

Why is funding needed?

'Funding for vaccine research has always fallen far short of that devoted to drug development, and for a period, there was very little happening in the vaccine field. Had there been a sustained vaccine effort simultaneous with the drug effort, we probably would have a vaccine by now.'

Seth Berkley, Time.com article – New York, 2 March 2007

Despite significant growth in financial support for AIDS vaccine research and development (R&D) in recent years, worldwide efforts to develop an AIDS vaccine continue to face serious shortfalls in funding. Current spending on AIDS vaccine R&D makes up less than one per cent of all worldwide health product R&D expenditures, even though AIDS accounts for six per cent of the global burden of disease.¹

IAVI and many of its partners and collaborators have called for a significant increase in investments in AIDS vaccine research and development. These funds should be targeted towards solving some of the key unanswered scientific questions and used to develop and test AIDS vaccine candidates. .

'In my personal opinion, vaccine research has been delayed too long... If we as a society can send a man to the moon, then we must be able to find and develop a vaccine. We have not spent enough attention on the vaccine, nor have we spent enough money to find one.'

Lieve Fransen, Vice Chair of the Global Fund for the Treatment of AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, at the International AIDS Conference – Toronto, 22 August 2006

Traditionally, medicinal products including vaccines are developed by pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. This industry, where the majority of expertise in vaccine product development and manufacturing lies, accounts for roughly half of all biomedical research. Yet, it is responsible for only 10% of the roughly US\$750 million spent globally on AIDS research and development. The reasons for this lack of engagement are: the science of AIDS vaccines is daunting, the financial investments required are substantial and long-term and the market is unattractive and far from certain. The public sector – especially governments – continues to provide the overwhelming majority of the funds allocated to AIDS vaccine R&D.

¹ Calculated based on HIV/AIDS-related mortality and disability.