

Brazil Virtual Leadership Development Program

Internal Evaluation

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INTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE
BRAZIL
VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
(VLDP)

Report by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1. Context

1.2 History of the Brazil VLDP

1.3 Overview of Program Content and Methodology

2. Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

2.2 Methodology

3. Course-Related Findings

3.1 Participation

3.2 Program Content and Methodology

3.3 Facilitation

4. Participant Results

4.1 Identifying the Institutional Challenge and Implementing Action Plans

4.2 Improving Work Climate

5. Conclusions

6. Recommendations

Appendix A: Participant List

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The primary audience for this report is staff at MSH (M&L senior management, M&L project managers who are involved in leadership development, and electronic product developers and technical support teams), USAID/Brazil and the PN DST/Aids.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From July 5 to September 24, 2004, the Management Sciences for Health (MSH) Management and Leadership Program (M&L) carried out the first Virtual Leadership Development Program (VLDP) in Portuguese in Brazil. Using a blended learning approach, the VLDP combined a 7-module interactive, internet-based program for individual learning with virtually facilitated face-to-face group work focused on the challenges and real life experiences of the work groups enrolled in the program. Following delivery of the Brazil VLDP, an internal evaluation was conducted to assess participation, program content and methodology, and immediate outcomes. This report is a summary of the internal evaluation.

Results: Outcomes for Participants

- 73 participants from 10 HIV/AIDS organizations in five states completed the program
- All 10 teams were able to successfully apply performance improvement methodology to address an organizational challenge and develop action plans to address their challenges, five of which focused directly on the HIV/AIDS epidemic and five on strengthening organizational capacity to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
- Work climate appears to have improved at all organizations during the VLDP.

Overall Recommendations: from Participants and Brazil VLDP team

- Provide sufficient time for enrollment of organizations before program launch.
- Increase the proportion of enrolled organizations that successfully complete the VLDP by lengthening the recruitment period and enlarging the recruitment pool so that the selection process is more competitive. Consider charging a fee.
- Reduce facilitator time spent on administrative duties by automating administrative functions and assigning an assistant facilitator.
- Develop a facilitator manual.
- Reduce the length of Module 5 (Communication) to 1½ weeks and increase the length of Module 6 (Change Management) to two weeks and switch the order of these two modules.
- Revise Module 3 (Facing Leadership Challenges) to provide more detail and examples for developing action plans and revise Module 5 (Communication) to focus on communication of the action plan.
- Review all program instructions for clarity (particularly in the workbook)
- Ensure facilitated follow-up is provided to VLDP teams to support the implementation of their action plans in the period following the program.
- Extend the VLDP to other civil society organizations (CSO) and public sector managers of HIV/AIDS programs in Brazil.

The Brazil VLDP demonstrated that small CSOs struggling to confront the AIDS epidemic in difficult circumstances in Brazil's poor north and northeast regions have the capacity and commitment to participate in a virtual leadership program. The Brazil VLDP has helped these organizations to improve how their teams function and to face institutional challenges. As a virtual program, it is also an effective mechanism for scaling up leadership development to reach managers of many organizations across many states in a short period of time.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

In response to the demand from public and private health care organizations for high quality, cost-effective, and continuous leadership and management development, Management and Leadership Program (M&L) of Management Sciences for Health (MSH) designed the Virtual Leadership Development Program (VLDP). The program uses a blended learning approach that includes an interactive, internet-based program for individual learning and self-assessment, virtually facilitated small group work, support materials on a CD-ROM, and a printed workbook.

The VLDP was first launched in October of 2002. Since then the VLDP has been conducted eight times in three languages (Spanish, English and Portuguese) for 91 teams representing 710 participants in 29 countries. This report focuses on delivery of the VLDP in Brazil in Portuguese from July 5 to September 24, 2004, and corresponds to the seventh application of the VLDP. It is the third application of the VLDP in the context of HIV/AIDS.

1.2 HISTORY OF THE BRAZIL VLDP

In early 2003 the Civil Society and Human Rights Unit (SCDH) of the Brazilian Ministry of Health's National STD/AIDS Program (PN DST/Aids) expressed interest in MSH's experience in distance learning programs and particularly in the recently launched Virtual Leadership Development Program. SCDH staff showed particular interest in offering the VLDP to civil society organizations (CSOs) working in cooperation with the PN DST/Aids. MSH was also interested in carrying out the VLDP in Brazil since it would be the first application of the VLDP in Portuguese and in the context of HIV/AIDS. Delivery of the VLDP in Portuguese in Brazil would also set the stage for future delivery of the VLDP in lusophone Africa.

To fund delivery of the VLDP in Brazil, human capacity development funds made available to M&L by USAID/Washington were identified. The funds became available in late 2003.

Course Adaptation. When M&L began to plan for implementation of the VLDP in Brazil, the program had only been carried out in Spanish and only for CSOs working in reproductive health. Thus, all VLDP program content had to be translated and adapted to the Brazilian context and for CSOs working with HIV/AIDS. Reginaldo Alcantara, an independent translator, translated the content from Spanish to Portuguese in late 2003. Karen Johnson Lassner and Lia Junqueira Kropsch adapted the content in the first quarter of 2004. Adaptation consisted of interviewing Brazilian leaders in the area of HIV/AIDS, and inserting relevant parts of the interviews into the Brazil VLDP course content. In the Spanish version of the VLDP, Brazilian HIV/AIDS expert Paulo Teixeira had been interviewed. His interview was maintained for the Brazil VLDP and 4 new interviews were conducted with: Kátia Edmundo of CEDAPS, Carlos Duarte of GAPA/RS, Silvia Dantas of Gestos, Eduardo Barbosa of Forum das ONG-Aids do Estado de São Paulo and Lucinha Araújo of Sociedade Viva Cazusa, Casa de Apoio Pediátrico. The PN DST/Aids assisted in identifying the leaders to be interviewed.

During preparation of the VLDP content in Portuguese for Brazil, MSH/M&L translated the original VLDP in Spanish to English and adapted the content for CSOs working in HIV/AIDS in preparation for the fourth application of the VLDP in Africa for HIV/AIDS organizations. Since a number of improvements were made when the content was translated from Spanish to English and adapted to HIV/AIDS, the Brazil VLDP ended up being adapted from both the Spanish and English VLDP, incorporating the best from both. In practice this meant that the content was adapted a first time based on the VLDP in Spanish, then reviewed and adapted again based on the VLDP in English. The use of two versions of the VLDP in other languages to produce the VLDP increased the amount of time required to adapt the content, but was unavoidable in order for the Brazil VLDP to benefit from improvements made in the English version. Content adaptation was completed in April 2004.

