

MSH in BRAZIL

IMPACT: Improving HIV/AIDS Services in the Public Sector

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Over half a million adults are living with HIV in Brazil. In the Western Hemisphere, Brazil is second only to the United States in number of AIDS cases reported and accounts for over half of the cases in Latin America. Since it was first diagnosed in 1980, the epidemic has followed a distinct pattern; today it affects more young, low income, heterosexual and females than ever before. By partnering with local and international NGOs, providing significant resources for prevention and care, and protecting the rights of HIV+ individuals, Brazil's government has taken decisive steps to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic. From 1999-2002 the Brazilian Ministry of Health has committed US\$ 300 million (US\$ 165 million in World Bank loan funds and US\$ 135 million in government counterpart funds) to reduce the incidence of HIV. However, for these resources to be truly effective the Ministry of Health National AIDS Program recognizes that numerous management problems facing state and municipal secretariats of health need to be resolved.

MSH is subcontracting to Family Health International (FHI) on the IMPACT Project, to work with 10 key state and municipal secretariats of health to strengthen the management capacity of STD/AIDS prevention programs. MSH adapted its "MOST-Management and Organizational Sustainability Tool" for use in Brazilian public sector HIV/AIDS programs. The new instrument, called APROGE in Portuguese, provides a framework for a program (or organization) to conduct its own management assessment and develop a concrete action plan to make program-wide improvements. Specifically, APROGE allows an HIV/AIDS/STD program to:

- Assess its current status in relation to its management capabilities and practices;
- Identify changes that can be made to manage the program more effectively;
- Make specific plans to implement these changes; and
- Monitor the resulting improvements.

The "APROGE" methodology, endorsed by the MOH/NACP, allows a representative group of a program; managers, program coordinators, and service providers, to express their ideas on the management development strategies of the program. These individual assessments are compared, and then consolidated collectively to create a general and agreed upon management development plan for the program.

The method and its instruments identify and establish a consensus of management areas that require improvement, and allow for the preparation of an "action plan" to specifically address the desired changes. The process continues after the initial assessment/planning workshop to include periodic reassessments and adjustments of the action plan to reflect situational changes over and hence, is sustainable.

MSH's tailored assistance and training is helping the municipal and state secretariats of health make sustainable improvements that will strengthen not only HIV/AIDS efforts, but also comprehensive health services.