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Advocates say “Yes We Can” to stopping AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria

The Call to Obama: “We’re Halfway There. Let’s Reach the Other Half.”

1 December 2009: To mark World AIDS Day, members of anti poverty advocacy group, RESULTS Australia will join thousands of global health advocates around the world and start sending postcards to the White House thanking President Barack Obama for past U.S. support that has helped nearly half of the people in need of treatment for AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria receive it. These advocates are also calling on Obama to help reach the other half through expanding contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

“ The sending of postcards to Obama is an important step for RESULTS Australia as a new member of the Gates Foundation’s, TB advocacy partnership, the ACTION Project. The progress made to control TB as well as AIDS and Malaria in recent years has been accelerated largely through Global Fund programs. We can’t afford to lose momentum now’ says Maree Nutt, National Manager.

In the face of a global recession, donors have been signaling their intent to back out of previous commitments to fund the Global Fund. As a consequence, the fund faces a US\$2.5 to US\$3 billion funding gap going into 2010. U.S. leadership is so important at this time because each dollar the U.S. contributes to the Global Fund historically has drawn two dollars in contributions from other donor governments, placing the fund’s future largely in Obama’s hands.

“The global community celebrates the achievement of reaching this halfway point, but now we need the world’s leaders to stand up and take action so that we can reach the other half,” said Lucy Chesire, TB advocacy advisor to ACTION. “We are calling on President Obama for strong leadership in stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria so that the other half of our friends, families, and community members affected by these diseases can also have access to life saving drugs.”

The Global Fund is the leading source of international financing for TB and malaria programs, and the second leading source of financing for HIV/AIDS programs. It supports treatment and prevention programs in over 140 countries through financial contributions from donor governments and the private sector. Since 2003, the Global Fund has provided 5.4 million TB treatments, 74 million malaria treatments, and supported antiretroviral therapy for 2.4 million people living with HIV. Together, these interventions have saved the lives of 4 million people — more than who live in Los Angeles, Berlin or Madrid.

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Advocacy to Control Tuberculosis Internationally (ACTION) www.action.org

The ACTION project is an international partnership of advocates working to mobilize resources to treat and prevent the spread of tuberculosis (TB), a global disease that kills one person every 20 seconds. ACTION's advocacy is premised on the belief that more rapid progress can be made against TB by mobilizing resources and building support for effective TB programming among policymakers and other opinion leaders in both high TB burden countries and donor countries.

ACTION is a project of AIDES (France), Avocats Pour la Santé dans le Monde (France), Global Health Advocates, Indian Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS, Kenya AIDS NGOs Consortium, RESULTS Australia, RESULTS Canada, RESULTS Japan, RESULTS UK, and RESULTS Educational Fund (US).

RESULTS Australia www.results.org.au

RESULTS is part of an international organisation which engages in grassroots advocacy on global poverty issues.

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