Partnership with the PN DST/Aids. As the adaptation of the Brazil VLDP content was being completed, several meetings were held with the PN DST/AIDS to discuss implementation. Inocência Negrão of the Institutional and Human Development Unit was assigned as the PN/DST/Aids counterpart for the Brazil VLDP. The main responsibilities of the PN DST/Aids were: 1) specification of the CSOs to be targeted by the VLDP; 2) dissemination of the VLDP for recruitment of the participant CSOs 3) selection of the CSOs; 4) preparation of opening and closing daily messages to be posted on the site; and 5) monitoring. As noted above, the PN DST/Aids also assisted in identifying the leaders to be interviewed for purposes of adapting the VLDP content to the Brazilian context.

Number and Geographical Location of the CSOs. At the time of planning the Brazil VLDP, the PN DST/Aids was engaged in launching the HIV/AIDS Emergency Plan for the North of Brazil to combat high AIDS mortality in that region. To complement the Emergency Plan, the PN DST/Aids decided to offer the VLDP to CSOs in the poor north (Amazon) region of Brazil. In the event that insufficient CSOs applied for participation, invitations to apply would be extended to CSOs in Brazil's poor northeast region. USAID/Brazil agreed with the decision to focus on CSOs in the north and, if needed, in the northeast.

Since previous deliveries of the VLDP had shown that the ideal number of participating teams is 10-13 and that 1 or 2 teams drop out of the program in the early weeks, MSH/M&L and PN DST/Aids agreed to select 14-15 CSOs from among the applications received.

Launch Date. During meetings with the PN DST/Aids several launch dates were established and successively postponed due to delays in recruiting the CSOs. On July 5, 2004, the Brazil VLDP was successfully launched.

Fee Waiver. All previous VLDPs delivered by MSH/M&L had charged a fee of US\$500 per team. The PN DST/Aids requested that MSH/M&L waive the fee in the case of the Brazil VLDP, as the PN DST/Aids would not be able to actively promote the VLDP if a fee were charged.¹ MSH/M&L waived the fee.

¹ All health service and products provided by the Ministry of Health in Brazil are free-of-charge, as determined by the Constitution. The Ministry of Health is unable to endorse commercialized health services or products.

Recruitment. Recruitment of the CSOs began in May 2004. Initially the PN DST/Aids disseminated the Program to all CSOs working in AIDS in the north (approximately 25). After two weeks of recruitment, only 8 CSOs had applied. Thus, applications were opened to CSOs in the northeast (approximately 100).

Recruitment was carried out primarily by e-mail. Many of the CSO e-mail addresses from the PN DST/Aids database were incorrect and were returned as undeliverable. A verbal announcement was also made at a meeting of HIV/AIDS NGOs during the recruitment period. Some CSOs were also contacted by telephone.

Based on MSH/M&L's commitment to enabling workgroups to face challenges and achieve results, participants are enrolled in the VLDP as teams rather than on an individual basis. Thus, in Brazil, teams of 4-10 staff members were recruited.

Applications. After several weeks of recruitment, a total of 15 CSOs applied to the Brazil VLDP: 8 from the north and 7 from the northeast. Since past VLDPs had shown that 1 or 2 teams would likely drop out at the beginning of the program, the PN DST/Aids and MS/M&L decided to accept all 15 teams that applied.

On-line Enrollment. During the week prior to the start of the Brazil VLDP, individual participants were invited to enroll on-line. Of the 15 CSOs that applied, participants from 14 enrolled on-line. More than one-half registered during the week prior to program start-up on July 5, 2004. The remainder registered during the first week of the program.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

The Virtual Leadership Development Program (VLDP) is designed as a 7-module program delivered over a 12-week period. The overall program goals are to create a virtual program to:

1. Present a framework of leadership functions and the competencies necessary for their development
2. Assist teams to identify an organizational challenge and develop and carry out a plan of action to address the challenge using the newly acquired leadership knowledge and competencies
3. Provide opportunities for individual participants to assess their leadership competencies and develop a plan for improvement
4. Structure team exercises to develop basic leadership competencies, including self-management, interpersonal communication, teamwork, and change management.

The program is intended to develop leaders who can work together in teams to:

- Identify and address key leadership challenges within their organizations
- Detect opportunities for participants, their teams, and their institutions
- Focus on achieving challenging institutional priorities
- Align and mobilize people, systems, and resources to achieve results

- Inspire staff

During the program, participants examine individual and group leadership practices and capacities, and using the performance improvement process, select an organizational challenge that they will work together to address. The program is based on a blended learning approach: at the beginning of module, participants conduct individual work on the VLDP Web site (including reading module content, case studies, and editorials, completing module exercises, participating in the Café) and then participate in face-to-face group meetings with other team members from their organizations to discuss what has occurred in the module and conduct assigned group work. At the end of each module the coordinator from each team participates in a group discussion that is posted on the website for teams to read. The team coordinator role rotated with each module in order to more equitably distribute team leadership responsibilities.

Because current knowledge in leadership development shows that leadership skills are best developed in the actual workplace rather than during a training course. Therefore throughout the VLDP the emphasis is on helping each team to select a real organizational challenge they are facing and to develop an action plan to address that challenge as a team.

Virtual facilitation of the program is conducted on a daily basis. This includes launching each program module, posting daily announcements, receiving and responding to e-mail from participants, posting questions to the café and forum to stimulate discussion, and providing feedback on individual and group participation as well as the quality and completion of individual and group products.

