

AIDS – from Policy to Practice

Challenges

Behavioral changes are difficult to bring about, especially in private matters. Family planning and AIDS is, therefore, a very delicate issue that requires a great deal of sensitivity. At the same time, AIDS remains high on the agenda of countries and development agencies alike. Despite a slight reduction



in new infections in many parts of the world, the number of people living with HIV/AIDS, estimated at 33,3 million in 2010, continues to rise. Gender inequality, stigma and the failure to protect human rights are the drivers of the epidemic. It is common knowledge today that technical approaches can only be successful if social issues are addressed as well. As considerable evidence has accumulated regarding AIDS control, interventions are becoming more focused and should satisfy standards established by international best practice.

GFA Approach

Since its beginnings in 1997, GFA Medica, the company's health department, has advised a variety of clients on the implementation of AIDS studies and projects. We have worked in 39 countries, ten of which were based on multi-year contracts. This long-standing experience has provided us with the competence to take on complex tasks. Also, it has allowed GFA Consulting Group to develop a strong network of skilled experts who can provide the type of professional standards and best practices our international clients would expect.

GFA Services

GFA Consulting Group services cover both HIV/AIDS prevention and comprehensive care. Our expert teams have particular experience with the social marketing of condoms and with implementing communication programs for HIV prevention. Here, increasing the knowledge, and changing attitudes and practices of key stakeholders are crucial factors. Such programs often comprise workplace interventions, harm reduction for drug users as well as prevention programs for adolescents in general and specific groups such as itinerant construction workers. Moreover, GFA consultants have assisted treatment centers providing anti-retroviral treatment and the diagnosis and treatment of opportunistic infections. Our experienced experts have created facilities for voluntary testing and counseling, and centers for home-based care. For public health laboratories, GFA consultants have assisted purchasing large volumes of medical equipment for anti-retroviral therapy by international competitive bidding.

GFA AIDS Policy

GFA has established an AIDS policy for its personnel in Germany and abroad which is part of the company's quality management and its manual on project coordination. The policy has two main objectives. GFA personnel is informed about risks and preventive measures and understands the impact of the epidemic. Also, our working environment is free from stigma and discrimination. Our consultants and team leaders abroad have been instructed about our policy.



GFA at Work

Social Marketing of Condoms, Niger KfW, 2003–2012

Improving access to affordable condoms is considered one of the most effective HIV prevention measures. In Niger, we set up a social marketing organization, ANIMAS SUTURA,



which runs the successful country-wide distribution of condoms accompanied by communication campaigns and media productions. The HIV Peer Review Group evaluated the project a success for its attractive product design, affordable pricing and effective distribution system.

Contract Value: €3,586,000

Treatment and Care, Guinea GIZ, 2005–2007

In Guinea, GFA has contributed to improve access to anti-retroviral treatment – one of the biggest challenges of our time. We have assisted with the management of a comprehensive treatment and care program in three regions. The strategy included anti-retroviral treatment centers, the management of drug supply and a computerized patient management system. We set up voluntary testing and counseling facilities and initiated self-help groups of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Contract Value: €514,000

HIV Prevention, Moldova GIZ, 2009–2010

AIDS prevention among young people is a particular responsibility of many societies as this social group determines the future of health systems concerned. In Moldova, we assisted the Ministry of Education to develop curricula as well as a teacher guidebook and a book for students on HIV/AIDS prevention in vocational training centers. Also, GFA experts trained teachers in the use of that material. At the same time, we helped engage schools in a constructive dialogue with parents and the church on sensitive issues related to HIV/AIDS.

Contract Value: €490,000

AIDS Control Equipment, Vietnam KfW, 2005–2010

The project aimed at supporting HIV/AIDS prevention in Vietnam by facilitating appropriate working conditions as a prerequisite for the effective treatment of AIDS patients. In Vietnam, GFA Consulting Group assisted the Ministry of Health with the supply of 110 million condoms for country-wide social marketing, and equipping AIDS treatment centers in 20 provinces with modern laboratory and diagnostic equipment. The production of patient information, education and communication material was expected to bring about attitude and behavior change among major risk groups and the general public.

Contract Value: €360,000



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