

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND THE GLOBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

President Obama's \$63 billion Global Health Initiative (GHI), launched in May 2009, partners with countries to improve health outcomes through strengthened health systems, increased and integrated investments in maternal and child health, family planning, nutrition and infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases, and through a particular focus on improving the health of women, newborns and children. While the GHI will be implemented in all countries receiving U.S. health assistance, eight fast-track countries, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nepal and Rwanda, will receive additional technical and management support to quickly implement and learn from GHI's approach, including integrated programs and investments across the health priorities, fostering greater country ownership and targeting health systems activities that deliver results. These countries will provide enhanced opportunities to build upon existing public health programs; improve program performance; and work in close collaboration with partner governments, across U.S. government agencies, and with global partners.

A key principle of the GHI focuses on strengthening health systems to save lives and achieve sustainable outcomes. The GHI is a concrete manifestation of the policy in several ways:

- GHI places a premium on strengthening existing health systems to enable efficient, effective and sustained provision of health care services and public health programs;
- GHI recognizes that focusing on women, girls, and gender equality is a force multiplier which will improve the health status of women and in turn their families and communities;
- It is selective in its approach in two ways: in its initial focus on eight fast-track countries, in order to garner significant and sustainable improvements in the management of the health system and health outcomes while ensuring learning that will inform the work of all countries; and in its focused investments within specific countries that are based on the health challenges particular to that country, continuing to build upon the existing foundation of U.S. programs;
- It supports country ownership and donor coordination by treating health assistance as a shared responsibility of the partner country, U.S. government, and other donors;
- It expands investments in game-changing innovation by promoting research and development, both in terms of applied science as well as operation and implementation research, to address important questions that are immediately relevant to both GHI and partner country goals and objectives.

Implementation of the GHI follows a new approach:

- GHI identifies examples of and invests in successful integration and coordination of vertical programs across the health spectrum, aligns U.S. government health and health-related programs with national plans;
- It maximizes synergies among U.S. government-supported programs, and allows for identification of greater efficiencies, evaluation of new and innovative approaches, and better use of taxpayer funding;
- It builds on and leverages efforts of multilateral partners, other donors, and partner countries by working within a common national framework and will identify gaps where the U.S. Government should focus its contribution to achieve broader impact; and
- GHI strengthens U.S. government engagement with partner countries to support national ownership and priorities that are aligned with GHI objectives.

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