

# GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY AND ADVOCACY

## STRATEGY OVERVIEW

### OUR MISSION

Guided by the belief that all lives have equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. Our Global Health Program supports this mission by harnessing advances in science and technology to save lives in developing countries.

We focus on problems that have a major impact on people in the developing world but get too little attention and funding. Where proven tools exist, we support sustainable ways to improve their delivery. Where they don't, we invest in research and development of new interventions such as vaccines, drugs, and diagnostics.

Our financial resources, while significant, represent a very small fraction of the overall funding needed to improve global health on a large scale. We therefore advocate for the policies and resources needed to provide people with greater access to health solutions. Strong partnerships are also essential to our success in making a difference and saving lives.

### THE OPPORTUNITY

There is an increasing recognition that when people are healthier, they can build better lives for themselves, their families, and their communities. Indeed, the commitment by donor governments to improving the health of the world's poor has never been stronger. Donor funding for health in developing countries has quadrupled over the past two decades, increasing from \$5.6 billion (U.S.) in 1990 to \$22.1 billion (U.S.) in 2007, a 289 percent increase.<sup>1</sup> Governments across the world have implemented funding mechanisms and partnerships such as **The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund)** and the **GAVI Alliance** (formerly the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations). Philanthropic organizations and other donors, such as the **Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)** and the **Wellcome Trust**, also have committed vast sums to global health. Through effective public campaigns such as **Product (RED)**, more people

have gained an awareness of the health issues affecting the developing world and are working in creative ways to help resolve them.

Despite recent increases in global health funding, however, resources are far below what is needed to meet the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), eight goals agreed to by governments aimed at reducing poverty, hunger, and disease by 2015.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the focus of current funding is imbalanced. In 2007, just 12 governmental and philanthropic organizations provided about 80 percent of funding for research and development (R & D) in global health, and approximately 80 percent of this funding went toward three diseases: HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), and malaria.<sup>3</sup> While these better-known diseases still need additional funding, many health problems responsible for killing millions of people in developing countries, such as pneumonia and diarrhea, receive far less funding and visibility.

An important objective for our policy and advocacy work is to help develop incentives for the private sector to increase their involvement in R & D and help fill critical funding gaps to solve global health challenges. Among governments, another objective is to track the effectiveness of donor spending on health and share evidence of progress and successes in global health. Without accurate information, governments from both wealthy and developing nations are understandably reluctant to spend more on health priorities, and poorly prepared to enact effective policies.

### OUR STRATEGY

**Our aim is to meet the most critical resource, policy, and visibility needs required to improve the health of the world's poor.** Our strategy for policy and advocacy comprises activities to promote more and better resources, effective policies, and greater visibility of global health to reduce infectious diseases and improve maternal, neonatal, and child health and nutrition.

We encourage others—governments from wealthy nations and developing countries, businesses, foundations, and philanthropists—to increase the amount of human and financial resources directed toward global health priorities. To unlock new resources, we also try to maximize the impact of funding and strengthen the effectiveness of our global health partners.

We also aim to support effective policymaking by collecting and sharing evidence about global health challenges and effective solutions.

## AREAS OF FOCUS

### Maintain the resource commitment of donor governments

For the past decade, we have collaborated with numerous partners to advocate for increased funding toward global health priorities from governments of the wealthiest nations. From 2001 to 2007, health funding by donor governments rose from \$7.2 billion (U.S.) to \$22.1 billion (U.S.), representing a 208 percent increase.<sup>4</sup> Commitments by the U.S. government to increase support for the **President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)**, the **President's Malaria Initiative (PMI)**, and the **Global Fund**,<sup>5</sup> as well as the **Group of Eight's (G8)** reiteration of its health-related commitments at its 2009 summit<sup>6</sup> have solidified the importance of global health on a number of donor government agendas.

