

DEEP DIVES

topics



Spain's global health R&D

Spain focuses its funding on HIV/AIDS research

In 2016, Spain provided US\$6 million for research and development (R&D) on poverty-related and neglected diseases (PRNDs), referred to as 'global health R&D' in this profile. This is about a fifth of where funding stood in 2008 (US\$25 million). However, the 'Master Plan for Spanish Cooperation for 2018 to 2021' underlines R&D as a key priority of its contributions to global public goods, and the Spanish Secretary of State for Development and the Spanish Secretary of State for Research signed an agreement to strengthen coordination and foster joint activities on R&D and international development in March 2018.

In past years, Spain has concentrated its R&D funding on HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis. In 2016, 77% of its financing could not be allocated to a single disease, largely owing to US\$4.6 million that was given to the Barcelona Institute for Global Health. ISGlobal is an influential global health think tank and R&D institution based in Spain. It is mainly funded by a banking foundation, 'la Caixa', and accounts for a varied research agenda with an special focus on malaria due to its institutional links with the World Health Organization's head of the malaria program, Pedro Alonso. The next-largest areas of funding in 2016 were malaria (US\$400,000), tuberculosis (US\$356,000), kinetoplastids (US\$237,000), and HIV/AIDS (US\$220,000).

According to G-FINDER data, three institutions channeled nearly all of Spain's funding for global health R&D in 2016: The Catalan Department of Health (57%, US\$3 million), the Carlos III Health Institute (20%), and the Catalan Ministry of Economy and Knowledge (15%).

ISGlobal was the largest implementer of Spain's public global health R&D (83% in 2016). It received core contri-

butions from both the Catalan Department of health (US\$3 million) and from the Catalan Ministry of Economy and Knowledge (US\$834,000), as well as earmarked funding for projects focusing on specific diseases (e.g., it received US\$100,000 to carry out research projects on Malaria from the Carlos III Health Institute, in 2016).

The Carlos III Health Institute, the main public research funder in Spain for managing and carrying out biomedical research, invested US\$1 million in global health R&D in 2016, spread out over a number of projects. The focus of the funding was on tuberculosis (33%), kinetoplastids (22%), malaria (21%) and HIV/AIDS (20%). The institute reports to the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness and to the Ministry of Health. Its key mission is to support the development of scientific knowledge.

MAEC and MINECO are the main ministries responsible for global health R&D

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MAEC) is the main ministry working on global health R&D. The MAEC's Health Division is mainly responsible for global health R&D funding. The AECID works on funding and implementation of global health R&D programs through its Directorate for Multilateral and Sectoral Cooperation. In turn, the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness's (MINECO) Secretary of State for Research steers Spain's national strategy on R&D, including for global health. The MINECO's Carlos III Health Institute implements health-related R&D interventions through direct investments and channels funding to national research initiatives. It also represents Spain's position on health R&D to the European Union. Previously, the MAEC and the Spanish Development Promotion Fund (FONPRODE) financed product-development partnerships, but this funding channel has been discontinued now that FONPRODE's budget only includes loans and equities.