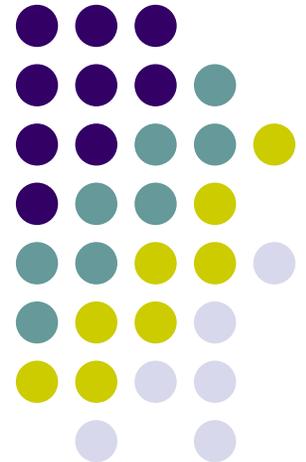


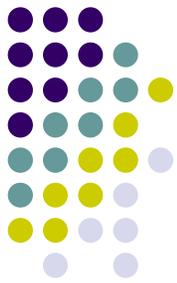
HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean

Lisa K. Fitzpatrick, MD, MPH
Medical Epidemiologist
Global AIDS Program, CDC
October 2007



Overview

- **Regional context**
- **HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean**
- **Challenges**
- **Opportunities**



The Caribbean Region

- CAREC Member Countries
- ☀ PEPFAR Bilateral programs
- ⚙ Regional Offices



Context





Regional Characteristics

- **Striking diversity**
 - **Ethnic and cultural potpourri**
 - **Economic disparities**
 - **Most countries with areas of extreme poverty**
 - **Political callaloo**
 - **Absence of regional consensus**
 - **“Countries are sovereign”**
 - **Economies of scale vs. autonomy**
- **Limited human resources and expertise**
 - **Implementation challenges**
- **Ease with slower pace**

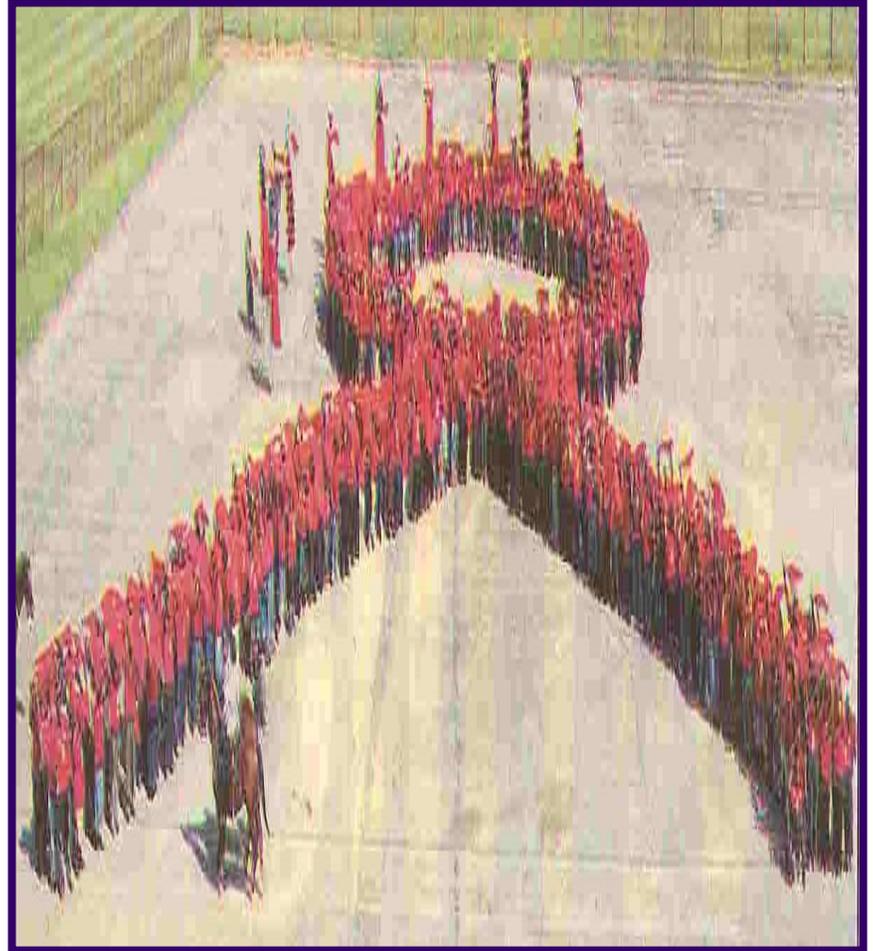
Region of Contrast and Disparity



What's the story with HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean



- **Context and Players**
- **Epidemiology**
 - As we know it
- **Data gaps**



HIV/AIDS Context



- **Low overall prevalence- 1.6**
 - Concentrated epidemics?
 - **MSM (18%) and CSW (24%) in Suriname**
- **Pervasive stigma and discrimination**
- **HIV/AIDS resentment**
 - **Chronic diseases is #1 health priority**
- **Data and technical gaps despite tremendous financial resources**

