ELIZABETH GLASER PEDIATRIC AIDS FOUNDATION

FACT SHEET

photo: Olivier Asselin

HIV and AIDS Research and Training Programs

Elizabeth Glaser was one of the first people to advocate for HIV/AIDS research specifically for infants and children. Since her initial efforts, the Foundation that now bears her name has continued to bring together the best minds in science to develop and implement critical research projects that support our mission to eliminate pediatric AIDS. We support the next generation of scientists, whose pioneering ideas and discoveries are ensuring that children have access to the most effective medical treatments; assessing the long-term effects of AIDS medicines on children; increasing the effectiveness of key HIV/AIDS programs in the field; and bringing us closer to a safe pediatric HIV vaccine. Whether through Foundation-led research and training programs or by supporting research and training programs funded by outside sources, the Foundation remains committed to research efforts.

Operations Research

The Foundation performs operations research to gauge and enhance the effectiveness of on-the-ground programs, ensuring that our prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV services are reaching as many women, children, and families as possible. Assessing internal operations and Foundation-supported external activities, research focuses on the following:

- Developing better ways to provide improved long-term health care to mothers and children, especially those affected by HIV/AIDS
- Creating more effective PMTCT models that can be replicated within other PMTCT programs
- Assessing health delivery systems to improve their cost-effectiveness

Past Foundation-led operations research initiatives have included the examination of consequences of early breastfeeding cessation in three provinces in Mozambique, the assessment of provider-initiated HIV testing strategies in Zimbabwe, and the review of Kenya health-care worker training and service implementation tactics.

Supporting External Pediatric HIV Vaccine Research

A preventive vaccine suitable for infants and children, especially those exposed to HIV through breastfeeding, would have a profound and dramatic effect on the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This ability to stop the spread of HIV, specifically from mother to child during breastfeeding, remains a core commitment of the Foundation. Together with a broader HIV vaccine, a successful pediatric vaccine would be a key step in reducing the spread of infections, providing lifelong protection to millions of children and families, and ultimately creating the first generation free of HIV.

Foundation-supported pediatric HIV vaccine research initiatives include the following:

- Investigating breast-milk transmission of HIV
- Understanding pediatric immune responses to HIV
- Identifying potential vaccines for pediatric populations
- Identifying solutions to obstacles in conducting clinical trials in infants

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From January 1, 2000, through January 1, 2010, the Foundation invested more than $6.7 million for HIV vaccine research and development.

Technical Leadership

The Foundation supports talented scholars and researchers around the world in their efforts to prevent, treat, and eliminate pediatric HIV and AIDS. It awards grants to individuals in all stages of their careers, including those who have just started their work and those who have been committed to their research for years. Technical leadership awards guarantee that awardees' individual ideas and research are given visibility in, and support from, the medical and scientific communities.

The **International Leadership Award** (ILA) is a three-year grant focused on international work in PMTCT and HIV care and treatment. The ILA program supports trained individuals in resource-poor settings who have the potential to develop and manage programs that would assist in the elimination of pediatric AIDS in the countries where they live. Recent awards were granted for research and implementation programs in the following areas:

- Improving the effectiveness of PMTCT services
- Strengthening maternal and infant diagnosis of HIV
- Supporting the development of national policies and strategies to combat pediatric HIV and AIDS
- Examining the impact of antiretroviral drugs on children

As of March 1, 2011, the Foundation has awarded 14 scientists and clinicians more than $5.7 million for research and training activities through the ILA program.

The **Elizabeth Glaser Scientist Award** (EGSA) is a five-year grant awarded to the best scientists and clinicians dedicated to international HIV/AIDS research and care. One of the only named awards in HIV and AIDS research, the EGSA is the most prestigious private award the Foundation offers. Notable research includes the following:

- Developing an effective and safe HIV vaccine
- Better understanding immune response in children infected with HIV
- Researching the transmission of HIV through breast milk

As of January 1, 2010, the Foundation has awarded 36 scientists and clinicians nearly $24.5 million under its EGSA program.

Elizabeth Glaser acquired HIV through a blood transfusion and unknowingly passed the virus on to her daughter, Ariel, and her son, Jake. Following Ariel's death in 1988, Elizabeth joined with two close friends with one goal: to bring hope to children with AIDS. The Foundation that now bears Elizabeth Glaser's name has become a global leader in the effort to eliminate pediatric AIDS, working in 15 countries and at more than 5,400 sites around the world to prevent the transmission of HIV to children and help those already infected with the virus. The Foundation's global mission is to implement prevention, care, and treatment; further advance innovative research; and give those affected by HIV and AIDS a voice to bring dramatic change to the lives of millions of children, women, and families worldwide.