



## PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Mark Aurigemma  
(212-600-1960 / 646-270-9451 / mark@aucomm.net)

DORIS DUKE  
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Medical Research Program

### FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW \$100 MILLION INITIATIVE TO STRENGTHEN HEALTH SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

*Grants will support innovative research, training and  
service delivery partnerships to overcome entrenched barriers  
to integrated primary health care delivery*

(New York, September 27, 2007) -- The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) today announced a major new initiative to address the most critical obstacles to the delivery of effective and essential health services in sub-Saharan Africa: fragile and fragmented health systems and a dire shortage of health care workers.

The foundation's African Health Initiative (AHI) will provide \$100 million over five to seven years to African-led partnerships working on innovative strategies to overcome barriers to integrated primary health care delivery. Grants will be awarded to create **Population Health Implementation and Training (PHIT) Partnerships** to implement strategies to significantly reduce mortality and morbidity in African districts of at least 250,000 people; identify and address health systems weaknesses and funding gaps; and conduct vital implementation research to be shared with the larger health service community.

"Although funding for health in Africa has increased significantly in recent years, simple, inexpensive interventions like deworming children and providing insecticide-treated bed nets are still unavailable to many people because health systems do not function properly," noted Elaine Gallin, Ph.D, Program Director for Medical Research at DDCF. "This initiative seeks to catalyze a change in approach to strengthening health systems, away from disease-specific funding and toward integrated models that significantly expand access to primary health care in Africa."

PHIT Partnerships will bring together experts in health service delivery, research and workforce training, along with representatives of African government, academia, NGOs, faith-based organizations and the communities served. The foundation will also encourage PHIT Partnerships to include the private health and business sectors.

"The foundation does not seek to build new health service delivery projects from the ground up, but rather to increase the efficiency of existing programs and fill critical gaps in funding," said Dr. Gallin. "While funded partnerships will develop their own approaches to the challenges of strengthening health systems, each will employ rigorous implementation research to systematically improve health services."

Depending on local needs, grants may be used for a variety of activities, such as training health workers, conducting disease surveillance, creating new health systems management tools or coordinating between vertical disease programs. DDCF also expects to support a portfolio of smaller projects to complement PHIT Partnership activities, such as the development of shared tools, as well as a 'network' grant to foster collaboration among AHI participants.

The foundation is currently accepting letters of interest from potential PHIT Partnerships. Selected teams will be invited to submit planning grant proposals for up to \$150,000 each, and in early 2009 the foundation expects to award three to six multi-year implementation grants of \$8 million to \$20 million each. Teams working in Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia are eligible to apply for funding. The list of eligible countries was developed through extensive discussions with experts and is designed to include a range of countries where successful scale-up models might be developed that could be adapted elsewhere on the continent.

The African Health Initiative will be guided by a distinguished advisory council that includes **Jo Ivey Boufford**, M.D., President, The New York Academy of Medicine; **Roger Glass**, M.D., Ph.D., Director, Fogarty International Center, U.S. National Institutes of Health; **Tore Godal**, M.D., Special Advisor to Prime Minister of Norway; **Demissie Habte**, M.D., Former International Director, James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, Bangladesh; **Marian Jacobs**, M.D., Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town, South Africa; **Adetokunbo Lucas**, M.D., Adjunct Professor of International Health, Harvard School of Public Health; **Anders Nordström**, M.D., (*observer status*) Assistant Director-General, Health Systems and Services, World Health Organization; **Miriam K. Were**, MBChB, MPH, Dr PH, Chairperson, National AIDS Control Council & AMREF Board, Co-Founder UZIMA Foundation with a focus on Youth.

“This initiative is a bold attempt to tackle an important challenge confronting health practitioners in Africa,” said Adetokunbo Lucas, M.D., Adjunct Professor of International Health at the Harvard School of Public Health and a leading Nigerian expert on global health.

“As the foundation approached its tenth anniversary, our board gave us an incredible opportunity and challenge to identify urgent needs for which a large infusion of the foundation’s resources, above and beyond our normal grant-making, could have a significant impact,” said Joan E. Spero, president of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. “The African Health Initiative grew out of that challenge, and we hope it will catalyze innovative approaches to integrating and scaling up existing projects in a way that leads to sustainable public health improvements for communities in Africa.”

The foundation’s staff consulted with dozens of experts to develop the African Health Initiative, which is a major expansion of the DDCF Medical Research Program’s funding for health research in Africa. Since 1998, the Medical Research Program has committed more than \$160 million to clinical research to speed the translation of biomedical advances into new therapies, cures and preventions for human diseases, including approximately \$16 million to improve the care and treatment of HIV/AIDS patients in 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

*The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation ([www.ddcf.org](http://www.ddcf.org)) is to improve the quality of people’s lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and the prevention of child maltreatment, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke’s properties. This mission is carried out by providing grants to tax-exempt U.S. accredited, degree-granting institutions; academic research institutions; or charitable institutions that are tax-exempt, as defined by Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, and publicly supported, as defined under Section 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.*