International HIV/AIDS Funding*



Agency†	<u>Estimated support</u>
● PAHO	● ?
● World Bank	● \$118 million
● Global Fund	● \$93 million
● DFID	● \$2.4 million
● EU	● \$7 million
● CIDA	● \$33 million
● USG+	● <u>\$130 million</u>
	T=\$382 million

*2000-2005

† other donors not listed include: UNAIDS, Clinton Foundation, German Tech Corp, UNICEF

+ CDC, HRSA, USAID, DoL, DoD, HRSA, Peace Corps

Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC)

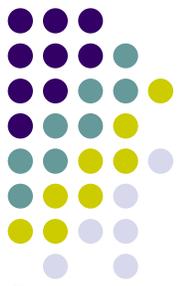


- Began as regional virology lab in 1947, converted to CAREC in 1974
- PAHO/WHO regional technical office
- Serves 21 English-speaking member countries
- HIV/AIDS funding comprises 60% of budget
- Perceived as premier public health agency for the Caribbean



Pan Caribbean HIV/AIDS Partnership

PANCAP*



- **Collaboration among regional, national gov't, private and social sectors, donor community and UN agencies**
- **Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework on HIV/AIDS (CRSF) outlines priority areas:**
 - 1. advocacy, policy development and legislation,
 - 2. care, treatment and support of PLWHAs
 - 3. prevention of HIV transmission
 - 4. strengthening national and regional capacities for program development, implementation and M&E
 - 5. resource mobilization
- **Highlighted as UNAIDS best practice**

*www.pancap.org



Epidemic

- **Leading cause of death, age 15-44**

- **New infections** **37,000 in 2005**
- **Overall prevalence** **1.6 (range .1-4.5)**
- **Infections** **330,000**
 - **Children <15** **22,000?**
 - **Women** **51%?**

Country Estimates

Country	Population	Reported AIDS Cases	Reported HIV Cases	Estimated PLWHA****	Estimated Prevalence
Anguilla	8,000	99		990	0.8
Antigua & Barbuda	68,000	142	409	1,128	0.94 - 1.6
Bahamas	300,003	4,382	8,124	6,150	2.0-3.3
Barbados	267,000	1,531	2,572	4,134	1.1 - 1.5
Belize	249,000	560	2,024	5,120	2.00
Cuba	11,200	1,577	2,744	3,200	<0.1
Dom Rep	8,400,000	6,119		130,000	1.0 - 2.5
Dominica	73,000	150	257	115	0.2
Grenada	98,000	129	227	1,122	1.30
Guyana	761,000	2,430	25,000	24,941	2.5 - 3.5
Haiti	8,000,000		250,000	210,000	4.1
Jamaica	2,600,000	7,063		22,715	1.2 - 1.4
Montserrat **	11,000	28		28	0.4 - 2.0
St. Kitts & Nevis	41,000	75	208	347	0.5 - 0.9
St. Lucia	156,000	192	377	877	0.6 - 2.0
St. Vincent & G	16,394	334	607	1,002	1.00
Suriname	419,000		2,470	3,983	1.00
Trinidad and Tobago	1,300,000	4,900	11,500	16,217	2.0 - 3.5

Behavioral Surveillance in OECS 2005



- **Mini-bus and taxi drivers (n=326)**
- **In-school youth (n=1,105)**
 - Ages 10-14
- **Youth-on-the block (n=391)**
 - Ages 10-19
- **General population (n=9,438)**
 - Ages 15-49

