



## GFAN Africa Stands in Solidarity with WHO

Five months into the year 2020, COVID-19 continues to cause illness, deaths and untold disruption. The disease has silently changed our ways of life. If unchecked, the disease has the possibility of overwhelming healthcare systems, reducing focus on other life threatening diseases as well as negatively impacting on health seeking behavior among communities. It is also likely to cause increased human rights and gender-based violations, it threatens to forcefully snatch gains made over the years to defeat diseases especially HIV, TB and Malaria. A study by Imperial College released on 1 May 2020 estimates that in high-burden settings, additional deaths related to HIV, TB and malaria over five years may increase by up to 10%, 20% and 36%, respectively, as an indirect result of the COVID-19 epidemic.

Unrelenting efforts are on-going across the globe to defeat this disease. Governments and organizations pledged €7.4 billion on 4 May 2020 as part of the Coronavirus Global Response pledging marathon led by the European Commission. The marathon runs until 23 May 2020 with the aim of financing the development and deployment of diagnostics, treatments and vaccines against COVID-19.

Informed by its mandate, the World Health Organization (WHO) continues to provide commendable leadership in the fight of COVID-19. We note with dismay calls for the resignation of Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus due to allegations of the organization being inefficient in responding to COVID-19. This is ill timed and ill advised.

At GFAN Africa, we refer to our previous [statement](#) and hereby continue in our solidarity and support to WHO and its leadership, as the organization leads the global community in defeating COVID-19 amongst other communicable and non-communicable diseases. In previous statements, we noted that more than ever, the global community must stand and support WHO in its efforts to defeat COVID-19 while sustaining focus on preventing the surge of other life-threatening diseases and to save lives. At this point in time, there is no space for dissenting and negative voices. The global community must single mindedly work towards defeating COVID-19 and minimizing its impact on other diseases.

We emphasize the need for strong multi-disciplinary partnerships to ensure solid coordination at national, regional and global level. WHO, donors, researchers, social scientists, civil society and community based organizations, academia, private sector, individuals, governments and financial institutions must be seamlessly coordinated and engaged to effectively tackle this disease.

We must now more than ever unite to fight COVID-19.



