

An Open Letter to Médecins Sans Frontières — Urgent Call to Reverse the Devastating Decision to Shutter the MSF Access Campaign

[Letters](#) An Open Letter to Médecins Sans Frontières — Urgent Call to Reverse the Devastating Decision to Shutter the MSF Access Campaign

June 20, 2024

To: Médecins Sans Frontières

From: Treatment Action Group

Re: An Open Letter to Médecins Sans Frontières — Urgent call to reverse the devastating decision to shutter the MSF Access Campaign

Dear MSF Friends —

As longtime allies, frequent coalition partners, and fervent admirers of the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Access Campaign, we at Treatment Action Group (TAG) write to you in shock and grief at [news](#) of the Access Campaign's imminent closure.

Since its inception a quarter century ago, the Campaign has played a pivotal role in reshaping global and national policies in order to get drugs, diagnostics, vaccines, and urgent health services to people who need them by targeting systemic barriers to access around the world. Our organizations' shared vision of global health equity will be undermined by this short-sighted decision, and we urge you to reconsider and change course.

As a community-based activist think tank dedicated to ending HIV, TB, and HCV, TAG has long recognized the Access Campaign's countless contributions to ending these pandemics, including helping secure major price reductions for antiretrovirals (ARVs) globally and in key countries such as Thailand; linezolid for drug-resistant tuberculosis (TB) in South Africa; and direct-acting antivirals for hepatitis C virus (HCV) in India.

More recently, we've been proud to fight alongside MSF and the Access Campaign as cofounders of the [1/4/6x24](#) and [Time for \\$5](#) Campaigns, aimed toward the universal implementation of shorter, better TB regimens and price reductions for GeneXpert diagnostic tools for TB and other diseases. The Campaign's wealth of experience, institutional credibility, and multidisciplinary expertise makes them invaluable advocates and partners: it is difficult to imagine achieving concessions like Danaher's commitment to charge only \$8 for TB tests or Johnson and Johnson's agreement to not enforce secondary patents on the drug bedaquiline without MSF and the Access Campaign's leadership and pressure.

Moving forward, it is clear that the Access Campaign continues to be necessary: recent news of effective trials for long-acting [lenacapavir](#) PrEP highlights the urgency

of ensuring this intervention is accessible, exactly the sort of initiative for which the MSF Access Campaign excels.

Without such efforts to combat the global power dynamics that determine who lives and who dies of treatable disease, gross health inequalities will persist. The sort of high-quality care delivery central to MSF's mission is sorely needed, but is most effective in tandem with a strategy to confront overarching structural drivers of health disparities that make those services necessary. MSF AC's ability to identify, research, publicize, and ultimately break such barriers is unparalleled in the global health field, and this loss will be felt most acutely by marginalized communities. We urge you to reverse course, and recommit to supporting MSF AC's indispensable work.

In solidarity,

Mark Harrington
Executive Director
Treatment Action Group (TAG)