

Current initiatives

Farmacéuticos Mundi

Since 1995, Farmacéuticos Mundi has been working in Nicaragua with local counterparts and institutions, such as the Pharmacy Faculty and the Ministry of Health. The main aim is to ease access to medication and promote its rational use, both amongst health professionals and amongst the population in general.

The main strategy to reach the beneficiaries of the projects has been the implementation of community chemists. Farmacéuticos Mundi has also created community chemists in El Salvador and Guatemala, where Mayan medicine is being revived and drugs derived from medicinal plants are produced.

In addition, the Pharmaceutical Purchase Centre in Farmamundi negotiates with Spanish and international laboratories for the purchase of basic medicines at cost price for humanitarian aid. It also supplies medicines to other humanitarian organisations to be sent to their respective projects.

Awareness raising campaign: “Drugs that do not cure”

In 2003, Farmacéuticos Mundi and Medicus Mundi Catalunya started the campaign “Drugs that do not cure” to raise the awareness of the population about the problems to access medicines and about inadequate drug donations. The campaign was launched to the rest of Spain after 2004.

Both development NGOs maintain that donations, which are often inadequate, cannot be a viable and sustainable solution to the lack of access. They also urge to review our consumer habits in order to rationalise the use of drugs.

The campaign has been addressed to health staff, cooperation personnel and also to young people by means of schools and various free time activities.

Health Action International (HAI)

It is an international network that strives to increase access to medicines and to promote their rational use.

In Nicaragua, HAI promotes the use of essential medicines by holding work sessions with those people in charge of medical supplies in health centres, as well as publishing information materials to increase the rational use of medicines.

HAI-Nicaragua forms part of the Inter-institutional Coordination of Essential Medicines (COIME), which brings together local organisations, as well as foreign NGOs that advocate access to medicines.

The Ministry of Health in Brazil launches a programme of Community Chemists

The initiative “Community Chemist” is a programme developed by the Ministry of Health in Brazil to improve access to essential medicines. These medicines are purchased from public or private laboratories and are available in Community Chemists at affordable prices.

There are already 78 Chemists and the Ministry of Health expects to have approximately 500 by 2006.

The WHO supports national medication policies

The WHO supports the efforts made by different countries or between countries or regions to develop, implement and monitor the effectiveness of national medication policies. It also collaborates in strategies and plans to ensure the availability, affordability and rational use of essential traditional medicines such as those of alternative medicines so that they can be safe, effective and of good quality.

Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDI)

In 2003 the DNDI was created as a joint effort on the part of development NGOs, ministries of health, international organisations and research institutes. It develops medicines for neglected diseases such as sleeping sickness, Chagas disease or leishmaniasis, with the aim to provide suitable and accessible medication for the most impoverished population.

Other initiatives

As we have seen in the previous goals, there are partnerships between the governments of developing countries and the pharmaceutical industry which, directly or indirectly, contribute to reach the Eighth Millennium Development Goal.