



Why Does Global Health Matter to Florida?

Probably for more reasons than you think. Even though the term “global health” refers to diseases and health issues that disproportionately affect developing countries, global health matters to Florida. It matters to Florida’s economy and to Floridians’ health.

Florida has global ties . . .

- . . . through trade and commerce.

In 2007, Florida was the sixth largest merchandise exporter among the 50 states, with exports that totaled \$44.8 billion headed to 222 foreign destinations. Its global exports have grown by 80 percent over the last five years, well above the national growth rate of 61 percent. Some of Florida’s trade partners are developing countries in Asia, Africa, and South America. Florida’s largest market in 2007 was Brazil, which received state exports worth \$4 billion.

- . . . through foreign investment.

Florida ranks sixth in the nation in the number of “in-sourced” jobs – employment by companies that are based outside the United States. About 226,000 Floridians work for foreign-owned companies, which invest in Florida’s economy as they expand their operations in the Sunshine State.

- . . . through travel and tourism.

Every day, more than 26,000 passengers depart from cities all over the world destined for Florida’s international airports. Among the arrivals are international tourists and business people who spend millions of dollars a year in Florida, generating wages and jobs that contribute significantly to the state’s economy.

- . . . through its colleges and universities.

In the 2006-2007 academic year, 26,900 foreign students studied at Florida universities. International students and their families contributed \$680 million to the state’s economy.



Global Ties Benefit Florida

Florida's global ties benefit the state's economy, providing billions of dollars in revenue and thousands of jobs. For example, one in nine manufacturing workers in Florida depends on international exports for his or her job.

These Ties Can Be Jeopardized by Global Health Crises

Florida's global ties link the state's economic health to the health and economic growth of other countries and regions. When health care crises in other countries threaten economic and political stability, they can end up affecting Florida as well.

What's the Link between Health and Wealth?

Epidemics and other health crises affect the ability of entire communities to work and limit the potential for economies to develop. The following examples illustrate the link between global health and economic development:

- Malaria costs Africa \$12 billion in lost economic output every year. It is estimated that without malaria, the economic output of several African countries, some of which are important trade partners for Florida businesses, would be 30 percent greater than it is today. Florida exports \$656 million worth of goods to Africa every year.
- UNAIDS estimates that the HIV rate in China is rising by 20-30 percent every year. China is a valuable trading partner for Florida, purchasing nearly \$941 million worth of Florida exports in 2007 alone.

Research to Improve Global Health Benefits Florida

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is a world leader in biomedical research that improves health in the United States and around the world. Most of the research that is funded by NIH is conducted on university campuses across the country. NIH awards many grants to Florida universities, which in turn bring money and jobs to Florida. In 2006, Florida received \$337 million in research grants from NIH. Some of these grants are for research that will improve global health. For example, Florida A&M University received a five-year, \$15 million grant to increase the biomedical research capacity of the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Some of this research will be in the development of new drugs and treatments for diseases such as HIV/AIDS, a disease that disproportionately affects low-income countries. Grants from NIH bring jobs and higher wages to Florida at the same time that they help the world to make progress in global health.

Global Exchange: FLAWI, Trade Opportunities, and Global Health

Today, many states have a stake in making progress in global health. As Florida becomes increasingly integrated into the global economy, it is experiencing first-hand the benefits of trading with nations around the world, as well as the impact that the poor health of developing countries can have on its own economy.



One of the state's global economic partners is West Africa. The Florida West Africa Linkage Institute (FLAWI) promotes trade and economic development in West African countries. Based at the University of North Florida and affiliated with Florida A&M University and Florida Community College, FLAWI has served to link the state of Florida with 16 West African countries since 1991. FLAWI works to encourage the expansion of educational, economic, and cultural linkages by providing student and faculty exchange programs; cooperating with chambers of commerce, governmental, and non-governmental organizations for trade expansions; and organizing conferences and seminars to educate Floridians about their West African partners.

FLAWI recognizes that strong educational, cultural, and economic relationships are not possible as long as poor health persists in African communities. For example, in response to Senegal's health problems, FLAWI entered a partnership with the Senegalese Ministry of National Education and the Centre Universitaire Regional to develop a community health program. This program provides community health training, health care education, and medical services.

FLAWI has become a model for collaboration with West Africa. By building linkages through mutually beneficial educational, cultural, and business exchanges, Florida is uniquely positioned to benefit from the emerging and growing African market of 800 million consumers and producers.

Conclusion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are taking the lead in the research and development of drugs and vaccines aimed at improving global health and lessening the impact of deadly diseases such as HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria.

To find out how we can accelerate the search for better medical technologies, please visit www.familiesusa.org/issues/global-health.

Sources available upon request from Families USA.



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