



MEDIA RELEASE

RESULTS International (Australia)

27 January 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A time for Australia to exercise global leadership in the fight against HIV

Two leading community sector organizations have issued an urgent call to the Australian Government to bring forward its financial commitment to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, or risk jeopardizing crucial advances in HIV treatment and prevention.

The Global Fund will mark its tenth anniversary this Saturday - a decade in which it has become the dominant funder of programs against the three diseases, saving 100,000 lives every month.

But the recent economic downturn has seen a number of donor countries either scale back or fail to deliver on their commitments to the Fund, posing a threat to the Fund's work and prompting the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and RESULTS International (Australia) to call on the Commonwealth Government to bolster funding and bring it forward, given Australia's relative economic strength.

"Now is not the time to scale back our efforts. A decade after the Fund's creation we have made real progress towards bringing an end to the world's three most deadly infectious diseases. The tragic irony is that just as there is real hope to end disease; donors are forcing the Global Fund to stall in its progress," RESULTS National Manager, Maree Nutt said.

"The disconnect between what can be done, and the resources being made available to get it done is painful. Winning the war against AIDS could be our greatest achievement this century," AFAO Executive Director, Rob Lake said.

The Global Fund was forced to freeze any new or expanded programs in November last year, when a number of European nations failed to meet their commitments.

The joint letter from AFAO and RESULTS calls on the Australian Government to both bring forward its 2011 - 2013 funding commitment of \$170 million, while also committing to an initial one off funding top up.

"In 2011, all United Nations members adopted a target of a 50% reduction in HIV transmission and 50% of people with HIV being on treatments by 2015. Without the Global Fund, this target is impossible." said Rob Lake

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RESULTS International (Australia) engages in grassroots advocacy on poverty issues with members around the country. www.results.org.au