Urgent Call to Action on World TB Day 2026 – Yes! We Can End TB!

On World TB Day, GFAN Africa urges African governments to take decisive action to end TB.

Despite progress, TB remains Africa's most lethal infectious disease. According to the WHO Global TB Report 2025, 10.7 million individuals were affected by TB and 1.23 million died because of this preventable disease in 2024. Africa has achieved a 28% reduction in TB incidence since 2015, proving progress is possible. However, funding cuts and systemic barriers threaten to reverse hard-won gains.

We are writing at a critical moment. Funding disruptions have left critical gaps in community-level TB services across our countries. Global TB financing reached just 27% of the annual target in 2024. Modelling warns that sustained donor cuts could cause up to 2 million additional TB deaths by 2035. The time to act is now.

We call on leaders to prioritise the following three areas:

1. Strengthen health systems and people-centred TB services

- Implement and fund national TB strategic plans, including the deployment and fair compensation of community health workers and decentralised service delivery to reach the most vulnerable.
- Expand access to shorter-course TB treatment and TB prevention for all groups facing higher risk, including people living with HIV and close contacts.
- Invest in community-led approaches (i.e., peer support, stigma reduction, counselling, and nutritional support) as essential, not optional, components of the TB response.

2. Close the funding gap by increasing domestic resources & supporting global health institutions

- Establish a clear budgetary roadmap to incrementally increase health spending toward the 15% Abuja Declaration target and ensure sustainability.
- Champion the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the largest international funder of TB programmes, by advocating for its successful replenishment and meeting co-financing obligations in full and on time.
- Ensure domestic budget allocations for TB to cover gaps left by the withdrawal of international donor funding, so that TB services are not interrupted.

3. Advance regional manufacturing and implementation readiness

- Invest in local and regional manufacturing of TB diagnostics, medicines, and preventive therapies, in line with the Africa CDC's health products manufacturing vision.
- Harmonise regulatory pathways through the African Medicines Agency (AMA) and accelerate mutual recognition of registrations to reduce access delays.
- Create enabling environments for investment in health manufacturing through policy, infrastructure, technology transfer, and pooled procurement mechanisms.
- Eliminate bureaucratic hurdles that delay the rollout of shorter, safer treatment regimens and new diagnostic technologies, and ensure health systems are prepared to effectively deploy new TB tools as soon as they become available.