additional resources to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. This partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and affected communities represents a new approach to international health financing. The Global Fund works in close collaboration with other bilateral and multilateral organizations to supplement existing efforts dealing with the three diseases.*

*The Global Fund has approved grants for 450 programs in 136 countries with a total commitment of US\$ 7 billion. As of December 2006, 770,000 people have begun antiretroviral (ARV) treatment through Global Fund-supported programs and nearly 18 million insecticide-treated bed nets have been distributed to prevent malaria. In addition, tuberculosis programs have detected and treated two million TB cases under DOTS, the internationally-approved TB control strategy.*

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