Aidspan

Independent observer of the Global Fund

Global Fund Sixth Replenishment pledging conference sees historic private sector contribution plus pledges from 23 implementing countries

The morning pledging session of the Global Fund's Sixth Replenishment Conference in Lyon, France, on October 10, saw representation from 68 countries, including several new donors to the Global Fund, as well as 'symbolic' pledges from many implementing countries as a show of their commitment to and appreciation of the Global Fund.

The pledging portion of the morning's events was moderated by British-Ghanaian broadcaster Henry Bonsu, whose occasional heavy-handedness regarding time-keeping weighed down the high spirits of the room, and whose questionable attempts at humor struck a jarring note in a couple of instances.

Nonetheless, donors' patience and good humor prevailed, with the major donors' pledges beginning with US Global AIDS Coordinator Deborah Birx, who spoke crisply but with obvious emotion about the US's dedication to combatting the three diseases (to the tune of 104 billion to date, overall).

Public donors

The United States, which has consistently been the largest donor to the Fund, committed $1.56 billion a year (its commitments are annual given the U.S.'s annual appropriations cycle), which means it will maintain its one-third share of all contributions.

France, which has historically been the Fund's second-largest donor, and has been the host country for the Sixth Replenishment, pledged €1.296 billion for the 2020-2022 funding cycle, which represents an increase of 20% compared to its contribution for the last funding period (2017-2019). This amount includes the additional $60 million committed at the end of the conference after finding that the total amount pledged thus far was $13.8 billion.

After Ambassador Birx, the pledges from the podium continued with European Union Commission Nevin Mimica announcing the EU pledge of €550 million euros (a 16% increase compared to the current three-year cycle), noting that the Global Fund fights diseases that particularly affect marginalised people, referring to women and girls, and key populations. In so doing, he said, the Fund addresses “the key aims of the European Commission.”

Next was Germany, with the German ambassador to France announcing Germany’s €1 billion pledge, while pressing the importance of sustained development of resilient and sustainable systems for health, as a means of achieving universal health coverage.

The United Kingdom’s Secretary of State for International Development, Alok Sharma, announced his country’s pledge of $1.4 billion, which includes a new matching fund for malaria. Emphasizing the critical importance of the private sector to achieving the global goals, Sharma said that $100 million had already been raised from the private sector for this fund, which includes $50 million from the Gates Foundation.

Japan’s Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr Keisuke Suzuki, announced Japan’s pledge of $840 million, also emphasizing the importance of “innovative methods” in filling the funding gap, especially the acceleration of private sector involvement. He pointed out the importance of resilient and sustainable systems for health, with the Global Fund as the largest health systems funder in most countries. He also said that domestic financing was crucial, as was the necessity of further collaboration with the private sector.

Canada reiterated its pledge, previously made, of CAD$930 million, saying that the Global Fund had given a voice to those who didn’t have it. Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Canada in France Amy Baker said that efforts to reach key populations must be accelerated, particularly adolescent girls and young women. She underscored that it was important to work harder to reduce inequalities that aggravate disease burdens.

Other donors pledged “from seated positions,” not taking the stage. These included:

- Australia for $242 million
- Belgium for €15 million for 2020 (with 2021-2022 amounts not to be known until the country has a new government)
- China for $18 million.
- Denmark for DK350 million
- India for $22 million
- Ireland for “a minimum of €45 million” (“committed to at least doubling” its previous contribution)
- Italy for €161 million
- Kuwait for $6 million (a 20% increase)
- Luxembourg for $9.3 million (a 15% increase, up from the pledge announced in February in New Delhi of $9m, which was an 11% increase)
- Netherlands for €156 million
- New Zealand for NZ$2.5 million
- Norway for NK2 billion and 20 million, plus another NK20 million to “double our increase”
- Portugal for €750,000 (representing a tripling of its commitment in the last Replenishment)
- Qatar for $50 million (a five-fold increase relative to its first pledge three years ago)
- Republic of Korea for $25 million
- Saudi Arabia for $30 million (a 100% increase)
- Spain for $100 million

- Sweden for SEK2.85 million
- Switzerland for CHF64 million

Pledges from new donors included Malta for €300,000 (a first-ever pledge), and Monaco for €400,000. Pledges from countries that were not present included Armenia for $60,000, Azerbaijan for $50,000, Thailand for $4.5 million, and Cameroon for CFR3 billion (about $5 million).

[Editor's note: The pledges in this article are not comprehensive; we will update this article when the full list of pledges and contributions is posted on the Global Fund website.]

Private sector donors and foundations

The list of foundations and private sector donors was long and impressive, with the private sector contributing a more than $1 billion for the first time in the Fund's history. Leading this charge was the $760-million pledge from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and $150 million from Product (RED), announced by Zambian (RED) ambassador Connie Mudenda, whose emotional testimony about having been unknowingly infected and losing her three children to HIV-related deaths moved many in the room to tears. (She has now been on ARVs for 15 years and now has a young, HIV-free daughter, who accompanied her onto the stage.) Six new private-sector donors pledged, and 11 of the private sector partners committed non-financial resources to enhance impact.

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Private sector pledges included:

- Children's Investment Fund Foundation for $25 million, through a catalytic mechanism to boost HIV self-testing
- Comic Relief for $17 million, which will be matched by the Gates Foundation (a 33% increase compared to Comic Relief's pledge three years ago)
- Rockefeller Foundation, a new donor, for $15 million (to accelerate the power of "precision public health")
- Rotarians Against Malaria, a new donor, for $12 million
- Catholic Relief Services for $5 million over 5 years (to accelerate elimination of malaria in the Sahel)
- Cordaid for $5 million (to address root causes of young women's vulnerability to HIV infection in the DRC
- Takeda for 1 billion Yen (about $9 million; to focus on integrating quality HIV, TB and malaria services in prenatal care)
- Goddbye Malaria for $5.5 million (for a cross-border malaria program covering eSwatini, South Africa and Mozambique)
- Sri Dato Dr Tahir (a private donor) for $30 million
- Human Crescent for $10 million (focusing on the needs of displaced persons)
- Co-Impact for $8 million
- Plan International and Plan Canada for $3 million (to scale up access to services)
- Miss Lei for $1 million (to support TB and malaria programs in Vietnam)
- YMCA and Wise Men Internationall with $500,000 (for malaria)
- 'Other and anonymous' commitments from the private sector totalling $86 million.

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Implementing-country donors

In a clear gesture of solidarity, an unprecedented 23 implementing countries made pledges to the Global Fund, including:

- Benin for $1 million
- Burkina Faso for $1 million
- Burundi for $1 million
- Central African Republic for $1 million
- Cote d’Ivoire for $1.5 million
- Democratic Republic of Congo for $6 million (a new donor)
- eSwatini for $6 million
- Kenya for $6 million (an increase of 20% compared to the last Replenishment)
- Mali for €500,000
- Namibia for $1.5 million
- Niger for $1 million
- Nigeria for $12 million (a 20% increase)
- Rwanda $2.5 million
- Senegal for $1 million
- South Africa for $10 million
- Togo for $1 million
- Uganda for $2 million
- Ukraine for $80,000
- Zambia for $5.5 million
- Zimbabwe for $1 million

See the Global Fund website for its press release on the final outcome of the Sixth Replenishment.

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