

MEDIA RELEASE

1 July 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

G20 reinforces importance of Global Fund in ending HIV epidemic

The G20 has endorsed the financial replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, reinforcing the case for Australia to also play its part in ending the world's three great epidemics.

G20 leaders made their commitment in a communique issued from Osaka, Japan yesterday, attended by Australian Prime Minister, the Hon. Scott Morrison.

AFAO CEO, Darryl O'Donnell, said the Global Fund's work was critical to a more prosperous, secure and healthy Asia Pacific region.

"The Global Fund has been a game changer in lifting the burden of disease in poorer countries," Mr O'Donnell said. "Now is the time to accelerate progress and defeat these epidemics for good.

"Since 2002, Global Fund investments have helped two million people in the Asia Pacific access anti-retroviral HIV medicine, 12.5 million treatments for tuberculosis and the distribution of 154 million malaria bed nets.

"In the larger Indo-Pacific region, the results are also astonishing, with more than nine million people accessing anti-retroviral HIV medicine, 14 million tuberculosis treatments and 285 million malaria bed nets distributed.

"The Global Fund provides an incredible return on investment for Australia. For every US dollar we invest, the Global Fund has invested US\$13 in the Asia Pacific region. For the Indo-Pacific, the figure is US\$22.

"Despite great progress in our regional neighbourhood, serious risks endure. Papua New Guinea has the highest number of new tuberculosis cases in the world. And in the Asia Pacific, an estimated 5.2 million people are living with HIV. In the Mekong Delta region, drug-resistant forms of malaria have emerged.

"We encourage Australia to make a serious commitment to the Global Fund, so that it can continue to drive progress against these entirely preventable diseases. We have every opportunity to make greater progress on HIV, TB and other infectious diseases challenges in Australia and our region. It's essential we do both as infectious diseases don't respect borders," said Mr O'Donnell.

In support of this goal, AFAO and other leading Australian HIV and TB organisations have called on the Australian Government to pledge \$300m over three years for the upcoming replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight HIV, TB and Malaria.

To arrange an interview with Darryl O'Donnell, please call Nick Lucchinelli on 0422 229 032

Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations

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The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) is the national federation for the HIV community response in Australia. AFAO works to end HIV transmission and reduce its impact on communities in Australia, Asia and the Pacific. AFAO's members are the AIDS Councils in each state and territory; the National Association of People with HIV Australia (NAPWA); the Australian Injecting & Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL); the Anwernekenhe National HIV Alliance (ANA); and Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association. AFAO's affiliate member organisations – spanning community, research, public health and clinical workforce – share AFAO's values and support the work we do.