



**Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025**

## **Statement from 46 organizations**

### **Global Fund replenishment: the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) must announce its pledge before the next Board Meeting**

As the world faces unprecedented health challenges, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is experiencing an accelerating health crisis, marked by the fastest-growing HIV epidemic globally, a rising burden of tuberculosis, and fragile health systems in many neighboring countries. These crises are not distant concerns—they pose a direct threat to the health and economic security of the GCC states, given the deep interconnections across the region through labor mobility, trade, and cultural and religious exchanges.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, through their ambitious national visions, have demonstrated their ability to integrate economic development, innovation, and effective diplomacy within long-term strategic frameworks. These visions include, for example, **Saudi Vision 2030** and the **UAE Centennial 2071**, both of which place the health sector at the forefront of national priorities. **Kuwait Vision 2035** also emphasizes improving the quality of healthcare, while **Oman Vision 2040** identifies health as a central national priority. **Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030** similarly outlines key health objectives focused on delivering high-quality, accessible, and equitable healthcare services.

Qatar, for its part, has adopted an ambitious national health strategy — the **National Health Strategy 2024–2030** under the theme “*Health for All*” — aligned with the Qatar National Vision 2030.

The GCC's ambitious participation in the Global Fund's 8th Replenishment represents a unique opportunity to redefine their role from donors to foundational leaders in the global health architecture. It also allows the Gulf states to expand their diplomatic influence through “**health diplomacy**,” an effective tool for building shared interests, protecting regional stability, and strengthening their international reputation.

#### **Supporting the Global Fund is a strategic investment in GCC health security:**

1. **Containing epidemics at the source:** Preventing the spread of HIV and TB in neighboring countries before crossing borders provides direct protection for GCC populations and reduces future health costs.
2. **Building resilient health systems:** Funding through the Global Fund strengthens laboratory networks, supply chains for medicines, and the capacity of health personnel, ensuring the region can withstand future crises.
3. **Enhancing social and economic stability:** Investing in the health of partner communities ensures the continuity of labor, commerce, and critical supply chains upon which GCC economies rely.

The Global Fund provides one of the highest known returns on health investment, with every dollar invested generating \$19 in health and economic gains. A GCC commitment that is at least 15% higher than previous pledges would not merely be financial support—it would be a strategic investment in sustainable economic prosperity and political influence.

**We call on GCC leaders to take decisive steps during the Global Fund’s Eighth Replenishment:**

1. **Announce ambitious, immediate financial commitments to the Global Fund:** Strengthen international confidence and ensure funding continuity for the **Eighth Replenishment**, exploring innovative financial instruments such as “Debt2Health” initiatives that convert sovereign debt into direct health investments.
2. **Enhance the GCC’s role in Global Fund governance:** Use their position as major donors in the **Eighth Replenishment** to help shape policies and funding strategies that reflect the unique health challenges of the MENA region.
3. **Integrate health security into high-level policy priorities through the Global Fund:** Link the **Eighth Replenishment** investments to national security objectives, foster regional cooperation, and ensure the sustainability of public health programs funded by the Global Fund.
4. **Focus on marginalized populations through the Global Fund:** Ensure the **Eighth Replenishment** programs reach underserved communities and vulnerable groups, promoting health equity and human rights across the region.
5. **Accelerate access to health innovations through the Global Fund:** Invest in the **Eighth Replenishment** resources in the latest diagnostic, digital, and preventive tools, strengthening health system capacity in MENA while aligning with GCC national visions for a knowledge-based and innovative economy.

The opportunity is now for GCC countries to lead globally and regionally through a strategic investment that protects their populations, elevates their international standing, and ensures regional stability. Failing to take bold steps now will increase health, economic, and social risks, while courageous investment today will secure a healthy, safe, and prosperous future for all.

**The time for leadership and bold action is now.**

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