The program is divided into seven modules of approximately two weeks duration (Module 1 takes one week to complete, Modules 2, 4 and 5 take two weeks, Module 3 last three weeks, Module 6 takes 1½ weeks and Module 7 takes 3 days):

- Module 1: **Introduction to the Program:** understanding program objectives and content; getting to know other program participants and facilitators; becoming familiar with the web environment and elements of the VLDP site and practicing using the web features (e.g., posting to the Café, emailing to facilitators); completion of the Work Climate Assessment tool
- Module 2: **Managers that Lead:** overview of leadership and its importance to addressing challenges of HIV/AIDS organizations; selections from interviews with leaders on “What is leadership?”; the four basic leadership functions from the M&L Managing and Leading Framework; the difference between leadership and management
- Module 3: **Facing Leadership Challenges:** applying the performance improvement model to identify and select a challenge in the teams’ institutions, define desired and actual performance related to the challenge, perform a root cause analysis using a fishbone diagram and design an intervention and action plan to address the challenge

- Module 4: **Leadership Competencies:** self-management; self-diagnosis of leadership competencies; exploring composite of leadership competencies within the team with regard to selected challenge; developing a personal development plan
- Module 5: **Communication:** the leader and communication; motivational patterns; styles of communication; self-diagnosis of motivational pattern and communication style; improving motivation and communication within participants' teams
- Module 6: **Change Management:** the leader and change; leadership and organizational transformation; Kotter's Eight Steps for successful change management
- Module 7: **Evaluation and Closing:** personal reflection; questionnaire evaluating elements of the program; completion of the Work Climate Assessment Tool and closing ceremony

All work online is asynchronous. Each participant works individually either online or using the VLDP workbook, which is designed to duplicate exercises for participants who encountered connectivity issues. Each team receives a CD-ROM containing all program materials in Word to facilitate downloading. The program is conducted using a web-based interface designed by the VLDP team.

The screen below gives a view of the interface.

PÁGINA PRINCIPAL

Bem-vindo Fiona Admin

- 1 Iniciando o curso
- 2 Gestores que lideram
- 3 Enfrentando desafios
- 4 Competências de liderança
- 5 Comunicação
- 6 Gestão da mudança
- 7 Finalizando o curso

Fortalecendo Líderes para Enfrentar Desafios

DESENVOLVIMENTO DA LIDERANÇA
PROGRAMA VIRTUAL

Última página visitada | Café | Corpo Docente | Participantes | Ajuda

Já Está Batendo a Saudade
22-Sep-04

Hoje iniciamos o Módulo 7, o módulo que encerra o nosso querido PVDL. Em três dias muito curtos, entre hoje e sexta-feira, vamos refletir sobre o que o PVDL nos tem significado, como pessoa e como equipe. O Café, como sempre, será o nosso lugar de encontro para comemorar a nossa jornada virtual e para nos encontrarmos com outros participantes que não são mais meros colegas de curso e sim nossos amigos. Como sempre, contamos com sua participação no Café, descrevendo suas experiências no PVDL, contando como pretendem continuar desenvolvendo suas habilidades de liderança e informando como vão continuar trabalhando no desafio identificado.

Continue

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The VLDP website contains the following elements:

- **Daily announcements** from facilitators summarizing current program content and postings to the Forum or Café
- **Editorials** from MSH senior managers on leadership topics
- A **Café** where any participant could post comments and questions
- A **Forum** where the team coordinators for each module posted the team response to the homework
- **Sequenced program materials** including a plan for each module that contains objectives and activities for the module, sequenced text, and a variety of interactive exercises such as self-assessments, case studies, homework exercises, bibliographies, and tools
- **Links** to tools and readings related to leadership
- **Participant and faculty pages** with photos, biographic sketches and email addresses
- **Help Desk with FAQs**
- **Faculty and facilitator support page**, a back-end administrative tool where team members can be added, teams displayed, facilitator e-journal entries made, program participation monitored, and evaluations tallied

2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this internal evaluation are to:

- Assess team participation, with particular emphasis on identifying ways that team participation can be increased.
- Assess the quality of program materials and facilitation, with particular emphasis on identifying ways that the virtual leadership program and supporting materials/ tools could be strengthened for facilitators and participants.
- Assess the program content and methodology from the viewpoint of participants and the Brazil VLDP team.
- Assess progress made on the action plans developed by each team by the completion of the VLDP.
- Assess improvements in team climate during program delivery

2.2 METHODOLOGY

The evaluation is based on information from the following sources:

- Data captured on the VLDP website on individual and group participation; i.e., participation in module exercises, postings to the Forum and Café, completion of individual and group exercises, participant use of website features

- Results of the Work Climate Assessment completed in Modules 1 and 7 of the program
- Participant feedback on the program through a final program evaluation (54 respondents)
- Results of the Brazil VLDP After Action Review with the team that developed and facilitated the program
- Review of module summary reports and other documents related to the Brazil VLDP
- Content of organizational action plans submitted by each participating institution

3. COURSE-RELATED FINDINGS

3.1 PARTICIPATION

A total of 110 participants from 14 CSOs enrolled on-line in the Brazil VLDP. Two organizations, MMCC-PA and APHAC, both in Pará, dropped out immediately due to connectivity problems, leaving a total of 93 participants from 12 organizations. During the early part of the program, two additional organizations, Projeto Saúde e Alegria from Pará and Gestos from Pernambuco also dropped out. Projeto Saúde e Alegria informed that their intense travel schedules to Amazon communities where they have no access to computers prevented them from participating in the program. Gestos never formally withdrew but ceased to participate. Consequently, 73 participants representing 10 organizations in five states completed the program.²

Individuals from each organization enrolled as a team, ranging in number from 3 to 10 people. The 10 organizations completing the program, by region and state, are listed below.

North (representing two states)

- **Associação Renascer**, Pará, team of 6
- **Fundação Esperança**, Pará, team of 10
- **Grupo Paravidda**, Pará, team of 10
- **REARD - Rede Acreana de Redução de Danos**, Acre, team of 9

Northeast (representing three states)

- **ACORDE – Associação Alagoana de Prevenção às Drogas, Atenção à Saúde Mental e Ecologia Humana**, Alagoas, team of 10
- **AMAZONA – Associação de Prevenção à Aids**, Paraíba, team of 6
- **Diaconia**, Pernambuco, team of 3
- **GACC – Grupo de Apoio às Comunidades Carentes**, Ceará, team of 6
- **ISDS – Instituto de Projetos e Investigações em Saúde e Desenvolvimento Social**, Ceará, team of 8
- **NIV – Núcleo de Integração pela Vida**, Ceará, team of 7

The 10 teams completing the Brazil VLDP participated actively in the program, as demonstrated by the following:

² A total of 63 participants from 9 organization received certificates of course completion since one organization, Paravidda, completed the program but did not meet the requirements for receiving a certificate of completion.

- 83% of the participants completed all exercises on-line;
- 74% and 71% of the participants completed the Work Climate Assessment in Modules 1 and 7, respectively;
- 71% of the participants completed the final evaluation;
- Nine of the ten completed all homework assignments except one; six of the ten teams completed all homework assignments;
- Nine of the ten teams posted the results of their group meetings to the Forum at the conclusion of each module.

