

SUCCESS STORY – SIDHAS

Strengthening Integrated Delivery of HIV/AIDS Service (SIDHAS)

FY12

EMBEDDING STAFF IN STATE GOVERNMENT OFFICES ENHANCES EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY OF GOVERNMENT HEALTH PERSONNEL



The Joint-State Implementation Team (SIT) strategy adopted on the SIDHAS project in Nigeria creates opportunities for the optimization of project resources. The idea of the joint-

SIT implies the co-location SIDHAS project staff with their state government counterparts in government owned offices. This approach not only provides opportunities for the easy transfer of skills, knowledge and capacities to state government staff but also contributes to saving costs for instance on office space and human resources thereby enabling the project to invest more resources in critical service delivery areas such as providing more drugs, consumables and commodities for HIV/AIDS patients that are supported on the SIDHAS project.

In Adamawa State where the co-location strategy is operational, there are already signs of cost-efficiency and enhanced collaboration. The project uses little effort and resources in engaging the stakeholders, particularly the State Ministry of Health, which plays host to the FHI 360 SIDHAS team. This is because the Ministry is always kept abreast of project plans and activities. More so, as key staff of the State Ministry of Health are part of the Joint-SIT, information on the

project are easily accessed and shared on routine basis with key health policy makers and implementers of the State.

Other positive changes that have emerged from embedding SIDHAS staff in the state offices include a more conducive work environment and increased productivity for State Ministry of Health personnel. Speaking on this subject, the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Yinasimna Anjilli professed that the sustained supply of electricity by SIDHAS to the entire Ministry of Health has resulted in ministry staff working longer hours than before hence improving efficiency and productivity of staff across all health service areas. “My staff spend longer hours at work and also are able to utilize SIDHAS services such as machines for photocopying, scanning, internet and printing purposes”. Before the co-location, the work environment was uncomfortable because of the lack of electricity to power the air conditioners. Also operational services for photocopying, printing and scanning could only be accessed at commercial centers at a cost, which many times was not affordable in terms of delayed release of funds from government.

“The work culture has also changed at the Ministry” says, Mrs. Milkah, a cleaner assigned by the Ministry to clean up SIDHAS assigned offices. According to her, she now resumes early to clean the offices because she is assured of finding running water and electricity provided by SIDHAS. Also the early resumption habit



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of SIDHAS staff motivates her to also report early at her duty post. Building the capacity of the state government staff has also been appreciated as a key benefit of colocation. Supportive supervision and mentorship by the Government SIT whose skills have been built through colocation continue in the State. Facility staff feel motivated when they see their supervisors (members of the SIT) providing mentorship and support to them in the work place.

In addition, as a result of regular updates and meetings afforded by proximity of the two partners, the Government of Adamawa State is showing greater commitment to HIV/AIDS issues. Recently, RTKs were provided to health facilities for service delivery to clients. Plans are also underway by the Hospital Management Board to procure more RTKs for testing and counseling services in supported facilities. The Government has procured chemistry analyzer for all SIDHAS supported facilities due to consistent advocacy by the Joint SIT team in the State. These benefits are not limited to Adamawa State but are being reported in all the 12 states where SIDHAS has embedded staff in the state government offices as opposed to setting up separate project offices, characteristic of many donor projects.