UNITAID Gives $63M to Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation

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The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) will receive up to $63 million from UNITAID to invest in programs that improve early infant diagnosis of HIV in nine African countries, according to an EGPAF press release.

By supplying 650 HIV testing devices, the program will result in more than 780,000 infant HIV tests over a three year period, which will meet about 40 percent of the infant testing needs in those countries.

Starting HIV-positive infants on treatment before 12 weeks of age can reduce their HIV-related morbidity by 75 percent. But currently only half the babies born to HIV-positive mothers are tested for the virus within two months of being born and only half of those get their test results.

UNITAID is a global health initiative that gets 60 percent of its funding from a small levy on airline tickets. It was launched in 2006 by the governments of Brazil, Chile, France, Norway and the United Kingdom.

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