



Independent observer  
of the Global Fund

## INTERNATIONAL FUNDING FOR AIDS DROPS FOR FIRST TIME IN OVER A DECADE

Decline seen as more of a delay than a shortfall

International funding for AIDS fell by 10% in 2010, the first time funding has dropped in more than a decade, according to a report from the Kaiser Family Foundation and UNAIDS.

In their annual [report](#) on international assistance for HIV/AIDS in low- and middle- income countries, released in August 2011, the two organisations state that funding fell from \$7.6 billion in 2009 to \$6.9 billion in 2010. Between 2002 and 2008, spending had risen more than six-fold, before levelling off in 2009.

The report's authors attribute the drop to reductions in development assistance, currency exchange fluctuations and a slowdown in the pace of disbursements from the U.S. government. Seven of 15 governments surveyed – Australia, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the U.S. – reported a year-over-year drop in their disbursements as measured in their own currencies.

According to the report, the bulk of the decline is attributable to the delay in U.S. disbursements. Although U.S. funding for HIV/AIDS in low- and middle-income countries has held steady, the U.S. Congress passed legislation in 2008 during the reauthorisation of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) that put conditions on the release of funds from that programme. As a result, disbursements slowed. In 2010, the U.S. contributed \$3.7 billion, compared with \$4.4 billion in 2009.

The shortfall is a delay, not a reduction, according to Bernhard Schwärtlander, UNAIDS director for evidence, strategy and results. Funds pledged for 2010 will be paid out in subsequent years, he said. In

fact, the report noted that U.S. disbursements have begun to pick up.

The U.S. remains the largest donor nation, accounting for an estimated 54% of AIDS-related disbursements by governments, followed by the U.K. (13%), France (6%) and the Netherlands (5%).

If one looks only at bilateral (i.e., government to government) disbursements, which make up about three-quarters of all AIDS-related disbursements, the U.S. share is 65%, followed by the U.K. (12%) and the Netherlands (6%).

In 2010, the U.S. provided 88% of its AIDS funding through bilateral channels, a proportion exceeded only by Italy (100%), Ireland (92%) and Denmark (90%). At the other end of the spectrum, France, Spain and Japan, respectively, provided only 16%, 14% and 12% of their AIDS funding through bilateral means, preferring instead to channel the bulk of their contributions through the Global Fund and UNITAID.

Some information for this article was taken from “HIV/AIDS funding dropped by 10% in 2010,” Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), 36(15), 19 October 2011.

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