

New partnership to improve access to new antibiotics in low- and middle-income countries to boost efforts to combat TB and AMR

Geneva, 29 May 2024 – The Global Antibiotic Research & Development Partnership (GARDP) and the Stop TB Partnership’s Global Drug Facility (GDF), hosted by UNOPS, today announced a partnership agreement to improve global access to antibiotics. GDF will incorporate GARDP’s portfolio of antibiotics to improve appropriate and affordable antibiotic access for the benefit of patients and health systems, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

Access to newer antibiotics tends to be limited to a small number of high-income countries. A [2018 study](#) found that only 12 of the 25 new antibiotics that entered the market from 1999 to 2014 were registered in more than 10 countries. By pooling procurement of new antibiotics in the GARDP portfolio and utilizing GDF’s platform, GARDP and GDF will ease the procurement process by individual countries in GARDP territories, reduce wastage, lower prices and accelerate delivery for better patient outcomes and more cost-effective healthcare.

GDF is the largest procurer in the world of tuberculosis (TB) products, including TB diagnostics and therapeutics. Since 2001, GDF interventions have helped millions of people around the world get diagnosed and treated for TB who likely would not have been otherwise. The agreement between GARDP and GDF could have similar benefits for patients with non-TB bacterial infections.

“This partnership is a major step toward placing equity at the heart of the international response to AMR,” said Manica Balasegaram, Executive Director of GARDP. “By positioning AMR, like tuberculosis, as a public health issue to be prioritized, we can build an ecosystem for appropriate access to antibiotics for patients around the world.”

The partnership between GARDP and GDF reflects the increasing need to respond to the crisis of antimicrobial resistance through global coordination. TB is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. Like other bacteria, it can evolve to develop resistance to available treatments, making those treatments less effective in the population at large. Currently, GDF supports access to medications for all types of TB, including multidrug-resistant and extensively drug-resistant TB; now in partnership with GARDP, it is broadening its approach to antibiotics for drug-resistant infections more generally.

“We at Stop TB are delighted to show how investments in tools and platforms aimed at ending TB can be essential to supporting AMR efforts. By leveraging GDF’s network to distribute GARDP’s innovative antibiotics, we are enhancing access and ensuring that effective treatments reach those in dire need,” said Lucica Ditiu, Executive Director of the Stop TB Partnership. “Together, we are shaping a future where health equity is a reality.”

GDF’s success in facilitating access to TB medicines may hold the key to facilitating access to antibiotics in general. Given the small market size for TB medicines, there are high transaction costs and risks of wasted product. These factors and others disincentivize the development and production of TB medicines.

GDF has overcome access issues by developing critical tools and services, such as its strategic rotating stockpile. This physical inventory of TB medicines, which is stored at the warehouse of GDF's contracted procurement agent, helps lower prices by pooling procurement, sharing risks and decreasing supplier transaction costs. Since 2019, for example, GDF has overseen a 25-40% price decrease in new WHO-recommended all-oral regimens for drug-resistant TB.

GARDP in turn engages in license and sublicense agreements and, with local partners, implements product introduction plans, among other key activities. Together these activities aim to support reliable supply of products at sustainable, affordable prices.

"Adapting GDF's existing set of tailored systems and tools to address AMR is a cost-effective means to improve the lives of millions of people. We are stronger by working together on all parts of the product life cycle, leveraging the relative strengths across GARDP and GDF," said Brenda Waning, Chief of GDF at the Stop TB Partnership.

GARDP and GDF will initially focus on developing access plans for cefiderocol. This antibiotic is approved in the US, EU, and Japan to treat certain gram-negative bacterial infections with limited treatment options. In the future, GDF will also incorporate, upon regulatory approval, zoliflodacin for uncomplicated gonorrhoea and other antibiotics from GARDP's portfolio.

About GARDP

The Global Antibiotic Research & Development Partnership (GARDP) is a not-for-profit organization that develops new antibiotic treatments for drug-resistant bacterial infections that pose the greatest threat to human health, and makes them accessible to the people who need them. It puts public health needs at the centre of antibiotic drug development to address the immediate crisis of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Its work is funded by the governments of Canada, Germany, Japan, Monaco, the Netherlands, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the Canton of Geneva, the European Union, as well as Global Health EDCTP3, the RIGHT Foundation, Wellcome and other private foundations. GARDP was created by the World Health Organization and the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) in 2016 and legally registered as the GARDP Foundation in Geneva, Switzerland in 2018. www.gardp.org

About GDF

The mission of Stop TB's Global Drug Facility (GDF) is to facilitate world-wide, equitable, and timely access to tuberculosis (TB) medicines, diagnostics, and devices. Working across both supply and demand sides of the market, GDF provides incentives for suppliers to develop new TB products, technical assistance on demand generation to rapidly introduce new products, and a unique set of tools and services to ensure an uninterrupted supply of products in countries. GDF also serves as the global TB market steward, bringing together partners and stakeholders to align on priority issues and coordinate policy, regulatory, and other interventions towards maximizing access to TB products.

Since its creation in 2001, GDF has facilitated access to TB medicines and diagnostics in more than 160 countries. In 2023 alone, GDF delivered more than USD320 million worth of TB medicines and diagnostics to a diverse client base across 134 countries. GDF has led the introduction of advanced diagnostics and supplies, longer and shorter all-oral regimens for drug-resistant TB, and child-friendly medicines for both drug-sensitive and drug-resistant TB.

About the Stop TB Partnership

The Stop TB Partnership is a unique United Nations hosted entity based in Geneva, Switzerland, committed to revolutionizing tuberculosis (TB) space to end the disease by 2030. The organization aligns more than 2,000 partners worldwide to promote cross-sectoral collaboration. The Stop TB Partnership's various teams and initiatives take bold and smart risks to identify, fund and support innovative approaches, ideas, and solutions to ensure the TB community has a voice at the highest political levels and that all TB-affected people have access to affordable, quality, and people-centered care.