

Dedicated to eliminating barriers to global access to affordable life-sustaining medicines for people living with HIV/AIDS.

OFFICES:

Administration:
584 Castro St. #416
San Francisco,
CA 94114
Tel (415) 863 4676
Fax (415)-863-4740

Philadelphia:
P.O. Box 22439
Philadelphia, PA 19143
Tel (215) 474-9329
Fax (215) 731-1845

New York:
511 E.5th St. #4A
NYC, NY 10009
Tel (212) 674-9598
Fax (917) 591-3353

www.healthgap.org
email: info@healthgap.org

Health GAP is administered by
Mobilization Against AIDS
International, a 501(c)3 tax-
exempt non-profit organization



The HIV/AIDS epidemic is a global catastrophe that kills millions each year and undermines the social fabric and economies of scores of countries. The treatments that prolong life and relieve suffering are not available to the vast majority of those infected with HIV. Health GAP believes access to life-sustaining medication is a human right for all, not just those living in wealthy countries. We believe that increasing treatment access will bring hope and help sustain the health of those infected and will promote health infrastructure, improve HIV prevention efforts and strengthen provisions for care and support

What is Health GAP (Global Access Project)?

Health GAP is an organization of U.S.-based AIDS and human rights activists, public health experts, fair trade advocates and concerned individuals who campaign against policies of neglect and avarice that deny treatment to millions and fuel the spread of HIV.

We are dedicated to eliminating barriers to global access to affordable life-sustaining medicines for people living with HIV/AIDS as key to a comprehensive strategy to confront and ultimately stop the AIDS pandemic.

We believe the international community must mobilize massive funding in order to fill the deadly gap in access to AIDS treatment. We advocate for meaningful resources from the U.S. government and other wealthy nations to combat AIDS in developing countries and to correct the historical neglect of and prejudicial funding priorities that has left millions of people, already infected with HIV, behind. We believe that the human right to life and to health must prevail over the pharmaceutical industry's excessive profits and expanding patent rights.

What does Health GAP do?

We campaign for drug access and the resources necessary to sustain access for people with HIV/AIDS across the globe. We work with allies in the global South and in the G-7 countries to formulate policies that promote access, mobilize grassroots support for those policies, and confront governmental policy makers, the pharmaceutical industry and international agencies when their policies or practices block access.

Sustained access cannot result from industry-controlled charity programs. Multiple strategies are needed to lower drug prices to affordable levels. These strategies include generic production, voluntary and compulsory licensing, and parallel importing. A system of global bulk procurement at lowest world prices is crucial if people living with HIV in the poorest countries are to have access to treatment. We reject efforts by industry or governments to deny or restrict the right of countries to exercise these and other strategies to protect the health of their people.

Current Health GAP campaigns include:

Advocating for funding of AIDS treatment programs and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria : This fund, first called for by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, holds the promise of funding AIDS treatment programs in developing countries if adequately funded and operated on a policy which prioritizes filling the gaps. Much more needs to be done in order to address the historical and deadly neglect of multilateral and bilateral assistance in caring for those already infected with HIV. Since the beginning of the epidemic and, still to this day, a single U.S. government donated dollar has yet to be spent on antiretroviral treatment in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Reforming US and world trade policies: Health GAP has led a successful campaign to change U.S. trade policies that punished African countries that attempted to produce or import affordable generic AIDS drugs. In addition to targeting threatened use of trade sanctions, Health GAP has campaigned against the international intellectual property regime (the WTO TRIPS Agreement) and national patent laws that have restricted access to high quality affordable medicines. However, the US government continues to prioritize pharmaceutical profits and oppose generic competition through its influence over the WTO, United Nations institutions, as well as through bilateral trade agreements with poor countries: including the Chile Trade Agreement, Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), and Free Trade of the Americas (FTAA). The World Trade Organization, while recently reaffirming the primacy of public health over profits of pharmaceuticals, in its Doha Declaration, still needs to acknowledge and protect the rights of countries to manufacture and export generic versions of patented drugs into developing countries with limited production or market capacity whether they have patents or not.

Challenging Multinational Corporations to provide HIV/AIDS treatment to workers: While Health GAP believes the onus of protecting public health is upon the public sector, the private sector has much to bear on the continued spread and neglect of HIV among communities in which they operate in developing countries. Corporations, such as Coca-Cola and the huge mining concern, Anglo-America, continue to flout the most fundamental need among HIV positive workers in the developing world: the urgent need for access to affordable, life-extending HIV treatment and care. Working with international and domestic allies Health GAP challenges multinational corporations to fulfil an obligation to implement comprehensive HIV/AIDS workplace policies that include a provision for AIDS treatment for workers and their dependents.

Fighting for debt cancellation: Foreign debt handicaps the ability of the most affected countries to confront the AIDS epidemic. We work with global allies to win full cancellation of debt owed the IMF and World Bank by poor countries, using the resources of those financial institutions. We oppose structural adjustment programs and similar requirements that weaken public health systems, obstruct treatment access, and accelerate the spread of HIV.

Pressuring drug companies: The pharmaceutical industry maintains its extraordinary profits in rich countries, and sabotages poor countries' efforts to produce or import affordable generic drugs--although drug companies generate little-to-no profit in poor countries. We expose and actively oppose these efforts and will build support for poor countries' right and responsibility to care for their people.