LIVING WITH AIDS, DYING OF TUBERCULOSIS

HIV/AIDS and TB attack as one, forming one of the most lethal combinations of diseases on the planet. Of the people who have AIDS, more die of TB than any other cause.

TB is the leading cause of death among HIV patients. Globally, TB is responsible for a quarter—and in Sub-Saharan Africa, up to half—of all AIDS deaths. One-third of the world’s population is co-infected with the TB bacteria, but the disease preys especially on people made vulnerable by HIV. People living with HIV are up to 34 times more likely to develop active TB.

The lack of new tools to combat the TB pandemic, and that can treat TB/HIV co-infection, is severely undermining the impact of the billions invested in successful AIDS treatments.

- Despite the prevalence of people co-infected with TB/HIV, the available tools very often are inadequate to treat these diseases together. Doctors that provide care for people with TB/HIV face a set of tough choices, all of which can endanger patients. They can treat TB and HIV at the same time and risk serious side effects, or delay HIV treatment until the TB controlled and risk allowing the HIV to progress.
- Today, less than 7% of people living with HIV are screened for TB, and even when they are, diagnosis is often inaccurate. First-line TB drugs have complications with many of the most commonly used therapies for HIV, while the existing TB vaccine does not protect against adult pulmonary TB—the biggest threat to AIDS victims. Without adequate tools to treat TB/HIV co-infection, we threaten the recent advances gained in the fight against HIV.

Investing in TB vaccines, diagnosis, and treatment can prevent deaths among people with HIV/AIDS and realize the true life-saving potential of modern AIDS treatments.

- Global advocacy and support have made the development and availability of new technologies for preventing, diagnosing, and treating HIV/AIDS possible. Today, the same patients these technologies are intended to save are threatened by TB. At the same time, new TB tools are on the horizon and offer hope to break the vicious TB-HIV cycle. Now more than ever, support from around the world is needed to ensure the massive strides in HIV/AIDS care are not undermined by the TB threat.

THE FIGHT AGAINST TB IS THE FIGHT AGAINST AIDS!