

# APLA: LATIN AMERICA

In 2007, UNAIDS estimated 58,000 people died of AIDS in Latin America, and 1.6 million people there were living with HIV. It is often argued that HIV and AIDS are most prevalent among heterosexuals in the region, while same-sex transmission is frequently ignored. With time and the sophistication of data collection, it is now clear that in most Latin American countries, men who have sex with men (MSM) are the most impacted. Homophobia and stigma continue to influence the ability of MSM to access prevention and treatment and influence policy.

Promoting human rights in the context of HIV continues to be a significant public health challenge. Currently, our program conducts work in regional Central America and has partners in Colombia, Mexico and Peru. In addition, program leadership and staff participate in consultancies and in bilateral advisory committees. Collaborations will expand over time, and funding is garnered for mutual projects. Our formative work of nearly three years has led to strengthened relationships, both locally and internationally.

## PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

**Training Initiatives.** Addressing homophobia, HIV, stigma and xenophobia by providing capacity building in core areas including multi-media and cultural competency.

**Research.** Implementing diverse research methods to enhance contextual understanding of MSM in collaboration with international partners.

**Technical Assistance.** Offering assistance in grant writing, abstracts, white papers and regional reports in English and Spanish.

**Database/Libraries.** Compiling reports, articles and intervention-related material for Web access.

**Advisory Committees/Consultations.** Partaking in local, international and bilateral planning bodies, conducting prevention and advocacy work and formulating research and policy agendas.

**Regional Policy Briefs (TBD).** Supporting regional partners to enhance advocacy and grassroots strategies on public policy and funding.

## POPULATION SPECIFIC

APLA International responds to scientifically identified trends, targeting the populations most affected by HIV. Recognizing the need to be where HIV prevalence is most severe, APLA continues to focus on migrants and MSM in Latin America. With many people moving between Los Angeles and parts of Latin America, migration carries with it high HIV risks associated with violence, poverty, sex work and loneliness.

Conversely, MSM are frequently exposed to homophobic attacks and strong social pressure to hide significant parts of their lives. With particular attention to the complex factors underpinning the causes and effects of migration and homophobia, APLA International aims to reduce HIV risk among the hardest hit communities in Latin America.

In collaboration with country partners, APLA International commits itself to creating these cultural bridges while acknowledging their direct relationship to prevention, research, training and advocacy.

## CONTACTS:

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