

Global Program Country Profile: HAITI

NASTAD

The National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) represents the United States chief state and territorial health department program directors responsible for coordinating, administering, and managing HIV prevention, care, and support services. NASTAD's Global Program works to build the organizational, programmatic and human resource capacity of its regional/state public sector AIDS program counterparts across the world. In Haiti, NASTAD works in partnership with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Global AIDS Program (CDC/GAP) as part of the unified U.S. response to the HIV pandemic through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

HIV/AIDS IN HAITI

The Republic of Haiti has a vibrant culture and a proud history as the world's first free black republic. Today, however, more than 80 percent of its estimated population of 8.9 million lives in absolute poverty, making Haiti the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.¹ Haiti also has the highest HIV prevalence outside of Africa, with an estimated 2.2 percent of its population infected with the HIV virus.² Since the epidemic first appeared in Haiti, both public and non-profit sectors have joined forces to curb its progression. International funding, such as PEPFAR, have

created opportunities for unprecedented expansion of programs to provide voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) for populations at risk, for services to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission (PMTCT), and for care and treatment services in general. In the past five years, 131 VCT centers, 98 PMTCT centers, and 47 antiretroviral medication centers have been established.³

CDC/Haiti provides technical leadership in the areas of strategic information, laboratory services, and many aspects of clinical care. One of the priority areas for CDC/Haiti and the Ministry of Health (MOH) is to put in place a revitalized HIV/AIDS case notification system in order to provide data critical to planning and monitoring activities related to the prevention of HIV transmission and treatment of infected persons.

ACTIVITIES

In 2003, NASTAD began to work in Haiti to assist the MOH in the implementation of a more comprehensive and complete surveillance program. NASTAD undertook a situational analysis to evaluate the different components of a successful, sustainable HIV/AIDS reporting system. These recommendations provided a framework for discussion and feedback among partners. Over the next year, NASTAD helped facilitate partner meetings to discuss a potential surveillance system, and to draft a protocol and revised case reporting forms for a pilot HIV/AIDS case notification phase. In 2005, the pilot

¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html>

² <http://www.measuredhs.com/topics/hiv/data.cfm>

³ <http://www.mesi.ht>

HIV/AIDS case notification system was implemented in four VCT sites. Following an assessment and some modifications, the pilot was expanded to 12 additional sites in 2006. Over a period of two years, more than 5,000 cases of HIV and AIDS were reported to the MOH through the pilot sites.

In 2007, a consensus meeting was hosted by the Haitian MOH, CDC/Haiti, and NASTAD, to discuss the HIV/AIDS case notification pilot, and to plan for nationwide implementation. Over the next year, processes and procedures were revised to better match site-level services. Through 2008, over 500 Haitian providers were trained on the revised name-based HIV case notification system, and the program was officially launched, nationwide, on December 1, 2008. NASTAD is initiating capacity building for the use of local, regional, and national data for decision making as a result of HIV surveillance data now being collected in the country.

Products

- *National HIV Case Notification Algorithm*
- *National HIV Case Notification Forms: Adult, Child*
- *HIV Case Notification Operations Manual*
- *Quarterly HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*
- *Epi Profile, Le Grand Sud*
- *Training Modules: Epi Profile Development, Data Quality, Data Use, Valuing Confidentiality and Data Security*

Evaluation

In 2008, NASTAD conducted an External Assessment of the technical assistance provided in 2006 and 2007. The assessment found that NASTAD was considered the key agency which helped them to jump-start the HIV/AIDS surveillance system in Haiti. Additionally, senior level respondents from the MOH were very satisfied with NASTAD's TA in regard to the training provided, facilitation of surveillance planning process and the creation of surveillance tools.

Next Steps

In 2009 and beyond, NASTAD will continue to support the ongoing development of Haiti's HIV/AIDS case surveillance system. NASTAD looks to further its peer-to-peer technical assistance, twinning HIV/AIDS surveillance experts in the U.S. with peers in Haiti, to build human capacity and programmatic sustainability, and to further its support of nationwide training in HIV/AIDS case surveillance, and the effective use of surveillance data for evidence-based planning.



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