Given the recent economic crisis and emerging global priorities such as climate change, we are working to ensure that funding commitments to global health are nurtured and maintained so the gains of the last several years are not eroded. We strive to collaborate more closely with the major donors in global health, including the United States, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom, as well as the European Union. Along with our grantees, we advocate the importance of maintaining strong international commitment to priority health areas including HIV, TB, and polio. We also commission and distribute policy research that helps optimize current spending on health programs by donors and other agencies, and makes the case for increasing resources in other areas (for example, maternal, newborn, and child health). Beyond policymakers, we also support efforts that will build a lasting constituency of public support for global health. One example of this is the recently launched Living Proof Project: U.S. Investments in Global Health are Working (LPP), a multimedia initiative designed to highlight the positive impact of U.S. investments in global health.

We monitor our efforts in this area by tracking overall funding levels as well as how funds are allocated to and across health priorities. We are working to improve ways to make it easier to see how spending is being allocated and the impact it is having. We will also track changes in awareness and perceptions of the effectiveness of investments in global health.

### Generate more and better resources in selected developing countries

Though the fight to achieve global health targets is challenged by insufficient resources, the emerging economies of India, China, and some areas of Africa hold significant opportunities for increased health funding. Recently, the Indian government committed to increase public-sector health spending from 1 percent of GDP (gross domestic product) to 3 percent.<sup>7</sup> In 2001, African leaders agreed to spend 15 percent of their national budgets on health. If met, this commitment alone would triple the amount of health spending in African budgets.<sup>8</sup>

We aim to make these commitments a reality by supporting our existing networks of grantees and other stakeholders who maintain attention on the importance of committing resources to health priorities. Our focus is on those countries that have received the majority of our developing-country grants: India, Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and Zambia. We reach out to policymakers and key leaders through strategic dialogue, communications efforts, and leadership visits. For example, a recent visit by Bill Gates to Nigeria focused on engaging religious and other leaders in Nigeria in the effort to eliminate polio and improve routine immunization throughout the country.

### Strengthen partnerships and develop mechanisms to unlock new resources

Given the many different expenditures governments must make across a list of public-sector priorities, we realize there is a limit to what can be allocated to health in the developing world. New sources of funding and fresh champions for global health must be cultivated to sustain momentum and resources. At the same time, existing resources and mechanisms for distribution of funding must be strengthened in order to maximize their potential. We aim to make current resources more effective and harness more diverse sources of funding for global health priorities. This includes our investments to:

- Improve the governance and technical capacity of our global health partners the Global Fund, GAVI, and **UNITAID** to maximize effectiveness of their resources.

## Implementing Innovative Financing Mechanisms for Health

Over the last several years, we have supported the development of innovative financing mechanisms to meet health needs in the developing world. Most of our work focuses on creating markets for priority health products where no viable market existed before. We also support additional work including bulk purchasing and front-loading health aid to poor countries that would typically be spread over many years. Some key mechanisms we support with partners include:

- **The Advanced Market Commitment (AMC)** is designed to provide financial incentives to the private sector to develop affordable vaccines for developing countries. The AMC offsets development, manufacturing, and introduction costs through an upfront commitment by donors to purchase vaccines once they are developed. This creates a more predictable market for new products. In return, the manufacturers agree to sell (or license) vaccines at prices that are more affordable in the developing world. In 2007, we joined the governments of Canada, Italy, Norway, Russia, and the United Kingdom to pledge \$1.5 billion (U.S.) for the pneumococcal vaccine—the first AMC—which launched in 2009.
- **International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm)** is a GAVI-based financing facility designed to accelerate the availability of funds for immunization

programs among the 72 poorest countries in the world. The program significantly increases the amount and predictability of funds for vaccines and health system improvements through the sale of bonds issued on the international market, which are backed by legally binding obligations assumed by donors.

- **Debt2Health** is a Global Fund-facilitated partnership between creditors and grant recipient countries. Under this agreement, creditors forgo repayment of a portion of their loans on the condition that the beneficiary country invests an agreed-upon amount in health through Global Fund-approved programs. A pilot case in 2008 was a debt conversion between Germany and Indonesia, where an additional \$72.6 million (U.S.) was made available for health through this mechanism.<sup>9</sup>
- **Affordable Medicines Facility—malaria (AMFm)** is a Global Fund financing mechanism to increase access to effective malaria treatment and delay resistance to the last remaining effective drugs. The facility has dramatically reduced the cost of the most effective antimalarials through a co-payment financed by donors. This allows wholesalers who supply malaria drugs to both public and private sectors to purchase artemisinin-based combination therapies at much lower prices, subsequently providing malaria patients with a lower price that is comparable to what they currently pay for less effective drugs.