Participation, as measured by the number of page visits to the Brazil VLDP site per participant, is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. MEAN NUMBER OF PAGES VISITS TO THE BRAZIL VLDP SITE, PER PARTICIPANT, DURING PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

CSO Team	Mean Page Visits per Participant
Fundação Esperança	3,606
NIV	2,305
ACORDE	2,279
ISDS	1,179
REARD	1,092
GACC	724
Renascer	376
AMAZONA	369
Paravidda	359
Diaconia	290
Mean (all participants)	1,376

Source: Tabulation of Brazil VLDP course monitoring data.

The large range in mean number of page visits is largely due to participation in the Café. The organization whose participants were most active in the Café resulted in higher mean pages visits.

One of the conclusions of the Brazil VLDP After Action Review was that the quality of participation in the Brazil VLDP was exceptional, knowing the difficulties these organizations face in terms of difficult connectivity, heavy workloads and general scarcity of resources. All of the organizations are relatively small and most staffed primarily by volunteers. Access to computers is limited. Indeed, informal communications with the participants indicated that a number of them were using the computer for the first time. Under such circumstances, participation was outstanding.

The concern expressed during the After Action Review is the number of organizations that dropped out (four) once the individual participants enrolled on-line in the program. Several suggestions are offered to assure that a greater proportion of registered organization complete the

program. First, the period of time dedicated to recruitment of organizations should be lengthened in order to recruit the largest number of organization, thereby enlarging the applicant pool and creating competition for acceptance into the program. Second, the period of time dedicated to on-line enrollment should also be lengthened such that on-line enrollment occurs entirely before Module 1 begins. In the case of the Brazil VLDP, most of the organizations enrolled on-line as they began participation in Module 1. Enrolling the organizations before the start of Module 1 allows the participants to become familiar with accessing the site and allows them to identify connectivity issues before starting the course. Third, the Brazil VLDP team is of the opinion that not having charged a fee for the course facilitated enrollment of several groups that were unsure of their commitment. Indeed, one other delivery of the VLDP for organizations in the Caribbean did not charge and also encountered a higher than anticipated number of organizations that dropped out. It is recommended that a registration fee be charged in the future to inhibit enrollment of “false starters”. For delivery of the VLDP in conjunction with the PN DST/Aids that does not permit charging fees, each team could contribute a fixed amount of money to a course fund that could be used in a competition that, for example, would be awarded to the team with the best Action Plan, with the idea that the funds will be used to offset the costs of implementation of the Action Plan.

The fact that many, if not most, participants were also volunteers rather than salaried staff may have also contributed to the higher than anticipated number of organizations dropping the VLDP once it had started.

3.3 PROGRAM CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

This section is based on feedback from 54 Brazil VLDP participants that completed the final program evaluation.

As can be seen in Table 2, the majority of participants who completed the final program evaluation rated the content of all modules as “very useful” in order to address their selected challenge.

TABLE 2. USEFULNESS OF BRAZIL VLDP PROGRAM CONTENT IN ADDRESSING CHALLENGE

Module	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very Useful	N
Module 1: Introduction			41%	59%	54
Module 2: Managers that Lead			24%	76%	54
Module 3: Facing Leadership Challenges			11%	89%	54
Module 4: Leadership Competencies			15%	85%	54
Module 5: Communication			24%	76%	54
Module 6: Change Management		2%	22%	76%	54
Module 7: Evaluation and Closing			35%	65%	54

Source: Brazil VLDP final course evaluation (Module 7).

Of the seven learning modules, participants most appreciated the content and methodology of **Modules 3 and 4: Facing Leadership Challenges and Leadership Competencies**.

As shown in Table 3, most participants felt that the time allotted for each module was reasonable. Module 3, 6 and 7 least met the participants' time expectations. In the case of Module 3, that lasted 3 weeks, more than one-fourth of the participants thought the time allotted to the module was excessive. It is interesting to note that in the first deliveries of the VLDP, Module 3 lasted two weeks and was lengthened due to participant feedback that the time allocated to the module had been insufficient. Participants also mentioned that Modules 6 and 7 required more time to complete than programmed.

TABLE 3. TIME ALLOTTED TO EACH BRAZIL VLDP MODULE (N=54)

	Excessive	Reasonable	Insufficient
Module 1: Introduction (1 week)	20%	72%	7%
Module 2: Managers that Lead (2 weeks)	19%	74%	7%
Module 3: Facing Leadership Challenges (3 weeks)	26%	55%	9%
Module 4: Leadership Competencies (2 weeks)	17%	72%	11%
Module 5: Communication (2 weeks)	9%	80%	11%
Module 6: Change Management (1½ weeks)	17%	59%	24%
Module 7: Evaluation and Closing (3 days)	17%	56%	28%

Source: Brazil VLDP final course evaluation (Module 7).

During the After Action Review, the length and order of the VLDP modules were discussed. The entire Brazil VLDP team felt that the time allocated to Modules 1 through 4 is adequate. However, the duration and timing of Modules 5-7 needs re-consideration. Since Module 6 is an important one in terms of continued work on the Action Plans, it should be increased from 1½ weeks to 2 weeks and Module 5 be reduced from 2 weeks to 1½ weeks. The suggestion was also made that the order of Modules 5 (Communication) and 6 (Change Management) be reversed. This would allow the teams more time to work on their Action Plans in Module 5, particularly so that they can revise them using the Kotter approach to introducing change. The change in order would also allow the VLDP end with the module on communication that could focus on the communication aspects of implementing the Action Plan.

Participants were also asked about the usefulness of the individual components of the VLDP. Their responses are summarized in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4. USEFULNESS OF BRAZIL VLDP COMPONENTS (N=54)

	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very Useful
Forum		2%	24%	74%
E-mail communication with Facilitators		2%	26%	72%
Self-assessment Tools		2%	28%	70%
Daily Announcements			31%	69%
Tools and Readings		2%	31%	67%
Editorials		2%	46%	52%
Café	4%	4%	46%	46%

Source: Brazil VLDP final course evaluation (Module 7).

