National Institutes of Health

Fact Sheet — *Global Health*

Yesterday

- The burden of infectious disease has posed major challenges to individuals, families and communities around the world, and particularly in resource poor nations where conditions for the rapid spread of disease are present. Chronic conditions, including cardiovascular disease, conditions associated with aging, and disability represent additional challenges, and in poor countries, represent a double burden.

Today

- Countries once isolated are now part of the "global village." International travel and trade between both developed and underdeveloped nations exacerbates the problem of rapid transmission of infectious diseases. At the same time, our understanding of the causes and risks of disease, including genetic, environmental and behavioral factors, has never been greater. To tackle global health challenges using the best science and the best minds, NIH supports research and training programs for global health priorities.
- A substantial network of U.S. governmental, private sector, and academic institutions are committed to improving health conditions in developing countries. NIH, through its rigorous investment in training and support of developing world scientists, now has partners around the globe working in collaboration to tackle the most challenging issues.
- NIH is increasing the numbers of researchers from developing countries. An estimated 5,000 scientists received training in the United States, and over 100,000 researchers and scientists participated in workshops or local training courses in their own countries. The AIDS training program alone provided long-term (> 6 months) training in the U.S. for more than 1,000 health scientists, including Ph.D. and Masters level researchers from developing countries who are engaged in basic and clinical HIV/AIDS research. Other programs provide training in malaria, TB, cholera, rotavirus, environmental health, and brain disorders.
- Recognizing the need to mobilize quickly and to predict and control emerging infections, the NIH emphasizes training in surveillance and development of rapid, reliable, and inexpensive diagnostic tests. In addition, every year, NIH welcomes more than 2,500 foreign scientists into its intramural laboratories to work on the full spectrum of biomedical and behavioral issues. Successful scientists working on the ground in poor countries are major partners for the US as it tackles global health challenges. At the same time, NIH supports research training of U.S. junior scientists in developing countries, who will upon completion of their training return to provide new insights and expertise into global health challenges.
- As a key partner in an international consortium, NIH helps to identify cost-effective interventions for a range of global health challenges impacting poorer nations. This effort, the Disease Control Priorities Project, was developed to inform and assist policymakers around the globe in deciding the most successful strategies for successful disease control.

The Future

- The future will feature a collective resource of global, self-sufficient, multidisciplinary scientists with skills to successfully apply for NIH and other grants. This group of global scientists will facilitate and publish excellent and essential research, design and conduct clinical trials in resource poor countries, evaluate the effectiveness of clinical programs, and will be available to deal with global health problems on the horizon.
- NIH will continue to support international research and training in key chronic disease areas, and to address the rising global burden of non-communicable diseases previously less prevalent in under-developed countries. The results of this research will find application and benefit to both U.S. and underserved populations.
- NIH will expand partnerships with public and private entities from around the world. NIH will work closely with resource poor nations to identify shared research priorities, at risk populations, areas for action, and the most effective means to move from research to remedy.