



The Damien Foundation in Brazil

Supporting the National Tuberculosis Control Programme

The Damien Foundation's support of the above-mentioned programme comprises the federal district of the capital Brasilia, the state of Goiás and the city of Salvador de Bahía.

Even though the Brazilian programme uses the international Directly Observed Treatment Standard as its basis, treatments do vary. The programme is too centralised to ensure a safe, direct supervision of patients taking medicines. Diagnoses are mostly carried out in medical centres with laboratories to examine patients' sputum, and in hospitals. Patients go to these medical centres or hospitals to follow treatment there, usually once a fortnight or once a month.

The federal district of Brasilia essentially provides financial support in monitoring and training. In Goiás, an experienced paramedic assists the state in monitoring patients from designated districts. We have an office in Brasilia. The doctor who works with us is based in Salvador de Bahía. This doctor monitors and trains health workers in that city's designated districts. He commutes to Goiás and to the federal district of Brasilia in order to give technical support to our local team workers there.

Supporting the leprosy control programme

Other member organisations of the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations have taken up the anti-leprosy fight in other regions. Our support is therefore limited to the federal district. The district itself has not been too badly hit. However, many immigrant patients come to it from other Brazilian states looking for a job. We provide financial support in monitoring and training, dermatological consultation as well as in producing and setting up teaching and awareness-raising material. We also provide our poorer patients with public transport tickets.

Faced by the challenge of insufficient decentralization

Brazil has set up a network of teams which provide entire families with medical care. Each team consists of a doctor, a nurse and some health motivating personnel and caters for 5,000 people. Each health motivator works with about one hundred families. Although the network does not cover all of Brazil, it means we can finally apply DOTS in many more cases than we could before. The teams have not yet become wholly familiarised with the concept of detection and treatment of tuberculosis and leprosy yet. However, the Damien Foundation hopes to bring about a change through a national programme to train and support these teams. Frequent personnel shifts do not exactly help matters.

As yet, not all medical centres deal with the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis and leprosy patients. The Damien Foundation uses various means to support ongoing decentralization by providing laboratory equipment, and most importantly by training and supervision.

Summary

Start of the project	2000
Local partners	National Leprosy Control Programme National Tuberculosis Control Programme
Project type	Leprosy and tuberculosis
Population covered in 2006	10,829,532
Patients detected and treated in 2006	3,315 tuberculosis patients 254 leprosy patients
Expenditure in 2006	€ 153,640