



International Geneva

Directory of Geneva Global Health Actors

UNITAID

www.unitaid.org

Chemin de Blandonnet 10 – BIBC II – 8th Floor | CH-1214 Vernier
Tel +41 22 791 12 00 | Fax +41 22 791 4890 | unitaid@who.int

BACKGROUND AND MISSION

Launched in September 2006, UNITAID works to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria faster, cheaper and more effectively. Its mission is to provide long-term, sustainable and predictable funding to increase access to and reduce the price of quality drugs and diagnostics for the treatment of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in developing countries. Until 2009, UNITAID worked mainly as a large scale procurement group. UNITAID does not fund R&D or country programs, but rather works with accelerating the in-between steps and ensuring affordability of the medicines and diagnostic tools.

AREAS OF INTEREST

- treatment, diagnosis and eradication of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria
- medicines and diagnostic tools
- fixing market shortcomings in life-saving medicines
- access to and use of paediatric medicines

HEALTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES

UNITAID aims to identify the gaps in global response to HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and searches for smart ideas to close the gaps, accelerating practical solutions to treat, prevent and eliminate the diseases. It works closely with partner organisations to overcome the barriers in access to affordable medicines and diagnostic tools in developing countries, for example intellectual property issues and poor quality and delivery of medicines. From the beginning, UNITAID has significantly contributed to the access to and affordability of treatment in many countries. Main approaches include cutting the cost of ARV treatment via leveraging price reductions, funding new diagnostic tools for tuberculosis and malaria and accelerating the pace at which new drugs and diagnostic tools are made available in developing countries. The organisation contributes to the improvement of the lives of children by investing in the development of new paediatric formulations of drugs which allow more

appropriate and easier to follow medication of children. Similarly UNITAID fosters the improved access to care for rural populations by accelerating the development of rapid diagnostic tools and self-testing mechanisms. UNITAID advocates for a pro-public health approach to intellectual property rights.

GOVERNANCE AND STAFF

The executive board of UNITAID is chaired by Celso Amrim and determines the organization's objectives, approves budgets and monitors progress. The secretariat, which is hosted by the WHO, is headed by the Executive Director Lelio Marmora. UNITAID employs approximately 75 staff members at its headquarters in Geneva.

FUNDING SOURCES AND BUDGET

UNITAID is financed through airline tax levies, adopted by 10 countries, and regular budget contributions. The levy presents an innovative financing tool, and contributed to nearly 50% of UNITAID funding in 2013.

PUBLICATIONS

See all publications at: <http://unitaid.org/en/resources/publications>

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