

PI Approach Raises Reproductive Health to a New Level



Another success story for the Performance Improvement (PI) approach! The PRIME Project proves that PI works as effectively at the organizational level as it does at the provider level. The Executive Council of the Dominican Social Security Institute (IDSS) has just officially announced a substantial redesign of its organizational structure. This new alignment particularly affects the Reproductive Health (RH) Program, which increases in status within the Institute from a **Special Project** at the same level as the malaria and dengue program to the **Division of Reproductive Health** responding directly to the Health Directorate. The RH Division now includes in its portfolio the sections on maternal and child health, STI/AIDS prevention and care, prevention of cancers of the reproductive organs, and nutrition.

This accomplishment represents a direct outcome of PRIME's successful PI work with IDSS, in which PRIME assisted the organization in identifying and resolving its performance problems related to the field of reproductive health. The performance needs assessment PRIME conducted revealed a significant disconnect between the widespread need for improved reproductive health services among the IDSS' target population and its relatively low priority in the organization. The RH coordinators, with PRIME assistance, developed a series of awareness-raising interventions for senior-level managers to demonstrate the importance of an integrated RH approach, along with the target population's real need for these RH services. This unmet need is especially poignant given the shift over the last decade within the population served by IDSS from an agrarian base with almost an exclusive male population to an industrial workforce with a majority of female members. IDSS had never adapted its clinical and

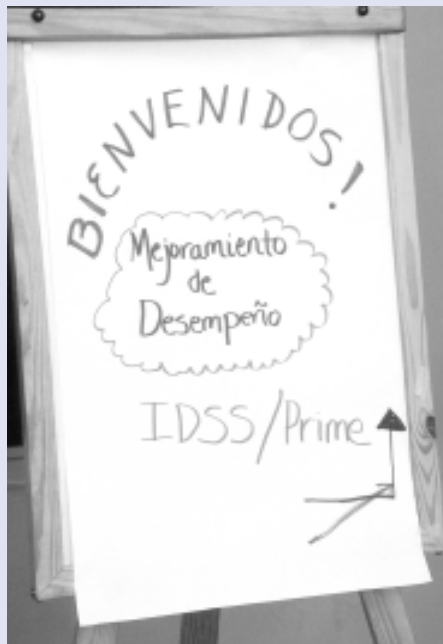
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preventive services to match this dramatic shift until the PI process clarified the situation.

With the increased RH awareness and strong leadership support, IDSS is committed to becoming an organization responsive to client needs and rights. The organizational shift places Reproductive Health at the forefront of the institution where it can provide the greatest impact for the Dominican working population. The Reproductive Health Division will receive high institutional support, increased funding, and additional human resources to allow increased control of the quality and access of the RH services it offers. PRIME II continues to provide technical assistance and is currently designing the second phase of PI interventions with IDSS, set to be implemented in the last quarter of 2000.



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