

Overview: The Gates Foundation's HIV Strategy

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HIV is one of the top global health priorities of the Gates Foundation. We focus on reducing the burden of HIV in developing countries, where the epidemic represents one of the most serious health and development challenges.

Tremendous progress has been achieved on HIV over the past decade. Our strategy is to build on that progress by strengthening HIV prevention and helping ensure that HIV programs are as efficient and effective as possible.

To date, the foundation has committed more than US\$2.2 billion in HIV grants to organizations around the world. We have also provided \$650 million to support the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

HIV will remain a major focus for us in the coming years.

HIV STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

While our resources are significant, they represent a small part of the overall HIV funding picture. To ensure that our investments have the greatest long-term impact, we have developed a highly targeted strategy for HIV that concentrates on three areas:

- **Discovering and developing new tools:** We support work to discover and develop powerful new tools for preventing and controlling HIV – including HIV vaccines, antiretroviral-based prevention, and new HIV diagnostics for developing countries.
- **Maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of HIV prevention and treatment programs:** We fund projects to help donors and countries use HIV funding as efficiently and effectively as possible, so the greatest number of people benefit.
- **Country demonstration projects:** We invest in country-specific projects to demonstrate and share lessons learned from scaling up HIV prevention and treatment. These currently include ACHAP in Botswana, Avahan in India, and our initiative in China.

Global AIDS facts

Progress on treatment and prevention:

- The number of people receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV has increased from 400,000 in 2003 to more than 5 million today.
- Globally, the rate of new HIV infections declined 17% from 2001 to 2008.
- Progress against AIDS has led to progress on other global health priorities, including tuberculosis and maternal and child health.

Remaining challenges:

- An estimated 10 million people are in need of HIV treatment, based on current international guidelines, but do not yet receive it.
- Prevention efforts must be greatly intensified – for every two people who gain access to HIV treatment, five people become newly infected.

HIV GRANTMAKING AREAS

Discovering and developing new tools

HIV vaccines: The foundation's number-one global health priority is discovering and introducing vaccines for infectious diseases. In HIV, we work closely with the U.S. National Institutes of Health and the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, and are a member of the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise.

Our HIV vaccine investments center on:

- *Efficiently advancing the most promising HIV vaccine candidates to human efficacy trials.* In the near term, our support will focus on conducting trials to build on the RV144 HIV vaccine trial, which recently showed encouraging results in Thailand.
- *Exploring innovative ideas for HIV vaccines.* We support development of novel HIV vaccine concepts with the goal of advancing the best candidates to early clinical trials.

- *Facilitating efficient collaboration and coordination* in the discovery, development, and clinical evaluation of HIV vaccines.

Antiretroviral-based prevention: We support a range of efforts to develop and refine HIV prevention methods that use antiretroviral compounds to prevent HIV infection or reduce transmission. Our primary product development partner is the International Partnership for Microbicides.

Our investments include:

- ***Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP):*** We support clinical trials to evaluate the effectiveness of PrEP for HIV prevention, and are investing in the development of a long-acting injection form of PrEP. We also support operations and modeling research to identify the most effective strategies for adding PrEP to HIV prevention programs, should it prove to be effective.
- ***Microbicides:*** We were an early supporter of research on HIV microbicides and remain strongly committed to the development of effective microbicides. One of our primary interests is the development of a long-lasting vaginal ring to deliver the antiretroviral compound dapivirine.
- ***Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT):*** We support efforts to help overcome financial and logistical barriers to making PMTCT services more widely available.
- ***Treatment for prevention:*** New research shows that treating HIV also reduces transmission to others. We are supporting epidemiologic modeling studies to understand the optimal strategy to scale up treatment for reduction of HIV transmission.

