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Press Release

Combating Tuberculosis in Swaziland

The Swiss Red Cross receives financial support from Eli Lilly and Company to fight tuberculosis in Swaziland.

In Swaziland, a small state in southern Africa, the number of tuberculosis (TB) cases is increasing dramatically to over 1,000 cases per 100,000 people, representing a tenfold increase in 20 years. The rise of the disease is a direct consequence of the wide-spread AIDS-epidemic in the country: About 26% of the adult population is infected with the HI-virus. The average life expectancy has dropped to 32 years. The already weakened immune system of AIDS-patients is very susceptible to TB.

With a donation of 100,000 Swiss Francs (about EUR 70,000), Lilly is supporting the efforts of the Swiss Red Cross to fight TB in Swaziland: Local hospitals in Sigombeni, Mahwalala and Silele are enabled to provide testing, counselling and life saving therapy to thousands of AIDS and TB patients. Furthermore, the Red Cross ensures the nutrition of the patients and their families by providing them with food and seeds if necessary.

TB is much more than a medical problem; it is also a social and economic challenge. TB devastates not only lives but livelihoods as well. Recognizing that TB cannot be halted by medicine alone, Lilly is pursuing an innovative approach with the launch of the Lilly Multidrug-resistant Tuberculosis Partnership.

"Lilly is proud to partner with the Swiss Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Through this initiative and others which form part of the Partnership's multi-pronged approach, we are confident that we will change the lives of the millions of people affected by TB," said Dr. Patrizia Carlevaro, Head of the International Aid Unit for Eli Lilly and Company.

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