More than 90% of all participants indicated that various VLDP components were “very useful” or “useful”. The most highly rated components were the **Forum, e-mail communication with the facilitators, self-assessment tools, daily announcements and tools and readings**. Communication with the facilitators was a theme that ran through many of the comments in the participant evaluation. As one participant noted in the final course evaluation, *“Throughout the VLDP the two facilitators were able to stimulate the participants to participate in the activities, enabling them to recognize their strong and weak points and transform them into positive forces.”*

The **Café** was the only program component that was rated (by two participants) as “not useful”. Nevertheless, the Café appears to have been a popular feature for many participants. The After Action Review team noted the tremendous enthusiasm for the **Café** demonstrated by most all of the Brazil VLDP teams. Two teams, Fundação Esperança and ACORDE, were particularly active in the Café. While the mean number of Café postings per participant in the 12-week program was 10.2, Fundação Esperança team posted 35 messages per participant and ACORDE posted 18. The challenge for the facilitators is to encourage balanced participation by all of the participating teams.

During the After Action Review, considerable discussion was devoted to the **Forum**. Posting results of group meetings in the Forum does not present a problem for the teams. Most teams post in the **Forum** since it is a requirement to receive the VLDP course certificate. The challenge of the **Forum** is getting the participants to post the results of their group meetings in time for them to be read and commented on before the close of the module. The quality of the posting also needs improvement. Rather than merely posting the results of the homework carried out in the group meeting, the intention of the **Forum** is to share with other teams more details about how and why the results were obtained. The Brazil VLDP team agreed that further work be done to improve the link between the homework in the group meeting and the contents of the posting in the **Forum**.

The participant evaluation conducted at the end of the course also identified the following comments and recommendations regarding content and methodology:

CONTENT

- Replicate the content of the site on the CD-ROM, in HTML and PDF, if possible
- Provide information on the organizations participating in the VLDP (history, main activities, staff, target population, photos, link to website)
- Provide more detailed instructions on using a computer, leadership functions, development of action plans, preparation of a fish diagram, communication
- Provide orientation on coordinating group work
- Incorporate information on revenue generation
- Improve the instructions for group and individual work, in terms of clarity, particularly on the CD-ROM
- Include the main texts cited in the bibliography on the CD-ROM

METHODOLOGY

- Incorporate face-to-face sessions
- Lengthen the duration of the course

3.3 FACILITATION

One of the most important elements of an online program is the quality and responsiveness of the facilitation. It is therefore important to analyze how the facilitation was carried out, how the facilitators performed, and facilitation needs for future VLDP programs.

TRAINING

The Brazil VLDP facilitators, Karen Johnson Lassner and Luiz Carlos Meregé were two experienced face-to-face facilitators with experience in management development. Prof. Meregé, in particular, teaches management at the university level. Neither had facilitated a distance-learning course, although one of the facilitators had been a participant in the first delivery of the VLDP.

Lourdes de la Peza, an experienced MSH staff member who had facilitated four previous deliveries of the VLDP, trained both facilitators for the Brazil VLDP. Training occurred “on the job” during Module 1.

ACTIVITIES

Facilitation of the VLDP was a time consuming job and required two individuals who could alternate the facilitation of the modules. The two facilitators worked together to facilitate Modules 1 and 7. Luiz Carlos Meregé facilitated Modules 2, 4 and 6 while Karen Johnson

Lassner facilitated Modules 3 and 5. During Module 1 (when the facilitators were in training), both facilitators worked together in Rio de Janeiro. For the remaining modules, Prof. Merege worked from his office in São Paulo while Karen worked from her office in Rio de Janeiro.

Facilitation activities included daily reading and responding to participant e-mail; writing and posting daily announcements; providing feedback on participation and homework, reading postings to the Café and summarizing them; and communicating with the team in Boston.

Cary Perry, of MSH/M&L provided support to the facilitators for analysis and feedback on the teams' action plans.

FACILITATOR PERFORMANCE

The facilitators communicated primarily with teams as a whole rather than with individuals, although at times they communicated with individual participants when it was needed. They used primarily e-mail communication to motivate and encourage the groups and provide suggestions on their action plans. They also provided feedback on team participation to all teams, which created a slightly competitive environment and proved to be a successful tool to motivate the teams.

Brazil VLDP participants were pleased with the usefulness of the facilitator intervention and their availability as seen in Table 5 below.

TABLE 5. USEFULNESS OF BRAZIL VLDP FACILITATION AND AVAILABILITY OF FACILITATORS (N=54)

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Usefulness of facilitator interventions			22%	78%
Facilitator availability			22%	78%

Source: Brazil VLDP final course evaluation (Module 7).

USEFULNESS OF BACK-END TOOL TO SUPPORT PROGRAM FACILITATION

Facilitation of the Brazil VLDP was enhanced by of a back-end management tool that allowed facilitators to carry out the following activities:

- Monitor individual and team progress
- Motivate participation rates by providing feedback on the activity level of each team
- View exercise results, including the Work Climate Assessments in Modules 1 and 7
- View final participant evaluation
- Post announcements on homepage (functional side)
- Modify forum questions, if necessary

- Capture and communicate the facilitation process using an e-journal
- Access participant profiles

The facilitators used all of the features of the back-end tool. The least of the features used was the e-journal. The sample web page below demonstrates one of the features of the tool: monitoring of team participation.

The screenshot shows the 'Programa Virtual' web interface. The top header includes the text 'PROGRAMA VIRTUAL DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DA LIDERANÇA' and navigation links: 'Página Principal | Café | Corpo Docente | Participantes | Ajuda'. A sidebar on the left contains a menu with 7 items: '1 Iniciando o curso', '2 Gestores que lideram', '3 Enfrentando desafios', '4 Competências de liderança', '5 Comunicação', '6 Gestão da mudança', and '7 Finalizando o curso'. The main content area is titled 'Admin' and includes sections for 'Course Setup', 'Announcements', 'Facilitators', 'Exercises', and 'Reports'. The 'Reports' section features a table titled 'Site Activity Week 5 (02-Aug-04 to 08-Aug-04)' with the following data:

Team	No. of Members	Page Visits	Average
Renascor - PA	6	355	59.17
ACORDE - AL	10	2483	248.30
Diaconia - PE	3	55	18.33
Fund. Esperança - PA	8	1928	241.00
GESTOS - PE	10	171	17.10
Paravidda - PA	10	304	30.40
AMAZONA - PB	6	140	23.33
REARD - AC	9	341	37.89
ISDS - CE	8	443	55.38
INIV - CE	7	68	9.71
GACC - CE	6	420	70.00

At the bottom of the page, there are logos for 'MSH MANAGEMENT SCIENCES for HEALTH' and 'Este programa foi produzido com o apoio da USAID Agência Norte-Americana para o Desenvolvimento Internacional'.