BSS Results



- **HIV general and prevention knowledge poor among in-school youth and taxi drivers**
 - 27% vs. 40% could reject HIV misconceptions AND identify prevention strategies
- **High degree of HIV-related stigma**
 - 1%-8% accepting of people with HIV
 - Excludes in-school youth
- **Early sexual debut**
 - Up to 30% sexually active before age 15
- **Poor HIV testing uptake**
 - 18-27% of gen. pop ever tested for HIV
 - 10-17% know test results

Data Gaps



Program Technical areas



- **No regional strategies implemented**
- **Countries at varying stages of implementation**
- **Epidemiology and surveillance data collection**
- **Care and treatment**
 - **Clinical monitoring and adherence**
 - **Service delivery**
 - **Drug combinations and availability vary**
- **General prevention**
 - **Fragmented and country-based**
- **PMTCT**
 - **Gaps in pediatric testing and treatment**
 - **Bahamas a best practice**

HIV Testing Snapshot

- **No regional strategy for scaling up HIV testing**
- **Region endorses lab-based HIV testing**
 - Turnaround times up to 4 weeks
 - Interest/curiosity growing in rapid testing
 - Same-visit testing only in three countries
 - Guyana
 - Suriname
 - Trinidad
- **Providers trained but quality of services unknown**



Laboratory capacity



- **Accreditation, Accreditation, Accreditation**
 - No regionally or internationally accredited labs
 - Barbados within reach
 - Some lab support from Puerto Rico and Martinique
- **CD4 capacity in many countries**
 - Quality control issues
- **Few countries with viral load capacity**
 - Barbados, Jamaica, Bahamas
- **Very little OI data**
 - TB limited in-country to smear microscopy

We need to know more about:



- **Migration impact**
 - Caribbean to US and vice-versa
 - Are there links between US-Caribbean and wider Caribbean?
 - Intra-Caribbean
 - Link between Bahamas and Haiti epidemics?
- **Risk factors and transmission routes**
 - MSM activity. Is it really 12%?
 - Drug use?
 - Is heterosexual transmission largest contributor?
 - Role of poverty, unemployment, gender inequality?
- **Antiretroviral coverage**
- **Surveillance data duplication, timeliness, reporting**
 - True burden of disease unknown
 - No denominators, i.e. PMTCT or STI sites
- **Prevention efforts**
 - PMTCT
 - Most-at-risk populations (MARPs)
 - Prevention for positives

Challenges

It's not just fun in the sun!





Why aren't we seeing more data and impact from the region?

Regional Challenges



- **Fractured regional response**
 - **Lack of coordination**
 - How extensive is duplication of efforts?
 - Action is at the country level
- **Lack of systematic data collection, monitoring, analysis and use**
 - **Paucity of HIV-specific data on all fronts**
 - Program improvement
 - Regional and national policy development
 - Mode of operation sometimes erratic, spontaneous, donor driven
- **Poor human resource capacity**
 - “Brain drain”
 - Technical expertise?

Opportunities





“What we have before us are some breathtaking opportunities disguised as irresolvable problems”

- John Gardner, 1965

writer, activist, leader

HHS/USAID Long-term Goals



- **Develop regional public health leadership**
- **Improve availability and access to strategic information**
 - **Surveillance, epidemiology, clinical data**
- **Expand prevention programming**
 - **PMTCT**
 - **Prevention for MARPs**
 - **Prevention for positives**

USG strategy



- **Encouraging/emphasizing** coordinated regional responses and strategies
 - Strengthening relationships with PANCAP and CAREC?
- **Influencing** technical strategies
- **Modeling** best practices
- **Address root causes for sluggish program implementation**



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

JUL 12 2006

The Honorable Denzil L. Douglas, M.D.
Prime Minister
Government Headquarters
Church Street, Basseterre
Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis

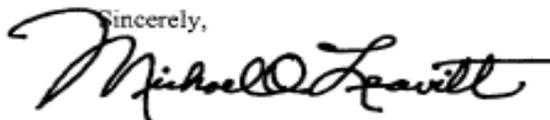
Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

I send you warmest regards from Washington, D.C. I recently learned of your interest in and support for routine HIV testing in medical clinics and prenatal care sites throughout the Caribbean. I also understand you will present this concept to your fellow Caribbean Heads of Government this summer. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) supports HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment activities throughout the Caribbean through the regional offices of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). We in the United States, who are committed to working in close partnership with our Caribbean neighbors, truly support and believe in your leadership in this direction.

