

UNICEF delivers first shipment of generic antiretrovirals to Brazil



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Fabio Santos (centre) of Brazil's National Network of People Living with HIV receives the first shipment of the antiretroviral medication Efavirenz; beside him is UNICEF Representative in Brazil Marie-Pierre Poirier.

BRASILIA, Brazil, 5 July 2007 – UNICEF has delivered 113,800 doses of Efavirenz, a generic antiretroviral (ARV) medication, to the Brazilian Ministry of Health. The ARVs will benefit 75,000 people living with HIV in the country, including children and adolescents.

Produced by the Indian laboratory Aurobindo and approved by the World Health Organization, the medication was purchased by the Brazilian Government through UNICEF and will be available for free distribution via the country's public health network in August.

The first shipment comprises 112,600 adult doses (3.378 million pills) and 1,200 paediatric doses (108,000 pills). By January 2008, another four shipments of Efavirenz will be delivered to Brazil, totalling 13.5 million pills.

ARVs for all who need them

The delivery followed President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's announcement of the compulsory licensing of Efavirenz in May. The purchases will be enough to respond to the Brazilian demand for Efavirenz this year – represent savings of more than \$30 million from the public budget in 2007 alone.

"UNICEF's support is fundamental because the Brazilian Government will be able to guarantee treatment to every person who needs Efavirenz,"

Support for prevention and treatment

An estimated 600,000 people, more than a third of them women, are living with HIV in Brazil. Over the past few years, there has been a significant drop in the number of cases of mother-to-child HIV transmission (through pregnancy, delivery or breastfeeding). But the number of cases among women, and especially afro-descendant adolescent girls, is growing faster than in other population groups.

As part of the global *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* campaign, UNICEF Brazil supports the National STD/AIDS Programme in its HIV/AIDS prevention efforts and its purchase of medications for treatment of people living with HIV, amongst other activities.