

# Global Health Overview

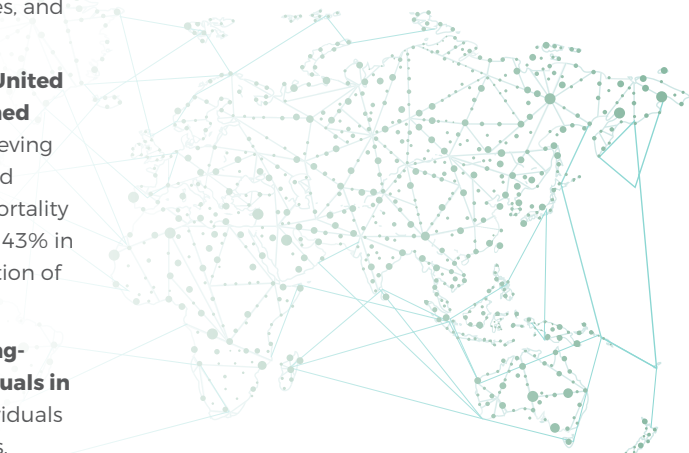
## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

**Global health programs seek to address the physical and mental health needs of individuals; treat and prevent the spread of infectious diseases; strengthen the capability of health workers and health systems; and increase access to health care services** to improve the overall well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

**Through relatively modest investments for global health programs, the United States has helped save millions of lives, and many diseases that threatened millions of people only a decade ago are declining.** We are in sight of achieving an AIDS-free generation; ending preventable child and maternal deaths; and eradicating polio, Guinea worm, measles, and malaria. Since 1990, infant mortality has been reduced more than 50%; maternal mortality has declined by over 43% in the 19 countries where U.S. involvement has been greatest; and the proportion of undernourished people has fallen from one in five to one in nine.

**Improving health care systems reduces the cost of future pandemics, long-term disability, and premature death, and improves the ability of individuals in developing countries to contribute to their own economies.** Healthy individuals are more productive and are better able to contribute to their own societies.

**For every dollar invested in global health there is an expected 10- to 20-fold return in economic benefit.**<sup>1</sup> Investing in global health allows developing nations to move toward aid independence and increase their participation in the global economy.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONGRESS

**Maintain appropriate funding levels for all health accounts so we can achieve global health objectives and not lose the progress that has been made.** If the U.S. fails to live up to its commitments, the gains made in reducing incidences of maternal mortality, tuberculosis, malaria, HIV, and other diseases in developing countries could stagnate or even reverse. Sustained U.S. investments in global health programs and health systems strengthening are crucial – health problems will only be more expensive and difficult to resolve in the future, especially with the rise of chronic non-communicable diseases (cancers, lung and heart disease, and diabetes) in all populations.

**Continue to invest in global health research and evaluation programs** that develop and implement new technologies and tools to assist countries anticipating future health challenges.

**Encourage federal agencies to ensure that their global health programs are integrated, recorded, monitored, and evaluated** so efficiency improvements can continue to be made throughout the global health sector.

**Support policies that will build strong local health systems and train a sustainable health workforce.** Strong, integrated health systems prevent devastating infectious disease outbreaks, bolster access to essential health services and strong public health responses, prevent stock outs of essential medicines and other lifesaving health products, and help drive inclusive economic growth. Additionally, investments in health workers save millions of women's and children's lives, enhance global health security efforts, and bear tremendous economic returns.

## WHY THIS INVESTMENT IS IMPORTANT

The United States is at the forefront of global health, with targeted initiatives such as Acting on the Call (led by the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID] to end preventable child and maternal deaths) and Saving Mothers, Giving Life (a public-private partnership to reduce maternal mortality). The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) are helping to create an AIDS-free generation and reduce the burden of malaria respectively. These initiatives help countries build and strengthen the health care services they provide, leading to economic and social stability, as well as independence from donor aid.

### U.S. investments in global health programs have led to significant progress.

As of September 2015,<sup>2</sup> PEPFAR has supported more than **9.5 million patients** on lifesaving antiretroviral treatment and more than **68.2 million people with counseling** and testing programs.

In the 24 priority countries where USAID has heavily invested in maternal and child health, child mortality **declined an average of 4% each year** from 1990 to 2011, and maternal deaths declined by more than half between 1990 and 2015.<sup>3</sup>

In Fiscal Year 2015, 23 tuberculosis focus countries supported by USAID successfully treated 2.8 million patients, achieving an **88% treatment success rate**.<sup>4</sup>

More than **3 million lives are saved each year** through USAID's immunization programs.<sup>5</sup>

Over the past decade, the United States played a key role in the control and elimination of neglected tropical diseases by supporting the cumulative delivery of over **1.6 billion treatments to over 743 million people in 31 countries**.<sup>6</sup>

Between 2000 and 2010, **more than 50% of all new global health products (vaccines, drugs, devices, and diagnostics) were developed with U.S. support**.<sup>7</sup>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) has **trained over 31,000 epidemiologists in 72 countries** on how to detect and rapidly respond to infectious disease outbreaks, which greatly contributed to Nigeria's ability to contain the 2014 Ebola outbreak.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time, the U.S. government is not alone in its efforts to improve global health. Significant contributions are made by other nations; multilateral organizations, such as the World Health Organization and UNICEF; public-private partnerships, such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance; private foundations; and civil society organizations. These donor partnerships allow global health funding to be leveraged across multiple health sectors to benefit and reach those most in need.

Robust U.S. commitment to global health strengthens developing countries' own health systems and, therefore, their ability to care for their own citizens. This includes the training and deploying of essential frontline health workers who vaccinate; attend deliveries; and provide preventive and treatment care, medical information, and advice that keep families and communities healthy. Continued U.S. investment in global health is needed to build on these achievements and to ensure a healthy future for citizens around the world by funding new innovations, strengthening health systems, and taking on the next generation of the global disease burden like non-communicable diseases.

### Resources

USAID Global Health <http://bit.ly/2hAznQv>

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### Citations

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3. "USAID Maternal Health." <http://bit.ly/2gHVlxP>.
4. "Ending the Tuberculosis Epidemic: U.S. Government Report to Congress for Tuberculosis FY15, USAID." <http://bit.ly/2fo0t01>.
5. "USAID Progress: Health." <http://bit.ly/2hAxwLv>.
6. "USAID Neglected Tropical Disease Program." <http://bit.ly/2fT8yrC>.
7. "Saving Lives and Creating Impact: Why Investing in Global Health Research Works." <http://bit.ly/2hAAFv3>.
8. "CDC Field Epidemiology Training Program." <http://bit.ly/2hpbqjQv>.