Investing in Health: The Role of Research in International Development

Investment in Science

Research and development for HIV prevention and treatment has broad benefits and has driven critical breakthroughs in treatment for cancer, leukemia, hepatitis, and genetic diseases.

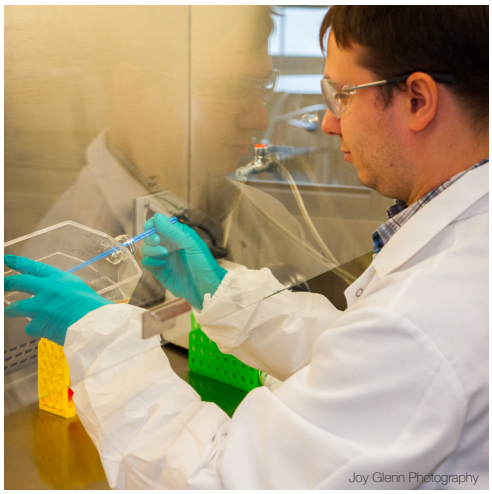
Investment in Efficiency

Prevention is a smart investment. An HIV vaccine has the potential to eliminate AIDS and the burden it creates for scarce global health resources. Vaccines are one of the single most cost-effective public health tools.

Investment in Stability

HIV creates health disparities, stigma, and instability. Until we bring about a permanent end to the epidemic, countries with enormous rates of HIV infection remain a risk to geopolitical security.

When the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funds research and development, it is solidifying an investment in low- and middle-income nations and their pathway to self-sufficiency. Whether through building health care delivery systems, training scientists and clinicians, or advancing vaccine and drug development, the U.S. commitment to a robust international development portfolio strengthens economies, fosters political stability, and promotes global security.



Funds that come from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) exemplify the U.S. commitment to stronger allies in Africa and elsewhere. Although most of the PEPFAR budget is spent on treatment for HIV infection, a small fraction is allocated for strategic research and development. In the past, those monies have yielded important discoveries in epidemiology, disease progression, and clinical trial management – the scientific foundation upon which promising antiretroviral treatments were developed. In the current PEPFAR landscape, research funding supports biomedical innovations to limit HIV infection, including microbicides and novel prevention tools; it supports discovery of longer-lasting antiretroviral treatments that can be used in populations with limited access to health care. Most important, it funds research toward a preventive vaccine – our greatest single hope of eliminating AIDS once and for all.

The rising costs of treatment will someday grow to unsustainable levels and we need to invest in tomorrow's prevention solutions, such as a vaccine. HIV-infected populations are susceptible to other diseases and face stigma and discrimination. Eliminating HIV means supporting research into a safe, effective, and accessible vaccine. It is the kind of long-term investment that belongs at the top of the development agenda.

Improvements to health accounts for an **11 percent rate of economic growth** in low- and middle-income countries from 2000 through 2011.

Every dollar invested in HIV vaccine R&D yields between **$2 and $67 in savings**.

$0.89 of every dollar spent on global health R&D goes to U.S. researchers.

Less than one cent per dollar of U.S. GDP is spent on global health R&D.

Founded in 1996, the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) is a nonprofit organization working to accelerate development of broadly effective AIDS vaccines accessible to all. IAVI works with partners in 25 countries to research, design and develop promising vaccine candidates. We collaborate with governments, partner with pharmaceutical and biotech companies, universities, hospitals and civil society organizations, and conduct and support research in North America, Europe, Africa, and India. We strengthen the expertise and infrastructure to fight HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, the epicenter of today's epidemic. And we advocate for policies, financing and environments that drive the fastest possible development of AIDS vaccines. Our vision is a world without AIDS, and that world has a vaccine.

11% of economic growth in low-and middle-income countries: Jamison DT, Summers LH, Alleyne G, et al. Global health 2035: a world converging within a generation. The Lancet. 2013;382(9908):1859– 1861.

Every $1 invested in HIV vaccine R&D: Hecht R, Jamison DT. Vaccine research and development assessment paper In: Lomborg B, ed. Rethink HIV: smarter ways to invest in ending HIV in sub-Saharan Africa. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012; 299–320.

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<.01% of US GDP: Global Health Technologies Coalition, Policy Cures. Saving lives and creating impact: Why investing in global health research works. Sydney: Policy Cures; 2012.

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