

# Health Bulletin



## Humanitarian Efforts Make A Difference

(NAPSA)—It's not always easy to tell who the heroes are.

In the battle against disease in the developing world, lives are being saved and improved by humanitarian programs that many people are not aware of.

Those programs have been created and are being funded by the pharmaceutical industry, in collaboration with leading humanitarian, academic, governmental, and community-based organizations. Such programs have benefited tens of millions of people living in more than 100 developing countries around the world.

Providing free medicine is not enough to ensure that the medicine gets to the people who need it most. To ensure that donated medicines and services reach their intended targets, pharmaceutical companies must also invest enormous amounts of time, money and expertise.

From the original decision to contribute medicine, a company's commitment often expands to creating networks, training tools and infrastructure needed to administer the medicine or implement preventive measures.

This work is often performed under difficult conditions and some of the companies have pledged to continue their involvement until the target disease is eradicated.

One area that these efforts have made a significant difference in is the battle against AIDS. The HIV virus causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome or AIDS for which there is no cure. Of the three to four million people who die of AIDS annually, about



**The pharmaceutical industry has risen to the challenge of battling disease in many developing countries.**

2.3 million live in Africa.

Pharmaceutical companies have targeted the disease through education, prevention, care and support.

For example, medication that prevents mother-to-child transmission of HIV has been donated to 36 developing countries in the last five years. In 2002, the pharmaceutical industry donated more than \$800 million in medicines to the developing world. Since 1998, that amount is more than \$2.7 billion.

Other programs improve local health care services for children affected by AIDS. Some programs build clinics and train health and social workers.

By caring for those affected by AIDS, say experts at PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America), the world will be safer from outbreaks of disease and the suffering and social and economic consequences it causes.