In the United States, we are finding in our domestic HIV/AIDS programming, as well as in our support to international HIV/AIDS control efforts, that improving access to and uptake of testing is critical to the success of our prevention and treatment goals. Our national standards have also moved in the direction of routine, opt-out HIV testing in clinical settings. Thus, your efforts and ours can and should move forward congruently, and I applaud your leadership in the Caribbean to implement state-of-the-art strategies and algorithms such as "opt-out" and provider-initiated HIV testing.

My Department's Regional Office in Trinidad and Tobago stands ready to provide any technical support you need as you prepare for the meeting of Caribbean Heads of Government, and in the months ahead, as you expand access to HIV testing in the region. I look forward to hearing about your successes and lessons learned in this area. Please contact my office here in Washington or Dr. Lisa Fitzpatrick at our Caribbean Regional Office (1-868-622-3153) if you need assistance or identify additional areas of collaboration.

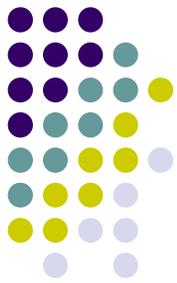
I wish you best of luck in this important effort to expand access to HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

Sincerely,


Michael O. Leavitt



USG program support



Organization	Technical area(s)	Region/country
CDC	Epi, surveillance, lab support, HIV testing, public health training	35 countries through regional organizations.
DoD	Military education and prevention programs	OECS, Trinidad Tobago, Barbados, Suriname
DoL	HIV prevention and stigma reduction in the workplace	DR, Jamaica, Haiti, Barbados, Belize, Guyana
HRSA funds Caribbean Regional Training Network (CHART), a collaboration with USAID and CDC	Care and treatment capacity building, provider training	Jamaica, Bahamas, Barbados, Haiti
Peace Corps	HIV education and behavior change communication	OECS
USAID	HIV testing, data collection and prevention for MARPS	Barbados, OECS



Issues to consider

- **US is part Caribbean. Is broader USG collaboration warranted?**
 - Probe and address migration/border issues and its role in US HIV burden
 - Strengthen technical, financial, and infrastructural support
 - Build collaboration and support between USVI, PR and wider region
- **Is stronger USG public health leadership role warranted?**
 - HIV competing with chronic diseases as highest health priority in the region (diabetes, heart disease, obesity)
- **Will support for regional prevention scale-up yield benefits to US**
 - Particularly, Southeast and New York
- **Given data gaps and migration challenges, is current USG funding scheme appropriate?**



Thank you!

Wish list for Caribbean



- **Stronger public health leadership and program implementation**
- **Accredited laboratories, regional and National**
 - Quality
 - Up-to-date standards and procedures
- **Access to basic lab services**
- **Regional monitoring and reporting from private sector**
- **Regional HIV surveillance with risk groups info**
- **Standardized data collection**
 - Establishment of minimum dataset
 - Regional guidelines adaptable to country capacity
 - Eg. Jamaica vs. St. Kitts
- **Strategy to address human resources shortages or improve effectiveness despite**
- **Regional guidelines**
 - Establish consensus on minimum standards plus options for tailoring to country capacity
- **Build national program capacity to implement**
- **Donor and program coordination**
- **Exit strategies for donor agencies/contractors**



MTCT estimates 2003

Country	HIV Prevalence (%)	Annual # HIV-infected Pregnant Women	Annual # HIV-infected Infants
Anguilla	N/A	N/A	N/A
Antigua	0.92	12-14	2-3
Aruba	0.10	N/A	3
Bahamas	2.7	N/A	3
Belize	1.3	78-91	9
Bermuda	0	0	0
Dominica	0.23	2	1
Grenada	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jamaica	1.6 – 3.3	832	208
St. Kitts & Nevis	N/A	N/A	2
St. Lucia	1.1 – 3.4	N/A	N/A
St. Vincent & Gr.	0.4	16	N/A
Suriname	0 – 1.4	120	15
Turks & Caicos	N/A	N/A	N/A
Trinidad & Tobago	1.3	234	60 - 78