

Stop AIDS Campaign and TAC applaud UK Government's backing for Global Fund

By *moderator*

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? DFID Secretary of State says the UK will increase funding because of the Global Fund?s ?proven track record of delivering excellent results for poor people?

? Stop AIDS Campaign calls on the government to lead the world by investing the UK?s fair share of what is needed to scale-up to universal access

AIDS campaigners have today welcomed the British Government's backing for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria which has saved more than six and a half million lives since its creation in 2002.

The Stop AIDS Campaign, a coalition of more than 40 British development agencies, applauded the Government's pledge to increase funding for the Global Fund and the recognition of its vital role in delivering the key development targets to deliver universal access to HIV treatment and to improve maternal and child health.

The announcements came as part of the Government's Multilateral Aid Review (MAR), delivered in the House of Commons yesterday by Secretary of State for International Development, Andrew Mitchell.

Diarmaid McDonald, coordinator of the Stop AIDS campaign said,

?It is great that the Global Fund?s exceptional results, saving lives and transforming communities, have been recognised by the government. We now call on the government to reward these results by investing £840 million in the Global Fund over the next three years. We believe this is the British Government's fairshare of what is required to scale up the AIDS response. Only then can we hope to deliver on the promise to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.?

The MAR looked at value for money provided by 43 multi-lateral organisations. The Global Fund was among nine organisations that were rated as providing ?very good? value for UK taxpayers and will therefore receive an increase in UK support. The scale of the UK contribution to the Global Fund ? which has already saved 6.5 million lives since its creation in 2002 ? has not yet been announced.

The Global Fund was described in the report as being *?critical to the delivery of the Health MDGs?*, specifically highlighting its contribution to Millennium Development Goals 4&5 on maternal and child health.

Vuyiseka Dubula of the Treatment Action Campaign in South Africa commented,

?By investing its fair share in the Global Fund ? £840m over the next three years ? the UK can lead the world in bringing an end to children being born with HIV by 2015, stopping children dying from Malaria in Africa, and finally start bringing TB under control.

This review confirms what we have witnessed in South Africa, and across the world ? the Global Fund saves lives. Now the UK must invest in the Global Fund?s success to ensure it can scale up its work to meet the Millennium Development Goals on Health.?

The Fund was also praised for the openness and accountability of its work with the MAR noting that the Fund?s practices have ?been a major driver for a range of innovations in [aid] transparency?. Areas highlighted for improvement including the speed at which it distributes its grants and its coordination with local partners and governments.

The Global Fund?s Executive Director Michel Kazatchkine welcomed the UK Development Minister?s statement,

?I am very pleased this important review of the United Kingdom?s multilateral funding has concluded that the Global Fund delivers excellent results and offers value for money. We also welcome the review?s suggestions for how we can do even better in the future.?

A note of caution was struck by the Stop AIDS Campaign, however. It highlighted that other organisations which haven?t performed as well as the Global Fund include UNAIDS and the WHO, whilst the Bilateral Aid Review had little detail on how the UK will tackle HIV across its country programmes.

McDonald argued,

?Both these organisations are critical to an effective AIDS response. This review focused very tightly on the ?value for money? contribution of organisations to this government?s development objectives. HIV does not feature very prominently in those objectives ? for a country with such a strong history of leadership in tackling HIV that is a concern and we look forward to finding out the detail of the UK?s approach to tackling AIDS.?

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