



## More GAIA News – Summer 2006

### *Update on Hope*

GAIA donors have provided more than \$125,000 in support for the foundation of the Hope Center Clinic in Sikoro, Mali. This new clinical HIV care center in an impoverished neighborhood in West Africa will facilitate the delivery of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) to as many as 1,000 infected children and their parents. Funds were donated or promised by **The Sun Also Rises Foundation** (TSARF), **Gilead Foundation**, **Adopt a Doctor**, **Keep a Child Alive**, and some very generous donors in the greater Providence community. **Thank you!** Ongoing support for the clinic is still needed.

The **Hope Center Clinic** site was identified during this summer, permission was obtained from local authorities, and the design of the new clinic is now underway.

Access to life-saving HIV/AIDS drugs is limited in Mali due to the lack of HIV clinics that provide specialized care. GAIA VF seeks to establish this clinic as a model for “communal self-care” that may be replicated in other neighborhoods in Bamako and the rest of Mali, should the model be successful. Thus, future beneficiaries will also include all HIV-infected children and their parents in Mali, West Africa.

### *Electronic Medical Records for Mali*

In the summer of 2004, with six donated laptops and a donated copy of the LabTracker Software system, GAIA volunteer **Jared Meshekow** traveled to Mali to take part in a pilot program to implement LabTracker, a unique software tool which allows for the tracking of lab results for HIV-positive patients.

Jared, who is now finishing his third

year of undergraduate studies at **Boston University**, returned to Mali this summer to provide support for the users of the LabTracker Software. He retrained clinicians on LabTracker, updated their versions, provided assistance with data entry, and worked on translating the LabTracker system to French.



Jared was assisted by **Moses Brown High School** student **Ali Bicki**, who entered patient data into the EMR at Chez Rosalie, the GAIA VF mother-to-child HIV transmission prevention program. These efforts will improve the development of functional Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system in Mali, which is a critical aspect of the “Scale Up” for national HIV care.

### *International AIDS conference, Toronto*

GAIA’s **Alexa La Faunce**, **Madeline DiLorenzo** and **Director Malick Kone M.D.** traveled to the IAC in August 2006. Dr. Kone reported on GAIA’s work in Mali to conference participants. Reports written by DiLorenzo and Millennium Village Project’s Negin are provided here:

Speakers, participants and advocates attending World AIDS conference focused their concern on the crisis in human resources capacity - one of the most significant challenges in the global response to AIDS. WHO (the World Health Organization) identified the need for

**training of 100,000 additional health providers and community treatment supporters** in order to accomplish the agency’s AIDS treatment target – to get all of the patients who need HIV medications into care by 2010.

### *WHO Call for Access to Care*

Kevin M. DeCock (Director, Division of HIV/AIDS, WHO) made yet another call for **universal access** to highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), the current standard of care for HIV/AIDS. Despite the fact that we learned about the benefits of HAART more than 10 years ago, millions of people still do not receive this beneficial therapy. **Currently, 6.8 million people in the developing world are in need of HAART, but only 24% of these people were on HAART as of June 2006.** DeCock also pointed out recent data showing protection against HIV infection following male circumcision, and called for further research on the role of male circumcision and microbicides in HIV prevention.

Since **90% of the world’s population remains unaware of their HIV status** and millions remain in need of treatment, DeCock also called for both mobile testing and treatment to reach hard-to-reach populations in rural areas. GAIA VF is proud to be responding to this need in West Africa.

