



HEALTH AND DEMOCRACY IN BRAZIL: CIVIL SOCIETY'S FIGHT AGAINST DRUG MONOPOLIES



Brazil has the biggest public health system in the world, the SUS, which is the result of social mobilization and an expression of solidarity and equity. To make the constitutional right to health a reality and secure SUS' sustainability, civil society fought for free distribution of essential medicines to all. Many lives now rely on these public health policies. However, dramatic increases on the price of medicines constantly put everything at risk.

As a group of treatment activists, networks of people affected by HIV/Aids and human rights defenders, GTPI (Working Group on Intellectual Property of the Brazilian Network for the Integration of Peoples) has witnessed how pharmaceutical patents can draw the line between life and death for millions of people. Therefore, robust practices of citizenship and democracy are crucial to reverse this process of extreme exclusion.

Over the last 3 years, ABIA (Brazilian Interdisciplinary Aids Association), which is the secretariat of GTPI, has intensified its efforts to challenge underserved patents and reduce prices of key drugs using a variety of tactics. ABIA/GTPI has also strengthened collaboration with partners in Ukraine, Thailand and Argentina under the Make Medicines Affordable campaign, coordinated by ITPC-Global and funded by UNITAID.

Here we present a summary of our objectives and actions taken over these last 3 years:

Objective 1: Patent laws to protect people, not profits

Our actions: Shaping the patent law reform debate with: (a) public interest oriented interventions; (b) expanded participation of affected communities; (c) and amendment proposals that expand public health protective measures.



Objective 2: Fight back monopolies on essential drugs

Our actions: Preventing harmful measures to be adopted through both national legislation and the free trade agreement (FTA) between Mercosur and European Union and shaping the public debate to highlight the risks of unchecked monopoly powers.



Objective 3: Fighting for public health-oriented patent examination

Our actions: Political pressure to preserve Brazil's unique public health approach towards patent examination (Anvisa's prior consent), Judicial interventions to block Big pharma's attacks on Brazil's regulations, social mobilization campaigns and intensive use of UN system to denounce setbacks in Brazil.



Objective 4: Put essential HIV/Aids drugs in public domain through direct challenges to undeserved patents

Our Actions: 5 patent oppositions for key HIV/Aids drugs, public campaigns calling for the rejection of patents, multi stakeholder dialogues, technical meetings and studies to inform decision-makers.

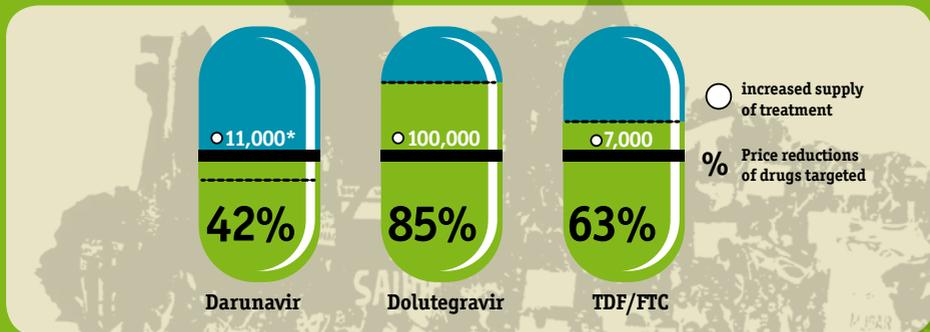


Objective 5: Promote citizenship and democracy over treatment policies and re-build an enabling environment for compulsory licenses

Our actions: Mass education about treatment options, pressure for review of national outdated protocols, Compulsory License campaign for the novel drug Dolutegravir (HIV/Aids), strong community based demand on incorporation tied to price reductions for Dolutegravir.



Price reductions of drugs targeted by ABIA/GTPI's interventions:



Total Cost savings (estimate)

U\$ 350 million

From 2015 until 2017 ABIA/GTPI accomplished a lot. Here are some of our activities in numbers:



Realização

Apoio



www.deolhonaspateentes.org