

## GLOBAL FUND: GLOBAL FUND TO PROVIDE \$24 MILLION OF NEW FUNDING TO FIGHT HIV/AIDS IN RUSSIA

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**GENEVA** – The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is to provide US\$24 million in new funding to Russia. This will extend by two years a successful HIV prevention program for highly vulnerable groups such as injecting drug users and sex workers.

A five-year grant to Russia's Open Health Institute, awarded in 2004 and worth \$88.74 million, expired at the end of August this year. The new funding, approved on November 11 by the Global Fund's Board at a meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, extends the grant until December 31, 2011.

The HIV prevention program supported by the grant operates through a consortium of non-governmental organizations called GLOBUS in 10 of the country's 83 administrative regions. It is making a significant impact by supporting prevention programs to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS and to reduce transmission of the virus.

Injecting drug users, who in 2007 accounted for nearly two-thirds of newly-detected HIV infections in Russia, are among the program's main beneficiaries and receive outreach services, needle exchange, voluntary counseling and testing, and condoms. Vulnerable groups covered by the program also include men who have sex with men, street children, migrants and prisoners.

Under the Global Fund's income eligibility policies, Russia is no longer eligible for AIDS funding. The Board took the decision, on an extraordinary basis, to extend the grant to the Open Health Institute in recognition of the emergency situation that would have arisen if funding had been discontinued.

The Global Fund Board will review its eligibility criteria late in 2010.

The treatment component of the Global Fund grant, including PMTCT (Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV) and prevention among the general population, has been taken over by the Russian government.

"The Board's decision to extend the Global Fund grant to the GLOBUS consortium in Russia is both pragmatic and compassionate", said Professor Michel Kazatchkine, Executive Director of the Global Fund. "It is pragmatic because it allows this network of organizations to continue vital work that is demonstrably preventing new infections and saving lives among the population most vulnerable to HIV in the country. It is compassionate because the Board has recognized that the Fund does not simply make funding decisions on the basis of which countries are rich and which are poor, but also considers the people most in need", he said. "I am also pleased that the decision helps to strengthen the important partnership between the Global Fund and Russia".

Among Russia's total population of 143 million people, an estimated 1 million people are living with HIV.

Russia has contributed \$225.85 million to the Global Fund and has supported other HIV programs in Russia.

*The Global Fund is a unique global public/private partnership dedicated to attracting and disbursing additional resources to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. This partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and affected communities represents a new approach to international health financing. The Global Fund works in close collaboration with other bilateral and multilateral organizations to supplement existing efforts dealing with the three diseases.*

*Since its creation in 2002, the Global Fund has become the dominant financier of programs to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, with approved funding of US\$ 18.4 billion for more than 600 programs in 144 countries. To date, programs supported by the Global Fund have saved 4.5 million lives through providing AIDS treatment for 2.3 million people, anti-tuberculosis treatment for 5.4 million people and the distribution of 88 million insecticide-treated bed nets for the prevention of malaria.*

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