Global Fund inputs for the Global Solidarity Levies Task Force

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Official Development Assistance (ODA) has been a fundamental source of development finance, particularly for low- and middle-income countries. Over the past two decades, this has significantly advanced global health. Amid ongoing reductions in ODA, solidarity levies can represent new and potentially large sources of development aid financing, serving as an additional tool to traditional donor aid models. Solidarity levies are innovative and complementary tools that offer a way to mobilize domestic and international resources and release pressure on already constrained domestic budgets.

Solidarity levies are not a new concept and in countries where they are already implemented, they have a demonstrated track record in mobilizing sustainable financing for development and global health. The Global Fund, as a recipient of these levies, has demonstrated their effectiveness and impact.

France pioneered this approach in 2006 with a small levy on airline tickets, primarily for global health. This Air Ticket Levy was then complemented with a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT), both used to fund development aid and primarily two innovative partnerships: Unitaid and the Global Fund. Similarly, the Republic of Korea introduced levies to support its development cooperation initiatives, showcasing how national-level innovation can align domestic fiscal tools with global solidarity. These examples highlight how well-designed levies, that are politically sustainable can generate predictable revenue to release the fiscal pressure on national budgets without affecting travel or transactions volume, effectively complementing traditional development assistance.

The Global Fund has been a recipient of France and the Republic of Korea's solidarity taxes, which have been critical in supporting national responses in countries where the Global Fund invests.

How levies have supported global health programming

As calculated by Friends of the Global Fund Europe in a recent brief[1], levies accounted for 74% of the French contribution to the Global Fund for the 2020-2022 period, 53% (3.6 billion EUR) of France's cumulative contribution to the Global Fund, and roughly 6% of all contributions received by the Global Fund since its inception. Thanks to this mechanism, France was able to confirm its leadership in global health by maintaining its historical, prominent position as the Global Fund's second largest and first European donor, despite relatively low ODA levels generated from traditional sources.

Until 2022 South Korea's contributions to the Global Fund were made possible through the Air Ticket Levy, which financed the country's Global Disease Eradication Fund. Introduced in 2007, this levy positioned South Korea as one of the few G20 countries leading international efforts to develop innovative financing mechanisms for global health and development. Over the years, South Korea has demonstrated a strong historic commitment to the Global Fund, steadily increasing its support, including through a three-fold increase at the Global Fund's Seventh Replenishment. This indirect

[1] https://friendseurope.org/2025/06/26/solidarity-levies-a-french-model-for-global-solidarity/

funding mechanism enhanced the Global Fund's resource base while contributing to South Korea's objectives for increased innovation and sustainable development finance.

Some countries have also been implementing taxes at a national level. For example, Zimbabwe funds part of its national HIV response through the AIDS Levy Tax on personal income and business profits. Introduced in 1999, the levy is collected by the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority and managed by the National AIDS Council, which allocates the funds primarily to the procurement of antiretrovirals, as well as to prevention programs, monitoring and evaluation, logistics, and enabling environments. This national funding mechanism, widely recognized as a best practice in domestic health financing, helps reduce reliance on external donors, ensures continuity of HIV services, especially during aid disruptions, and demonstrates national ownership of the HIV response. The decentralized implementation structure and multi-sector oversight have made the levy a sustainable and impactful tool in Zimbabwe's fight against AIDS.

The Global Fund, as the world's largest multilateral funder of global health grants in low- and middle-income countries, is a compelling example of how levy-generated funds can be effectively utilized, and it has demonstrated the potential of innovative financing tools to contribute meaningfully to health and development goals. Its inclusive partnership model, results-oriented, performance-based and transparent approach, ensures that resources reach the most vulnerable populations and drive measurable health outcomes.

Proceeds from solidarity levies channeled through the Global Fund have allowed for rapid and increased access to HIV, tuberculosis and malaria treatment and prevention, including through the deployment of innovations and new tools. They have helped strengthen health and community systems, expand access to integrated services, improve pandemic preparedness, and more recently, support program adaptations to address the health impacts of climate change.

Discontinuing existing taxes that currently channel funds to the Global Fund would pose significant risks to global health efforts and could reverse progress in the fight against the world's most devastating infectious diseases, exposing everyone everywhere to a resurgence of pandemics. It would also send a negative signal about the sustainability of innovative financing, potentially undermining trust in solidarity-based mechanisms at a time when global health challenges require greater collective investment and new approaches.

To alleviate the prevailing burden on an already constraint fiscal space, an effective implementation of solidarity levies, including effective tax collection could represent an even greater additional asset in support to development funding, ensuring their full potential is realized. Properly designed and enforced levy collection maximizes available resources and builds trust among participating countries and the public.

The Global Fund welcomes the work of the Global Solidarity Levies Task Force and is ready to support its mission by contributing to evidence generation, policy dialogue, and implementation partnerships that highlight its effectiveness. We support the further expansion of solidarity levies as an innovative mechanism to mobilize sustainable financing for global health and development. By mobilizing additional resources through solidarity levies, countries can help bridge critical funding shortfalls while releasing the fiscal pressure on national budgets. With extensive experience in delivering results through innovative financing, the Global Fund is prepared to support the Global Solidarity Levies Task Force in demonstrating the value, scalability, and transformative potential of solidarity levies.