HIV diagnostics: We support the development of new HIV diagnostics tailored for use in developing-world settings, including:

- Simple diagnostics to help improve HIV treatment and reduce its cost – for example, a finger-prick test to assess immune function.
- New tests to rapidly estimate the number of new HIV infections occurring in a population, to improve national HIV surveillance and the efficiency of HIV prevention trials.

Maximizing efficiency and effectiveness

Optimizing prevention in Africa: We are investing to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of HIV prevention programs in sub-Saharan Africa, the region where most new HIV infections occur.

We are supporting efforts to rigorously evaluate large-scale prevention programs. We aim to enhance the data and evidence used to determine the optimal combination and scale of prevention interventions for different settings in Africa.

Reducing treatment costs: We support partners working to reduce the cost of antiretroviral treatment so that the greatest number of people benefit from life-saving therapy.

We work with private industry to lower the cost of HIV drugs, through both manufacturing cost reduction and pricing optimization. We also support efforts to reduce the cost of delivering and administering treatment in developing countries.

Integrating HIV and TB: We invest in efforts to better integrate HIV and tuberculosis programs. TB is the most common HIV-associated opportunistic infection, and TB rates have increased dramatically in areas affected by HIV.

We aim to determine best practices for incorporating TB screening and preventive therapy into HIV treatment programs, and for effectively controlling TB in HIV clinics.

Male circumcision scale-up

Donors and countries have been slow to invest in voluntary male circumcision for HIV prevention, despite three clinical trials demonstrating the protective benefit of the procedure.

The foundation is investing in advocacy efforts to encourage more rapid scale-up of male circumcision for HIV prevention. We are also funding research on new technologies and methods for performing male circumcision safely and less expensively.

Investing in the Global Fund

The foundation is a strong supporter of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. To date we have committed \$650 million to the Fund.

Global Fund progress:

- Approximately half of HIV treatment worldwide is financed through the Global Fund.
- The Global Fund has expanded HIV testing and prevention, as well as increased prevention and care for tuberculosis and malaria.
- Overall, Global Fund-supported programs have saved an estimated 5.7 million lives to date.

Country demonstration projects

We have invested in three country projects to share learned from large-scale delivery of effective HIV prevention and treatment. As these projects mature, we are transitioning from being a primary funder to helping countries secure long-term support from other sources.

ACHAP in Botswana: The foundation and Merck & Co. jointly support ACHAP, a comprehensive HIV/AIDS partnership with the government of Botswana. ACHAP was one of the first initiatives to demonstrate the feasibility of large-scale HIV treatment in Africa – ACHAP helped to increase the number of people in Botswana receiving HIV treatment from 3,000 in 2002 to more than 145,000 today.

Avahan in India: We work through Avahan, an initiative to reduce the spread of HIV in India. Avahan provides funding and other support for HIV prevention programs in the six Indian states with the highest HIV prevalence, and along the nation's major trucking routes.

Peer-reviewed evaluation reports have linked Avahan-supported programs to declines in HIV risk behavior among people at greatest risk for HIV, including sex workers and their clients.

China: We support a targeted HIV prevention initiative in China. Foundation funding helps increase access to effective prevention programs for those most vulnerable to HIV through innovative partnerships between government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

PRINCIPLES GUIDING OUR WORK

All of our global health grantmaking – including HIV – is guided by clear principles to help ensure our resources are used for the greatest impact possible:

- *We focus on areas where we have unique advantages as a private foundation.* Chief among these is the ability to invest in high-risk, high-reward projects that could lead to new breakthroughs but are too new or untested for other funders to support.
- *We consider diverse partnerships essential to our work.* We work closely with organizations around the world, including other donors, national governments, nongovernmental and academic agencies, and private industry.
- *We are committed to data, evidence, and results.* We build rigorous monitoring and evaluation components into our grants, and regularly review investment decisions based on data. We also invest in large-scale efforts to improve the quality of health monitoring and evaluation overall, to help benefit the field as a whole.

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Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people – especially those with the fewest resources – have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life.

Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Jeff Raikes and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.