



THE PARTNERS IN HEALTH APPROACH

PIH DEVELOPED AN INNOVATIVE MODEL for delivering quality primary health care and revitalizing entire communities in some of the poorest parts of the world – areas ravaged by political conflict, poverty, and international neglect. The approach is patient-centered and community-based, focused on delivering healthcare services together with social and economic support. The following key elements are helping to raise the standard of care for the poor around the world.

1 PROVIDING ACCESS TO PRIMARY HEALTH CARE FOR THE POOR

A strong foundation of primary care is critical to successfully treating specific diseases or conditions. By integrating infectious disease and other disease-specific interventions into a wide range of basic health and social services and removing the financial barriers to care, PIH has successfully increased the use of medical services in the areas we serve, which has led to better case finding and prevention efforts, in turn leading to healthier and ultimately more productive communities.



2 TRAINING AND EMPLOYING A NETWORK OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

These local community members, many of whom are patients themselves, provide health education, deliver medicines and social support to patients in their homes, and provide a vital interface between the clinic and the community. Training, employing and compensating these community health workers for the critical services they provide also helps to boost local economies by increasing employment.





3 PRESCRIBING FOOD FOR PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF MALNUTRITION AND DISEASE

Hunger and malnutrition are both a major cause of disease and a major obstacle to effective treatment in the communities PIH serves. Hunger weakens bodies and immune systems and greatly increases the likelihood of falling ill with or dying from many common infectious diseases. Food is also an essential medicine for treatment, particularly for children and patients suffering from consumptive diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis. To address this, PIH includes food as a basic component of treatment regimens and prevention packages for at-risk patients, children, and families.



4 ADDRESSING BASIC SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC NEEDS



Fighting disease in impoverished settings also means fighting the poverty at the root of poor health. Achieving good health outcomes requires attending to peoples' social and economic needs. Through community partners, PIH works to create and improve access to clean water, shelter, sanitation, education, and economic opportunities.

5 REINFORCING THE PUBLIC SECTOR

A strong and stable public sector is the best way to bring health care to the poor. While nongovernmental organizations play a valuable role in developing new approaches to treating disease, successful models must be implemented and expanded through the public sector to assure universal and sustained access. Rather than establish parallel systems, PIH works to strengthen and complement existing public health infrastructure.



Long-term sustainability requires long-term commitments to reinvigorating local health systems and economies. PIH does this by investing directly in the public sector, employing health workers locally, and creating education and job opportunities for community members.