- Work with members of the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries to encourage greater investment in R & D of new treatments and vaccines for global health. In particular, we prioritize increasing the private sector's share of Phase III funding for clinical trials into new drugs and vaccines against diseases such as malaria.
- Develop and implement innovative financing strategies to reduce the cost of research and guarantee the development and establishment of markets for current and future health products.
- Engage emerging donors by developing investment cases on ways to advance multiple global health challenges and provide technical assistance where needed to support the work of others.
- Support the **Millennium Foundation**, which is working on a voluntary contribution via airline ticket purchases to support UNITAID's global health programs in HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria.
- Bolster new partnerships in malaria, such as those with the **Methodist and Lutheran churches**, which have mobilized their constituencies to raise funds for purchasing malaria nets.

## Promote evidence to drive effective global health policies

Each year billions of dollars are spent on initiatives to improve health outcomes in the developing world. However, an absence of evidence about the impact of these initiatives remains a problem, as it can impede the ability of funders and policymakers to make decisions on how best to allocate scarce resources for improving health.

Even when evidence on the benefits of health interventions is available (for example, data demonstrating the efficacy of a new drug or vaccine), government officials are often ill-equipped to draft appropriate policies to ensure these interventions are delivered to the wider population.

We are supporting a host of efforts to systematically build evidence about what works in global health and translate this into a rich pipeline of innovative policy solutions and products. Our investments include endeavors to:

- Develop and support the **International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)**, an independent entity that conducts and catalyzes high-quality impact evaluations

of social programs to improve the evidence base for development effectiveness.

- Support a global health R & D resource tracking report by the **George Institute for International Health** that will monitor public and private funders' annual contributions to global health across multiple products and diseases.
- Ensure that policymakers and the public in donor countries have access to up-to-date information about their country's global health policy and spending, which we've funded in the United States through **The Kaiser Family Foundation**.

We contribute by generating policy papers and new evidence about “what works” to improve global health outcomes that support our goals.

### Increase visibility of progress and successes in global health

One obstacle to increasing investments in global health is fatigue from numbing statistics about the challenges. According to independent research, policymakers and most of their constituents are not aware of the positive impact global health investments are already having on the lives of millions living in the developing world.

We are investing in a number of projects to raise awareness of global health issues, particularly successes, to galvanize and maintain commitments among governments, the public, private-sector leaders, policymakers, and members of the scientific community. Investments in global health are working, but more still needs to be done. Our investments include efforts to:

- Support partners in the development and implementation of public outreach campaigns such as **Nothing But Nets** and **Idol Gives Back** that can increase visibility and raise funding for global health programs.
- Improve the quality and quantity of global health news coverage through organizations such as the **Public Broadcasting System** and **Public Radio International**.
- Provide accurate health information for story lines in popular prime-time television shows through the **Hollywood, Health & Society** program at the University of Southern California.
- Improve the effectiveness of communications and advocacy activities by key partners and grantees through consulting and collaborating.
- Communicate success stories to broaden news coverage and strengthen alliances in the United States and other donor countries.

### Living Proof Project: U.S. Investments in Global Health are Working

Investments in global health are achieving real, demonstrable results. These investments are preventing and curing disease, and helping people escape from poverty. However, these messages are not reaching many of those who make decisions about funding and other support for investments in global health. Research on the tone of media coverage regarding investments in global health has shown that it is generally negative. The same research shows that Americans want to move away from hearing only about problems, pessimism, and guilt—to progress, optimism, and opportunity. Living Proof Project (LPP) is a multimedia initiative intended to highlight successes of U.S.-funded global health programs. By reporting success stories back to the people who funded them—American taxpayers and their representatives in government—we hope to cast the current global health conversation in a more positive and optimistic light. We also hope to demonstrate that we have the knowledge, innovative technologies, and proven tools to save and transform many more lives.