During the After Action Review, two themes emerged regarding facilitation of the Brazil VLDP: facilitator transition between modules and support for the facilitation process. With regard to facilitator transition between modules, both Brazil VLDP facilitators agreed that transition improved as the Brazil VLDP progressed. The transition between Module 2 and 3 was the most difficult due to the homework form not having been distributed during Module 2 and the need to distribute the form and follow up its return while also doing the same for Module 3. Prof. Meregé, who was responsible for Module 2, pointed out that he felt a strong need to for a facilitator manual and that the transition between Module 2 and 3 could have been smoother had had a manual to ensure that all tasks had been completed prior to “turning over” the module. The entire Brazil VLDP team stressed the need for a VLDP facilitator manual. Indeed the Brazil VLDP facilitation team is not the first to highlight the importance of a facilitator manual. One is under development and should be ready in the near future.

The Brazil VLDP team also re-iterated the suggestion made by other VLDP facilitators that greater support be made available to the facilitators. In spite of the back-end tool, far too much facilitator time is spent on course administration. Both Brazil VLDP facilitators regretted that they were not able to dedicate the time they would have desired to reviewing team homework, Action Plans, and participant contributions on the site, due to the large amount of time they had to devote to administrative chores. The After Action Review thus concluded that the quality of facilitator time should be greatly improved by: 1) improvements in the back-end tool that automate more course administrative functions and 2) assignment of an assistant facilitator to the course who can assist with administrative functions. Previous VLDP facilitators have also made similar suggestions and indeed improvements are already being made to the VLDP back-end tool. The most recent VLDP program has also enlisted the support of an assistant facilitator. Additionally, all homework templates should be made available to the facilitators so that facilitator time is not spent on developing the templates.

USER-FRIENDLINESS OF CITRIX AS A SOFTWARE TOOL TO ACCESS OUTLOOK AND WORD ON MSH NETWORK

To communicate with participants and MSH/Boston staff, and to store and retrieve documents produced by the teams during the VLDP, the facilitators accessed Outlook and Word on the MSH network. To do so, they were obliged to use Citrix software. Experience using Citrix was mixed. Often access was slow. In the middle of the course, accent marks became impossible to enter without having to change the language or insert them as symbols for every accent mark entered. IT was unable to find a solution, making the simple writing of an e-mail a time-consuming task. Printing on a local printer rarely worked. For future deliveries of the VLDP, the difficulties encountered using Citrix should be reviewed and suggestions made to the facilitators as to how to make most effective use of the software.

4. PARTICIPANT RESULTS

4.1 IDENTIFYING THE INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGE AND IMPLEMENTING ACTION PLANS

Throughout the VLDP, participants examine individual and group leadership practices and capacities, and using the performance improvement process, select an institutional challenge that they want to address in order to fully exercise new leadership knowledge and skills. The teams then develop action plans that are either a part of existing institutional plans or that tackle an important new challenge facing the organization. They receive feedback from facilitators to refine the plans and are expected to implement their action plans in the period following the end of the program.

All ten of the participating teams developed an action plan to address their institutional challenge. Nine of the ten teams submitted a second, revised version of the plan. The basic components of the completed action plans included: the selected challenge, a set of activities with a timeframe and assigned responsibilities, and indicators. The following table summarizes the ten completed action plans.

TABLE 6. SUMMARY OF ACTION PLANS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPATING BRAZIL VLDP TEAMS

CSO	Main Theme of the Challenge	Challenge	Indicators
1. ACORDE	Strategic planning	Develop a strategic plan for the organization	A strategic plan
2. AMAZONA	Institutional strengthening/development of a prostitute association	Strengthen APROS (an assoc. of prostitutes) and its leadership by December 2004.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organizational structure established ▪ Membership legally and financially defined ▪ No. of CSWs trained ▪ No. of CSW's active politically ▪ % participation of CSWs in meetings ▪ % increase in participation in conferences, networks and forums
3. Diaconia	Strengthening HIV/Aids prevention and care among FBOs	Raise awareness among Evangelical churches with regard to the importance of HIV/AIDS prevention and care for PLWA in their communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By March of 2005, 80% of churches associated with Diaconia will have included HIV/AIDS awareness in two of their working groups (youth, women) ▪ By March 2005 80% of the churches associated with Diaconia will send one representative from each local community to the workshops offered by Diaconia on HIV/AIDS
4. Fundação Esperança	Increasing HIV/AIDS testing	Increase testing for HIV/Aids by 50% in Santarém from Sept. to Dec. 2004.	% increase in number of tests carried out
5. GACC	Improved organizational structure	Implement a new organizational structure by January 2005.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Degree of implementation of norms and procedures in the new organizational structure ▪ Level of satisfaction of the team members with the new organizational structure
6. ISDS	Financial sustainability	Prepare and implement a financial sustainability plan for ISDS by December 2004.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of monthly fixed and variable costs covered by the institution's own services ▪ % of total costs covered by the institution's own services
7. NIV	Increased volunteer enrollment.	Increase the no. of project volunteers from 15 to 25 (75%) by January 2005.	▪ Increase from 15 to 25 the number of volunteers active in planning and in activities in January 2005
8. Paravidda	Strategic planning	Development and implementation of activities in a coordinated	Existence of a strategic plan that presents the objectives of the institution in a clear fashion,

		manner and based on a strategic plan.	that aligns the objectives with the mission and that demonstrates a logical link between activities and objectives
9. REARD	Increase HIV counseling testing among IDUs	Achieve a 25% testing rate for HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis among the membership of REARD (primarily CSWs and IDUs)	Number of persons associated with REARD who are tested for HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis from September to December 2004
10. Renascer	HIV/AIDS prevention in the work place	Introduce HIV/Aids prevention activities in three industries in Conceição do Araguaia by December 2004.	Did not define indicators by end of program

Four of the ten challenges addressed the HIV/AIDS epidemic directly, focusing on prevention, care and increased access to counseling and testing. Five challenges focused on strengthening of the CSO itself (strategic planning, financial sustainability, organizational structure, volunteer management) and one challenge was directed toward strengthening the capacity of a partner institution.

A quality action plan generally has the following characteristics: contributes to a strategic result of the organization, is measurable (at baseline and following the VLDP), is feasible (resources are available; within the domain of the team, etc.), is large enough to exercise leadership practices and competencies, inspires commitment, and is inclusive (all have a role to play). According to these criteria, the quality of the Brazil VLDP Action Plans was good. All ten of the organization needed assistance focusing the first draft of their plans and specifying their indicators. However, by the time the second version of the Action Plans was submitted all teams had focused their plans. Only one team did not present indicators. In general, the more established the organization the better the Action Plan.

