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## Unitaid and HIV/AIDS

An estimated 37 million people were living with HIV in 2016 and 21 million of them are on treatment. Global health targets call for ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030, but to accomplish that, another 16 million people need access to treatment.

Milestones to reach by 2020:

- 90 percent of people living with HIV know their status
- 90 percent of those who know their status are receiving treatment
- The virus is suppressed in 90 percent of people on treatment

Unitaid is helping reach those targets by investing in new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat HIV more quickly, affordably and effectively. Our projects have slashed the price of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs for children and second-line treatment for adults, and have brought advanced point-of-care diagnostics to infants and newborns who live far from clinics or hospitals.

HIV projects make up almost half of Unitaid's US\$1 billion grant portfolio.

### Testing and Monitoring

Unitaid-funded projects support quick, convenient diagnostics that encourage more people to get tested. About 30 percent of HIV-positive people do not know that they are infected.

Unitaid has also invested more than US\$ 100 million to improve technology for monitoring the amount of virus present in HIV-positive patients. A high viral load means the patient is not taking their medicine correctly, or needs a different medicine.

Among our projects:

- The HIV Self-Testing Africa (STAR) project promotes user-friendly tests and connects patients to HIV treatment and prevention. Unitaid is investing US\$ 72.2 million to evaluate the benefits of self-testing in Africa, and to develop a market for the tests.
- Without early diagnosis and treatment, half of HIV-infected infants die before their second birthday. Our US\$ 63 million project with the Elizabeth Glaser Paediatric AIDS Foundation links newborns in Africa to fast, point-of-care testing.
- Unitaid's US\$ 149.4 million collaborative project with the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and UNICEF is expanding early-infant diagnosis and viral load point-of-care technologies in Africa.

- Unitaid has invested US\$ 21 million in laboratory systems that can test viral loads and also diagnose illnesses such as tuberculosis and viral hepatitis. Partner Solthis, the lead grantee, is carrying out the project, known as OPP-ERA, across four African Francophone countries.

## Prevention

People at high risk of HIV infection can take antiretrovirals to block the virus. This form of prevention is called pre-exposure prophylaxis or “PrEP”.

- Brazil's Fiotec is introducing HIV prevention for high-risk groups in Brazil, Peru and Mexico.
- In South Africa, young women at high risk of contracting HIV are receiving PrEP and other prevention services through a partnership between Unitaid, Wits Reproductive Health and HIV Institute and the South African Department of Health.

## Treatment

Only about half of HIV-positive children received antiretroviral therapy in 2015. Paediatric HIV drugs taste bad, are hard to administer, need refrigeration, and are unsuitable for children co-infected with HIV and TB.

Our response includes:

- A US\$ 17.3 million grant to Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative to develop better HIV drugs for children.
- Four projects to bring the world's best-quality HIV drugs to countries in Africa. Supported by US\$ 67 million from Unitaid, the projects are evaluating dolutegravir-based regimens in pregnant women and patients co-infected with TB. A state-of-the-art dolutegravir + darunavir combination is being introduced for second-line HIV therapy.
- Unitaid is working with governments and industry to widen access to the best-available HIV drugs through a US\$ 34 million grant to CHAI. The project is finding ways to cut production costs, and seeks to generate early demand and quick adoption of adult and children's medicines in target countries.

HIV is a virus that kills the white blood cells that protect the body from disease. Without treatment, the virus causes AIDS, a fatal condition in which the immune system is unable to fight off infection. Antiretroviral therapy has transformed HIV from a life-threatening disease to a chronic, controllable condition. HIV is spread through direct contact with bodily fluids—blood, semen, or breast milk—of an infected person.