



Findings reports on ongoing operational, economic and sector work carried out by the World Bank and its member governments in the Africa Region. It is published periodically by the Knowledge, Information & Technology Center on behalf of the Africa Region .

The Sexually Transmitted Infections Prevention and Care Project, Zimbabwe

Increasing the Availability of Pharmaceuticals for Sexually Transmitted Infections - and Proving It: Project planning, implementation and evaluation processes that are collaborative in nature and quick in pay off

Objectives : To quickly and effectively, estimate the medications needed to treat sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and AIDS-related infections over a five year period, procure the drugs on international tender and survey drug availability among facilities before and after the procured medications arrive in country and are distributed.

Impact on the ground : The Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) Prevention and Care Project in Zimbabwe has decreased costs for pharmaceuticals by 60 percent and increased the availability of STI drug in health facilities from 68 percent to 89 percent within the first two years of the project.

Lessons Learned :

- **Collaboration is key.** Project personnel benefited immensely, from the experience of others. For procurement needs, the project adapted for use in Zimbabwe, a methodology to estimate future cases of STDs that originated from WHO/Geneva and another methodology to estimate future cases of AIDS-related infections first tried in a World Bank/WHO sponsored study in Tanzania. For monitoring progress, the project used a methodology to assess drug availability from the Zimbabwe Essential Drug Program.
- **Strengthen capacity to procure internationally.** Personnel in the Zimbabwe Government Medical Stores required significant support to prepare the tenders correctly and process them expeditiously. Technical assistance from DANIDA was a big help in providing this support.
- **Identify your indicators early on.** Once project personnel had found consensus on what indicators would correctly show impact, the methodology to measure the indicators became clearer and baseline data were collected before the project-procured

drugs arrived.

Decreased Costs and increased availability is only the beginning. The project is now facing several challenges. Which STI drugs are the most appropriate is an ongoing question since studies show inconsistent patterns of drug sensitivity. Persons with STI's need more than drugs, they need medical personnel who are skilled in STI diagnosis, can motivate patients to adopt preventive measures and are good listeners.

(To order copies of the publication, please telephone (703) 6611580 or fax (703) 6611501. For related information, please write, telephone or e-mail P.C.Mohan, Rm. J5-171, 1818 H Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20433; tel. no. (202) 4734114; pmohan@worldbank.org)