



Photo by Karen Kasmauski for CRS

FASTER is expanding innovative methods of pediatric case-finding and treatment.

# FASTER

## *Faith-Based Action for Scaling Up Testing & Treatment for Epidemic Response*

While the global HIV response has had many successes, reaching children and adolescents with antiretroviral care has been a persistent challenge. Through the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is funding Catholic Relief Services to mobilize partners in government, civil society and faith-based organizations to catalyze progress toward achieving the Joint United Nations Program on HIV and AIDS 95-95-95<sup>1</sup> targets for children and adolescents. The Faith-Based Action for Scaling Up Testing and Treatment for Epidemic Response project, or FASTER, aims to ensure that children and adolescents have achieved viral suppression. Based on the top 13 countries with unmet pediatric need, FASTER is active in Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.<sup>2</sup>

Quick facts	
Project type	HIV/AIDS
Funder/funding	OGAC/CDC \$35 million
Location	Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Time frame	01 April 2019– 31 March 2022
Partners	Clinton Health Access Initiative, EGPAF in Zimbabwe, Faith Based Organizations, Local Implementing Partners
Goal	Children and adolescents achieve viral suppression

<sup>1</sup> “Understanding Fast-Track: Accelerating Action to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2030.” UNAIDS, 2015, [www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media\\_asset/201506\\_JC2743\\_Understanding\\_FastTrack\\_en.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/201506_JC2743_Understanding_FastTrack_en.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Source: Spectrum/UNAIDS 2018

Working to strengthen systems of health ministries and PEPFAR implementing partners, FASTER is using three primary strategies to improve the pediatric and adolescent testing and treatment cascade.

**Strategy 1: Reduce Structural Barriers** to testing and treatment that are beyond the patient's or caregiver's control, such as the regulatory and policy environment, supply chain, access to care, human resources, poor linkage between testing and treatment, and other service-delivery related barriers.

**Strategy 2: Expand Innovation** by accelerating adoption and scale-up of new or novel approaches to improve pediatric case-finding, including screening tools and other testing methods.

**Strategy 3: Scale Up What Works** by expanding use of proven approaches and promoting new products, tools and approaches backed by evidence to maximize impact.

The FASTER initiative is focused on six priority actions across the pediatric and adolescent testing and treatment cascade, agreed upon by a core set of stakeholders in the 2017 Rome Action Plan<sup>3</sup>. By advancing these six Priority Actions, FASTER is fostering a game-changing, enabling environment and the development or improvement of operational guidance, tools, training, practical evidence, and proofs of concept that will allow all facilities and pediatric providers to quickly and strategically expand HIV testing and pediatric-friendly treatment, care, and support.

## FASTER'S SIX PRIORITY ACTIONS



### 1. Streamline Regulatory Approvals



### 2. Integrate Ministry of Health and Faith-Based Organization Service Delivery



### 3. Expand Diagnostic Platforms



### 4. Evaluate Novel HIV Testing Approaches



### 5. Implement Validated HIV Risk Screening Tools



### 6. Optimize Pediatric Anti-retroviral Therapy Regimens

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.paediatricrivactionplan.org/>

## Research Innovation



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FASTER is conducting operations research on the acceptability, feasibility and effectiveness of caregiver-assisted, oral fluid-based HIV screening for index testing of children in Uganda and Zambia. FASTER, in partnership with the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, or EGPAF, is also conducting cutting edge research on the introduction of the antiretroviral medication raltegravir administered in granules for neonates in Zimbabwe.



With support from the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, through Catholic Relief Services and Clinton Health Access Initiative