### PROGRESS

A snapshot of some of our successful collaborations with partners to increase resources and effective policies for global health:

- renewed political leadership, evidenced by the 2005 G8 summit, which dramatically scaled up development assistance for health
- provided an evidence base to support the U.S. Congress' reauthorization of the PEPFAR in 2008, which allocated \$48 billion (U.S.) over five years and added TB and malaria as target priorities, and pledged \$350 million (U.S.) for neglected tropical diseases
- encouraged the International Finance Corporation to invest in health care providers in Sub-Saharan Africa over the next five years, through the establishment of an investment fund, local currency-lending facilities, and grants for business advisory services
- secured \$4 billion (U.S.) in long-term funding commitments from donor governments for the IFFIm
- demonstrated the ability to lower market barriers through \$1.5 billion (U.S.) of donor commitments to the AMC pilot for pneumococcal vaccine
- mobilized the global community around malaria eradication through the Malaria Forum in 2007, using Bill and Melinda Gates' voices and bringing together

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leaders from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Global Fund, World Bank, the U.S. government, and ministers of health from various African countries

- Product (RED) has mobilized resources and engaged the American public around the Global Fund. Since its inception in 2006, (RED) has raised more than \$130 million (U.S.) through its retail partners to benefit the Global Fund projects focused on AIDS in Africa

## CHALLENGES

Scientific advances in recent years mean that more people than ever can access affordable health care in poor countries. Yet, despite significant progress in recent years, major resource needs remain. This means not only increasing the total amount of resources available, but also improving the manner in which those resources are used. The global economic downturn has increased the risks and uncertainties surrounding funding flows from donors, with clear implications for our work.

G8 governments make up a significant percentage of spending for global health efforts. This funding may be vulnerable in coming years due to the economic crisis and other global development and domestic health priorities. Further, there is widespread skepticism around the effectiveness of aid. In a recent survey, 50 percent of Americans said the government hurts rather than helps people trying to move up the economic ladder.<sup>10</sup>

Even within global health there are significant challenges, including a lack of consensus on funding priorities and increased “competition” among advocates for specific diseases. Given the extent of health issues and the limitations of funding, there is an active need to work in close collaboration and in recognition of linkages among health priorities.

## WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

In working with governments globally, we have learned that our ability to convince policymakers about the importance of funding global health priorities depends on the strength and rigor of the evidence and analysis that underpin these requests. More data and policy analysis is urgently needed if we hope to encourage policymakers to adopt meaningful solutions. We hope our commitment to improved evaluation and research for policy development will help address this challenge.

Similarly, we are learning that policymakers and other individuals can be galvanized to support global health priorities when they see evident payoffs for these investments. This is why it is critical to articulate the successes. We hope our efforts to launch campaigns around achievements in global health will help convince stakeholders that global health is a worthwhile investment.

We are also recognizing the importance of working more closely with poor countries to ensure that lifesaving health solutions—both those that exist today and those that will be developed in the future—are accessible to those who need them most. Many of the scientific challenges associated with the development of these tools will pale in comparison to the challenge of delivering them.

## THE WAY FORWARD

In recent years, we have worked to increase political and financial commitments for global health, supported the development of new funding mechanisms, improved the evidence base to guide policymaker decisions, and helped raise the overall visibility of key global health issues. As we look to the future, we are committed to working with governments and our advocacy partners to focus our efforts and catalyze new funding to save and improve lives through better health.

## TO LEARN MORE:

About the Global Health Program:  
[www.gatesfoundation.org/global-health](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/global-health)

About the Living Proof Project:  
U.S. Investments in Global Health are Working:  
[www.livingproofproject.org](http://www.livingproofproject.org)

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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.

For additional information on the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, please visit our web site: [www.gatesfoundation.org](http://www.gatesfoundation.org).

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