

COMMUNITY BAKERY: AN INCOME GENERATION PROJECT FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

Maria Eugenia L. Fernandes¹; Silas Barbosa¹; Tatiana Dowbor¹; Isabel Cristina Crepaldi²; Paulo Cesar Crepaldi²

¹Associação Saúde da Família

²ALIVI – Associação Aliança pela Vida

Introduction and Objective

We report the experience of implementation of a Community Bakery, a self-sustainable project for people living with HIV/AIDS. ALIVI provides shelter for mothers and children living with HIV/AIDS due to socioeconomic reasons such as prejudice and social exclusion. These people need professional counseling and requalification to be able to seek their own sustainability. Moreover, life expectancy of people living with AIDS assisted by ALIVI has considerably changed in the last few years, requiring institutions to seek for self sustainable projects and additional income sources. This project was created with the purpose of opening up opportunities for these persons to be trained and become able to perform a specific work activity, which will enable them to support themselves and their children.



Before refurbishment



New Bakery after renovations



During refurbishment



Method

The implementation of Bakery involved refurbishment and adaptation of a house owned by ALIVI, acquisition of equipment, training of professionals and distribution of products to local markets and groceries. Income generation projects such as hydroponics also contributed for the implementation of the bakery. In March 2001, ALIVI was granted a "Handmade Bakery Kit" by the Solidarity Social Fund of São Paulo, which represented the kick-off for this new project. An agreement was established with SENAI through which two employees of the organization were trained as bakers/pastrycooks to serve as multipliers and instructors for the project. Financial and technical support from the Elton John Aids Foundation and Associação Saúde da Família allowed ALIVI to buy better equipment for the project.



Conclusion

This project was strategic for the organization providing self-sustainability and income generation. For the residents of ALIVI, it meant a real opportunity for professional requalification, income generation and improvement of self-esteem. Barriers of prejudice were broken, since serum-positive people are working in food production, which was unthinkable some time ago. High quality products are being produced and sold with great acceptance, generating income for ALIVI's residents.

Results

The pastry produced at the bakery are partly distributed to ALIVI's units and partly sold in small local markets. With the revenue, ALIVI is covering the costs of necessary materials to continue the bakery's operation and democratically distributing part of the profits to those women participating in the project.