

Improving the health of Haitian families

Based in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, GHESKIO was founded in 1982 as the first institution in the developing world dedicated to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Under the leadership of Dr. Jean Pape, a professor at Weill Cornell Medicine, GHESKIO works with the Haitian Government to provide health care and humanitarian support to Haiti's most vulnerable populations. As an international research center of excellence, it seeks to improve treatment and prevention strategies in resource-poor settings, and it is building Haiti's public health system by training the next generation of healthcare workers.

Offering High-Quality Care

Weill Cornell Medicine faculty in Haiti identified the first cases of AIDS in a developing country. By implementing new prevention and treatment strategies, they helped to lower the prevalence of HIV in the Haitian general population from 6% to below 2% and to place 70% of people with HIV on life saving antiretroviral therapy.

Today GHESKIO receives over 100,000 patient visits annually. All services, including voluntary counseling and testing, HIV care including antiretroviral therapy, tuberculosis screening and treatment, reproductive health care, and services to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV, are offered free of charge.



Dr. Vanessa Rouzier, at the GHESKIO Primary School graduation



Monique Pierre, Community Health Worker

GHESKIO helped decrease the prevalence of HIV in Haiti from 6% to 2%.

Discovering New Strategies to Combat Disease

Weill Cornell Medicine faculty in Haiti have received continual support from the National Institutes of Health since 1983 and have conducted studies that changed how HIV and TB are treated globally. Their research focuses on HIV, tuberculosis, and other infectious diseases. Current research seeks to:

- Optimize treatment of HIV/AIDS with a focus on adolescents
- Improve diagnosis of tuberculosis in children and develop new treatments for drug-resistant tuberculosis
- Provide nutritional support to pregnant mothers and children
- Cholera vaccination of all Haitians and elimination of cholera from the country.



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GHESKIO Centers in Haiti



HIV/AIDS clinical research team

Training the Next Generation of Healthcare Workers

Weill Cornell Medicine and GHESKIO train over 500 Haitian health professionals each year. Visit any hospital in Haiti, and you will find our trainees.

- We provide training to Haitian healthcare workers to scale up HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis care and prevention nationally.
- With support from the NIH Fogarty International Center, Weill Cornell Medicine and GHESKIO have developed a cadre of over 100 Haitian clinical research investigators.
- GHESKIO established the first Master of Public Health (MPH) and Nurse Practitioner (NP) programs in Haiti, with 10 MPH and 15 NP degrees conferred annually.

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Providing Humanitarian Support to the Vulnerable

Recognizing that the foundation for good health requires more than medical care, GHESKIO's mission includes humanitarian aid:

- Impoverished residents of the neighboring City of God community receive clean water and sanitation, in addition to primary care, pediatrics, family planning, prenatal care, and reproductive health services.

- Following a devastating earthquake in 2010 and Hurricane Matthew in 2016, GHESKIO provided food, shelter and emergency health care to thousands. GHESKIO also opened a primary school for children whose schools were destroyed.
- GHESKIO offers economic development programs for adults, opened a vocational school to train young adults in construction and other trades, and began a microcredit program to provide women with small business loans.

Future Directions

Over the next five years, GHESKIO plans to expand cardiovascular disease epidemiologic surveillance and health services for the impoverished communities of Port-au-Prince. Cardiovascular disease is now the leading cause of death in Haiti, and Weill Cornell Medicine and GHESKIO are using their research and clinical experience to address this new challenge.



Mothers and children in the pediatric clinic