

Decentralization, regional spaces, and the national response against HIV/AIDS in Peru. Partial findings from the Global HIV/AIDS Initiatives Network's Peru-based Study

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BACKGROUND

- Peru has a tradition of centralized government, but now a regionalization process with certain political and economic independence has been established.
- Establishing a Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) is one of the most important requirements for a country to submit proposals to the Global Fund.
- The CCM has to be consolidated as an entity with a solid representation of organizations involved in the response to HIV/AIDS from different regions of the country.
- We aim to analyze the interaction between national and regional responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

METHODS

- As part of the Study: Lessons Learned from the Implementation of the Global Fund projects in Peru
- In-depth interviews with 30 key informants including current and past Peruvian CCM (CONAMUSA), officials in the public sector and from cooperation agencies, PLWHA organizations, NGOs, churches, academia, Principal Recipient (PR) and sub-recipients.

RESULTS

- When CONAMUSA was constituted, regional participation was not foreseen, because most of the epidemic was concentrated in Lima. This subsequently led to a centralist vision of the epidemic and the regions were left outside the National Response.
- A decentralization process occurred alongside in Peru, and the regions moved to start dealing with other problems such as poverty and working on their economic development.
- After these events the Global Fund projects set up the goal to implement a more decentralized national response, taking into consideration the country's regions beyond the capital.

"After about three years has recently agreed on the importance and the need to develop regional processes"

- In light of this, the COREMUSAS (Multisectorial HIV/AIDS Regional Committees) were created with the intent of decentralizing decision-making and above all to take action according to the HIV/AIDS context in each region. However, according to our interviewees, no formula was elaborated to reconcile the regional interests with the interests of the National Response as a whole.

"There should be legislation on this. It should be the emphasis of the CONAMUSA in the next draft, a real decentralization in the HIV response"

- The creation of COREMUSAS has a legal vacuum and is not possible to establish channels of responsibility and relationship between its national entity (CONAMUSA) and its regional entities (COREMUSAS)
- Interviewees expressed that there could be two alternatives to work at regional level: 1) either create more COREMUSAS or 2) insert HIV/AIDS work into other existing multisectoral bodies. This dilemma arises because since the COREMUSAS have been created by the GF project they could depend on the project agenda rather than the work of the regional organizations. It is a matter that must be analyzed carefully.

CONCLUSIONS

- Decentralized decision-making on HIV/AIDS at the regional level is a challenge for the Peruvian national response.
- Centralist rationality in confronting the Peruvian HIV/AIDS epidemic favors obstacles between the aims and interests of the regions and the national response against HIV/AIDS.
- Regions remain unrepresented in CONAMUSA.



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