In the final course evaluation, participants were asked if progress had been made during the VLDP to successfully address the challenge. As seen in Table 7, more than three-fourths of the participants had begun to implement the team Action Plan by the end of the VLDP and more than one-fourth had also already successfully completed the challenge.

TABLE 7. IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLETION OF BRAZIL VLDP TEAM ACTION PLANS AT COURSE COMPLETION (N=53)

Participants reporting that...	Yes	No
Implementation of Action Plan is underway	77%	24%
Action Plan challenge has been successfully addressed	28%	72

Source: Brazil VLDP final course evaluation (Module 7).

The participant final evaluation shed some light on the concerns of the participants regarding the Action Plans. Several participants noted the need for more detailed information for developing the Action Plans. The cause and effect diagram was one aspect of Action Plan development that the participants believed needs further explanation. In light of these comments, Module 3 (Facing Leadership Challenges) should be reviewed and possibly expanded

By the time the Brazil VLDP ended, one of the most successful Action Plans in terms of implementation progress was that of Fundação Esperança. Their challenge focused on increasing by 50% the number of persons tested for HIV in the remote municipality of Santarém on the Amazon River. By the end of the VLDP, an agreement had been reached with the municipal secretariat of health that clearly addressed this challenge. A campaign to promote HIV testing had been held at an annual festival. Fundação Esperança had begun to provide free HIV counseling and collection of blood samples at its headquarters. In turn, the blood samples were being sent to the municipal laboratory for testing.

At the writing of this report, two months had elapsed since the end of the Brazil VLDP. While follow up on the implementation status of the Action Plans is not part of this evaluation, the facilitators have heard from some of the organizations. One organization, REARD, has already surpassed its goal of assuring that 25% of its target population (IDUs and CSWs) is tested for HIV. They report that 45% has been tested so far.

One of the general concerns for all VLDPs conducted around the world is the follow-up that is provided for implementation of the Action Plans. Is follow-up a responsibility of the VLDP or some other provider? In the event that follow-up is neither available nor utilized, what are the expected measurable outcomes of the VLDP? For future VLDPs in Brazil, MSH/M&L recommends that careful consideration be given to providing follow-up support to participating organizations for implementation of their Action Plans. To do so, State DST/Aids Programs could program resources to provide grants to organizations participating in the VLDP.

Another initiative of MSH/M&L – Leadernet – provides virtual leadership support to all “graduates” of MSH/M&L leadership programs, Leadernet is piloting a methodology to support learning and results achievement after a leadership course (both virtual and face-to-face) finishes. Thus far, Leadernet is available in English and Spanish, although Brazilians from M&L’s Leadership Development Program in Ceará have participated in Portuguese. Given the size of Brazil, the number of Portuguese speakers, and the amount of MSH/M&L development work in Brazil and lusophone Africa, the availability of Leadernet in Portuguese will likely determine its success in supporting Portuguese-speaking leadership development “graduates”.

4.2 IMPROVING WORK CLIMATE

In Modules 1 and 7 all participants were asked to complete the Work Group Climate Assessment. Ideally, results from Module 7 should be compared with those of Module 1 to identify improvements in team perception of their working climate. However, with the exception of GACC, slightly different groups of participants responded to the WCA in Modules 1 and 7, and thus rigid comparisons of improvement in work climate cannot be made. That said, the following table shows how participants rated the integration and cohesion of their team according to six items or perceptions related to workgroup or team climate³. Assuming that the other teams experienced work climate improvements similar to those of GACC, the results indicate a significant increase in climate score between Module 1 and Module 7.

³ M&L defines Workgroup Climate as the prevailing workplace atmosphere, as experienced by the team members. The Workgroup Climate Assessment (WCA) used by M&L contains 12 items that are rated by respondents on a scale of 0-4. For the purposes of this evaluation, 6 of the 12 items from the tool were included in the final course evaluation. Respondents were asked to rate their perception of how the item had changed since the beginning of the course, using the following scale: worsened--stayed the same--improved a little--improve significantly. This approach was used because the WCA was not available for use at the beginning of the course and no baseline climate measure could be taken.

TABLE 8. EVOLUTION OF WORK CLIMATE DURING THE BRAZIL VLDP

Organization	Climate items													
	We recognize the contributions of each team member		We feel we have a common objective		We understand the individual capacities of the team members		We are clear about the expectations for our work		We participate in decisions affecting our team		We are proud to be members of the team		N	
	Mod. 1	Mod. 7	Mod. 1	Mod. 7	Mod. 1	Mod. 7	Mod. 1	Mod. 7	Mod. 1	Mod. 7	Mod. 1	Mod. 7	Mod. 1	Mod. 7
ACORDE	3.78	4.00	4.22	4.67	3.33	4.10	3.67	4.10	3.78	3.90	4.33	4.40	9	10
Amazona	3.50	4.00	4.25	4.50	3.25	3.50	3.50	3.50	4.00	4.50	4.00	4.50	4	2
Diaconia	4.00	5.00	4.67	5.00	3.33	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.33	4.00	4.67	5.00	3	1
Fund. Esper.	3.80	4.25	4.00	4.38	3.33	4.25	4.00	4.50	3.67	4.38	3.67	4.50	6	8
GACC	3.67	4.50	4.17	4.50	3.67	3.83	4.33	4.67	3.33	4.33	3.83	4.33	6	6
ISDS	4.00	4.50	4.17	4.50	4.00	3.88	3.33	3.5	4.17	4.00	4.33	4.63	6	8
NIV	3.75	4.86	4.00	4.86	4.00	4.43	3.75	4.43	3.75	4.71	4.25	4.71	4	7
Paravidda	3.17	3.67	4.00	4.00	2.83	3.67	4.17	4.00	4.17	4.67	3.33	3.67	6	3
REARD	3.20	3.13	3.70	4.13	3.00	3.38	4.00	4.13	2.90	3.50	3.70	4.00	10	8
Renascer⁴													1	1

Source: Brazil VLDP WCA in Modules 1 and 7.

⁴ Since only 1 person completed the WCA in Modules 1 and 7, the results are not reported.

