



Funders Concerned About AIDS

Supporting HIV-Informed Grantmaking
for Health, Rights, and Justice for All

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New Report Shows Philanthropic Support for HIV Raises Red Flags

With funding down by \$9 million in 2021, reversing course is mission critical.

Washington, D.C., October 24, 2023 – Today, Funders Concerned About AIDS (FCAA), the leading voice on philanthropic resources allocated to the global AIDS epidemic, released the 20th edition of *Philanthropic Support to Address HIV and AIDS*. This milestone issue finds that global philanthropic funding to fight the epidemic decreased 1% (\$9 million) between 2020 and 2021, falling to \$692 million.

Despite what may appear as a minor one-year decrease, waning support for HIV is not an anomaly; when adjusted for inflation, private philanthropic resources for HIV have shown a slow and steady decline in recent years. This is all the more dangerous when viewed within the current context that surrounds the global HIV response.

“It is unconscionable that we know how to end the AIDS epidemic but lack the political will and financial investment to do so,” says FCAA Executive Director Masen Davis. “Government and public funding — which account for the majority of resources for HIV and AIDS — are failing to meet the needs of those living with and affected by HIV. PEPFAR is being increasingly politicized, the U.S. House of Representatives slashed HIV spending by over half a billion dollars in the proposed FY24 appropriations bill, and the Global Fund is not receiving the funding that it has in years past. Any decline of private funding on top of this already perilous situation poses an existential threat to the HIV response and puts millions of lives at risk.”

Despite decades of progress, 39 million people are still living with HIV globally – more than half of whom are women and girls. Young people, ages 15-24, make up more than a quarter of new HIV infections, in large part due to a lack of access to HIV and sexual and reproductive health services. The situation is most acute in Sub-Saharan Africa, which is home to two-thirds of people living with HIV in the world. But no country is immune. For example, in the U.S., about 1.2 million people are living with HIV but 13% of them are unaware of their status.

One of the most critical roles that philanthropy plays is providing funding for populations that are most impacted by the HIV epidemic and who face severe systemic inequalities and violence in their daily lives. Currently these populations — LGBTQI communities in particular — are under attack globally, with legislation criminalizing their existence and basic rights emerging everywhere from the U.S. to Uganda. Even this small decrease in philanthropic resources could have devastating impacts on civil society’s ability to

respond to the needs of people living with HIV and other key populations most at risk of HIV — including transgender persons, gay men and other men who have sex with men (MSM), people who use drugs, and sex workers.

About this year's report

This year's report — capturing data on more than 5,000 grants, disbursed by 187 funders awarded to 2,800 grantee organizations — represents the most comprehensive study of the philanthropic response to HIV and AIDS.

Continuing a trend highlighted in previous reports, philanthropic support was concentrated among 20 top funders, which represented 92% of all HIV funding in 2021. The top two funders — Gilead Sciences, Inc. and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation — were responsible for 66% of global philanthropic resources. This overreliance on a small pool of funders is likely unsustainable.

Other key findings from the 2021 report include:

- HIV-related philanthropy for advocacy, including human rights-related strategies, reached an all-time high of \$150 million—a 15% increase from 2020.
- Despite being the most requested form of funding among communities responding to HIV, grants for general operating support (unrestricted funding that can be used for any purpose) decreased 17%, falling to \$45 million.
- HIV-related philanthropy for women and girls reached a historic high of \$100 million.
- Funding for key populations—including transgender persons, gay men and other men who have sex with men (MSM), people who use drugs, and sex workers—reached a new high of \$110 million. However, support for transgender persons — increasingly under attack around the world — remained essentially flat in 2021.
- HIV-related philanthropy for BIPOC communities within the United States reached a new high of \$58 million.

We Cannot Lose Momentum: A Call to Action.

This edition of the report marks 20 years of data on the philanthropic response to HIV, analyzing funding from 2021 — the year during which the world commemorated the 40th anniversary of when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identified the first cases of what would come to be known as AIDS.

The advocacy, infrastructure, and workforce that were mobilized and sustained during the first 40 years of the HIV response played a pivotal role in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic; they also support continued efforts around pandemic preparedness and global health security. However, that infrastructure is exceedingly vulnerable without funding. Inadequate resources compromise entire healthcare systems, diminishing our capacity to respond efficiently and effectively to current and future crises.

“This downward trajectory of funding has impacts far beyond a single disease. Human rights, gender rights, LGBTQI rights, reproductive justice, racial justice — these issues are all tightly intertwined with HIV. They are just as susceptible to funding cuts, too,” said Davis. “It’s time for the public, policymakers, and philanthropy to think seriously about what’s at stake. The most vulnerable people around the world are being left behind, and we have the chance to stop it, but the window is narrowing. We must take action now.”

You can read the complete findings of the study [here](#).

About FCAA

Funders Concerned About AIDS (FCAA) is a philanthropy-serving organization (PSO) founded in 1987 to take bold actions and push philanthropy to respond to HIV and AIDS. FCAA’s mission is to inform, connect, and support philanthropy to mobilize resources to end the global HIV pandemic and build the social, political, and economic commitments necessary to attain health, human rights, and justice for all.