

## GREEN LIGHT COMMITTEE CALLS FOR COUNTRIES TO SCALE UP ACCESS TO TREATMENT OF DRUG-RESISTANT TB



The **Green Light Committee (GLC)**, formally established in March 2000 under the Stop TB Working Group on MDR-TB, is an independent group of experts in scientific, programmatic, and clinical aspects of drug-resistant tuberculosis (DR-TB) that serves World Health Organization (WHO) in a technical advisory capacity.

With its expertise and unique procurement mechanism for quality assured second-line TB drugs, the GLC strives to enable patients with or at risk of all forms of drug-resistant TB throughout the world to have proper diagnosis and receive timely, high quality treatment. Effective treatment of drug-resistant TB will save lives, reduce transmission, prevent extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB), and ultimately lessen the global burden of TB.

Since March 2000, the GLC has received and reviewed applications from 45 countries. The number of countries applying to the GLC has substantially increased. As of December 2006, 42 of these countries were enabled to provide high-quality drugs and cost-effective treatment to over 25,000 patients and in 2006 alone, the GLC reviewed and approved applications for a total of 12,604 patients - a six-fold increase over 2005.

Nevertheless, despite the encouraging trend in countries applying to the GLC, the current status covers less than 5% of patients with drug-resistant TB worldwide, highlighting the need for countries to make increased and urgent use of the GLC services.

As a step towards meeting the global need for expansion of drug-resistant management, the GLC has built and continues to strengthen partnerships with major funding mechanisms such as **the Global Fund** and **UNITAID**.

In 2006 the GLC Initiative has reshaped, streamlined and strengthened its processes to respond to increasing demand from countries and provide for the targets outlined in the Global Plan to Stop TB and the Stop TB strategy.

**New Instructions for applying to the Green Light Committee and the new Guidelines for the Programmatic Management of Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis, launched<sup>[1]</sup> in 2006, provide a**

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**completely new foundation for scaling up programs, with sound management, of drug-resistant tuberculosis worldwide.**

*Green Light Committee, Executive Summary, Annual Report, March 2007*