Throughout the Brazil VLDP participants spontaneously communicated that the VLDP improved the way they worked together as a team. Participants described the improved teamwork as follows:

“It’s unbelievable how much our team has developed since the beginning of the course. Before we were so busy that we never stopped. Now, with the course, we stop, reflect, evaluate oneself, evaluate others, and we feel more at ease to say things...I’ve been thinking that this is a milestone for our organization...before and after the VLDP.”

“After this period of sharing and discovery, I have observed not only my own growth but also that of those who have shared this time with me. The VLDP gave us the opportunity to find out who we are and what we want, what our goals are and if we have the potential to reach them.... We can’t run from what we have learned...we will scan, focus, align/mobilize and, above all, inspire continuously. We will also overcome our challenge, as well as other challenges that arise in the future....

“I keep saying: we will never again be the same [as before the VLDP].”

Throughout the Brazil VLDP participants often expressed the personal benefits that derived from the program. From a personal point of view, participants described the value-added of the course as follows:

“I think that for everyone the VLDP has been a milestone. As a result of the VLDP today I am capable of listening to my friends and accepting their opinions...”

“For me the VLDP is the sign of a big change in my life because it has provided me with the opportunity to grow, transform myself, learn and overcome obstacles. The more I navigate on the VLDP site and share life’s experiences with other VLDP colleagues, the more I realize how much we have to learn. Thanks to the VLDP, we took the first step.”

“Without a doubt the VLDP has left a big impression on my life. Today I can say that I am adopting leadership behaviors that are different from before. I am stronger and more self-assured, which has resulted in more effective action...”

5 CONCLUSIONS

PARTICIPATION

The organizations that participated in the Brazil VLDP are small, have limited resources and faces intensive workloads. Many are staffed primarily by volunteers. Given the dedication and commitment that the VLDP requires over a 12-week period, participation in the Brazil VLDP was exceptional. Ten of the 14 enrolled organizations, representing 73 persons completed the course. For some of the participants, the VLDP was their first training experience (including face-to-face training) and others had never used a computer. Indeed, the VLDP made leadership training available to organizations that have limited access to training opportunities for large numbers of staff.

COURSE CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

VLDP participants overwhelmingly appreciated the course content and methodology, and its value in strengthening teamwork. The VLDP offered participants the time and space to reflect as individuals on leadership practices *and* work as a team on developing solutions to a common challenge facing the institution. By working on a common challenge throughout the program, teams gained much more than the ability to define and design an action plan to deal with institutional challenges; they gained new knowledge about themselves and fellow team members, and improved team spirit, collaboration and cohesion. Participants indicated in their informal exchanges in the Café the importance of the Brazil VLDP both personally and professionally:

“Each module [in the VLDP] represents a new stage of growth. This is the feeling I have had since the first module. And what is most interesting is that the course has reflected itself not only in my work with ACORDE, but also at my regular job and in my family relations. The VLDP was a gift for all of us.”

“The VLDP has enabled to me to review certain concepts, widen my knowledge of certain areas, add new experiences...in sum, to participate in refresher training without having to travel, allocate specific resources and leave behind my day-to-day responsibilities. For our organization, the VLDP has allowed us to strengthen and perfect our human resources, and we feel almost if we all of us [the participants] were together in the same place, as if we were participating in a big seminar. Thank you VLDP.”

The blended learning methodology is a key strategy of the VLDP that allows teams to work together in structured way on a real life problem, and at the same time, reinforce the learning content of the program. The team focus of the program also emphasizes a key M&L leadership program principle: producing change and improving performance through working in teams.

FACILITATION

An important take-home lesson from the Brazil VLDP is the importance of reducing facilitator time spent on administrative tasks. By automating some of the administrative functions and providing an assistant facilitator, facilitators can focus on providing feedback to the teams regarding their exercises, assessments and development of their action plans.

Unlike previous VLDPs facilitated by MSH staff or by consultants familiar with the VLDP, one of the Brazil VLDP facilitators was brand new to M&L's approach to leadership development and to the VLDP. A facilitator's manual would have been very useful and should be made available in future VLDPs.

ACTION PLANS

The Action Plans produced by the teams were of good quality. Four addressed challenges directly related to HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support. Six of the challenges addressed strengthening organizational capacity to respond to the AIDS epidemic. One of the concerns regarding the Action Plans involves implementation. As a 12-week course, the VLDP provides sufficient time to develop action plans but not enough time to implement them. Thus the ability of these teams to produce results depends to a large degree on the follow-up they receive while implementing their action plans and the availability of resources.

FOLLOW-UP

The design of the Brazil VLDP did not include follow up support for implementation of the Action Plans. Defining follow-up technical and financial support is an important consideration for future courses in Brazil and should be linked to state-level plans to support CSO activities via grants. MSH/M&L provides virtual leadership follow-up support to English and Spanish-speaking graduates of M&L leadership development (virtual and face-to-face) programs. While some Portuguese-speaking participants have participated, a Portuguese-language version of Leadernet would be useful for the many M&L leadership development graduates in Brazil and other lusophone countries

6 OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Specific suggestions for changes to the course content and delivery are found throughout this report, and particularly in section 3 on Course-related Findings. The following are general recommendations.

1. Continue to offer the VLDP course to interested CSO and public sector teams to support leadership development among HIV/AIDS organizations in Brazil.
2. Increase the proportion of organizations that complete the VLDP by lengthening the recruitment period to increase the applicant pool and create competition for admission and by lengthening the on-line enrollment period to identify early the organizations that have connectivity or computer access problems. Consider charging a team registration fee.

3. Invert the order of Modules 5 (Communication) and 6 (Change Management) and modify the duration of these modules, review the content of some of the modules, particularly Modules 3 (Facing Leadership Challenges) and 5 (Communication) and review all program instructions for clarity.
4. Reduce facilitator administrative time by adding administrative functions to the back-end tool and assigning an assistant or junior facilitator to assist with administrative tasks. Provide a facilitator manual.
5. Ensure adequate post-course follow-up to VLDP teams to support the implementation of their action plans and accomplishment of their desired results.

In conclusion, the Brazil VLDP demonstrated that small CSOs struggling to confront the AIDS epidemic in difficult circumstances in Brazil's poor north and northeast regions have the capacity and commitment to participate in a virtual leadership development program. The Brazil VLDP has helped these organizations to improve how their teams function and to face institutional challenges. As a virtual program, it is also an effective mechanism for scaling up leadership development to reach managers of many organizations, public and non-profit, across many states in a short period of time.

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