



Draft Concept Note

CARIBBEAN TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP FOR HIV/STI SURVEILLANCE MEETING

**Capital Hotel, Trinidad and Tobago
June 10 – 12, 2013**

I. Background

In 2009, PAHO/WHO/CAREC, in collaboration with CDC, established a Technical Working Group as a mechanism for joint planning and implementation of second-generation HIV surveillance in the Caribbean, with special emphasis on case-based surveillance and surveillance in MARPs.

The functions of the Caribbean Technical Working Group for HIV/STI Surveillance include:

- Serve as a platform for technical discussion regarding the strengthening of HIV surveillance in the Caribbean
- Facilitate synergies between HIV surveillance in the Caribbean and other relevant global, regional and national initiatives and programs.
- Advocate with global, regional and national stakeholders for implementation of HIV case-based Surveillance.
- To provide guidance with respect to the conduct of surveys and the methodologies to be used
- To promote and update countries with new tools and guidance developed at international level and adopt them to the regional situation
- Provide guidance to PAHO/WHO/CAREC and other key stakeholders through review of relevant documents/materials, and formulation of recommendations for improvement of surveillance and its application to policy, programs and services.
- To provide guidance to PAHO/WHO/CAREC and other key stakeholders on ethical issues with respect to HIV surveillance

In 2012 through its publication Second Generation Surveillance Update: “Know your Epidemic” (2012) WHO recommends case surveillance as a part of a comprehensive

system of Second Generation Surveillance. Other components include HIV and AIDS case and Mortality Reporting, Size Estimation and Risk Groups, Sentinel Surveillance, Behavioural and Bio-Behavioural Surveys and STI Surveillance.

Given its mission to support the Caribbean Cooperation in Health Initiative and the increased demand for technical support for HIS strengthening from countries, the Office of Caribbean Programme Coordination (OCPC) of the Pan-American Health Organization sought to renew efforts to support HIS strengthening at both the country and sub-regional levels through the development of the Caribbean Framework for National Health Information Systems Strengthening in 2012. CARICOM is working along with the OCPD and utilizing the Framework to develop an integrated surveillance system in the OECS through the The Global Fund Round 9 Proposal, Fighting HIV in the Caribbean: a Strategic Regional Approach.

In November 2012 PAHO, in collaboration with many partners, held a regional consultation on HIV Epidemiologic Information in Latin America and the Caribbean: Surveillance for and enhanced HIV and STI Response. Priority areas at this meeting included: HIV case based surveillance, strategic information for ARV treatment programs, linking information with HIV within HIV surveillance system and other information systems, surveillance among key populations, STI surveillance, strategic information for investment sustainability as well as HIV incidence surveillance and ARV drug resistance.

The new **Caribbean Public Health Agency** (CARPHA) came into effect in January 2013. This agency will replace and build on the work of the Caribbean Community's five Regional Health Institutions: Caribbean Epidemiology Centre, the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute, the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute, the Caribbean Health Research Centre and the Caribbean Research and Drug Treatment Laboratory. CARPHA has two aspects to its mission: Firstly the provision of strategic direction in analyzing, defining and responding to public health priorities of the member countries so as to prevent disease, promote health and to respond to public health emergencies and secondly to act as a key entity in providing for solidarity in health of the region.

A Caribbean HIV Case Reporting Workshop was held in Trinidad in April 2013 organized by the National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) on behalf of PEPFAR and CDC. The goal of the workshop was to support quality and use of data from existing HIV/AIDS case reporting systems in the region.

Many Caribbean countries have strengthened HIV Surveillance through the implementation of HIV case base reporting, however, various challenges still exist and affect surveillance systems including the quality of data and adaptation of systems to

the scientific advances and the international recommendations for surveillance and monitor and evaluation. At the same time the ever improving response to HIV and the systematic collection of data highlights the need for more integration of information systems.

II. Meeting Objectives

Overall Objective:

To support the improved quality and use of data through the strengthening of surveillance systems with emphasis on the scientific advances as well as international recommendations for monitor and evaluation

Specific Objectives:

- To review the Caribbean availability of epidemiological information for HIV and STI
- To identify the priority areas in the Caribbean for the strengthening of epidemiological and strategic information for HIV and STI
- To provide recommendations for the improvement of priority areas in the Caribbean for the strengthening of epidemiological and strategic information for HIV and STI

III. Expected results

- Increased understanding of the epidemiological information for HIV and STI in the Caribbean
- Identified priority areas in the Caribbean for the strengthening of epidemiological and strategic information for HIV and STI
- Recommendations for the improvement of priority areas in the Caribbean for the strengthening of epidemiological and strategic information for HIV and STI

IV. Methodology

Plenary sessions and discussions with presentations by facilitators and other participants

IV. Participants

The participants of this meeting will include the following:

- Members of the Caribbean Technical Working Group for HIV/STI Surveillance
- National AIDS Program Managers/Coordinators
- HIV Focal Points
- CARPHA
- CDC Barbados and Trinidad
- NASTAD
- UNAIDS