



Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS across territories and populations within the Caribbean

Drs. M. Blokland
Ministry of Health
Suriname
July 2012





Adult HIV prevalence



Adult HIV prevalence in a number of Caribbean countries

Bahamas	3.1
Barbados	1.4
Belize	2.3
Cuba	0.1
Dominican Republic	0.9
Guyana	1.2
Haiti	1.9
Jamaica	1.7
Suriname	1.0
Trinidad and Tobago	1.5

Source: UNAIDS



Prevalence among Female SW and MSM

Country	MSM	FSW
Bahamas	8.2	NA
Guyana	19.4	17.0
Haiti	NA	5.0
Jamaica	32.0	5.0
Suriname	6.7	24.0

Source: UNAIDS 2010



Drivers

Social vulnerability	Risk behavior
Poverty	Unprotected sex
Gender inequalities	Sex tourism
Stigma	Multiple partners
Discrimination	Commercial sex
Internal migration	Injecting Drug Use
Lack of circumcision	
Outdated legislation	



Sexual and Reproductive Health



- ▶ Reproductive health: A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its function and processes.
- ▶ Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capacity to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so.
- ▶ Sexual health: A state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity.



Integration of HIV and SRH in the context of the Elimination Initiative



➤ Important for:

- Prevention of HIV and syphilis infection in women of reproductive age and their male partners, **including women already pregnant.**
- Prevention of unintended pregnancies among women with known HIV positive status
- Prevention of unintended pregnancies among all women, in particular teens
- Prevention of gender based violence

➤ Makes sense because:

- Both are targeting the same women & their male partners
- Integrated services increase uptake and client satisfaction
- Integrated services have potential for cost-savings



Integrated services

- ◉ Availability of a comprehensive package of HIV/STI prevention and SRH services, provided in an integrated approach
 - ◉ Antenatal and postnatal care for mother and child
 - ◉ Comprehensive sexuality education and information
 - ◉ Safer sex promotion
 - ◉ Contraceptives distribution
 - ◉ Condom distribution
 - ◉ Promotion of dual protection as gold standard
 - ◉ HIV testing and treatment
 - ◉ Syphilis testing and treatment
 - ◉ Screening for other STI
 - ◉ Screening and referral for gender-based violence



Caribbean Initiative for Elimination of MTCT of HIV and Congenital Syphilis

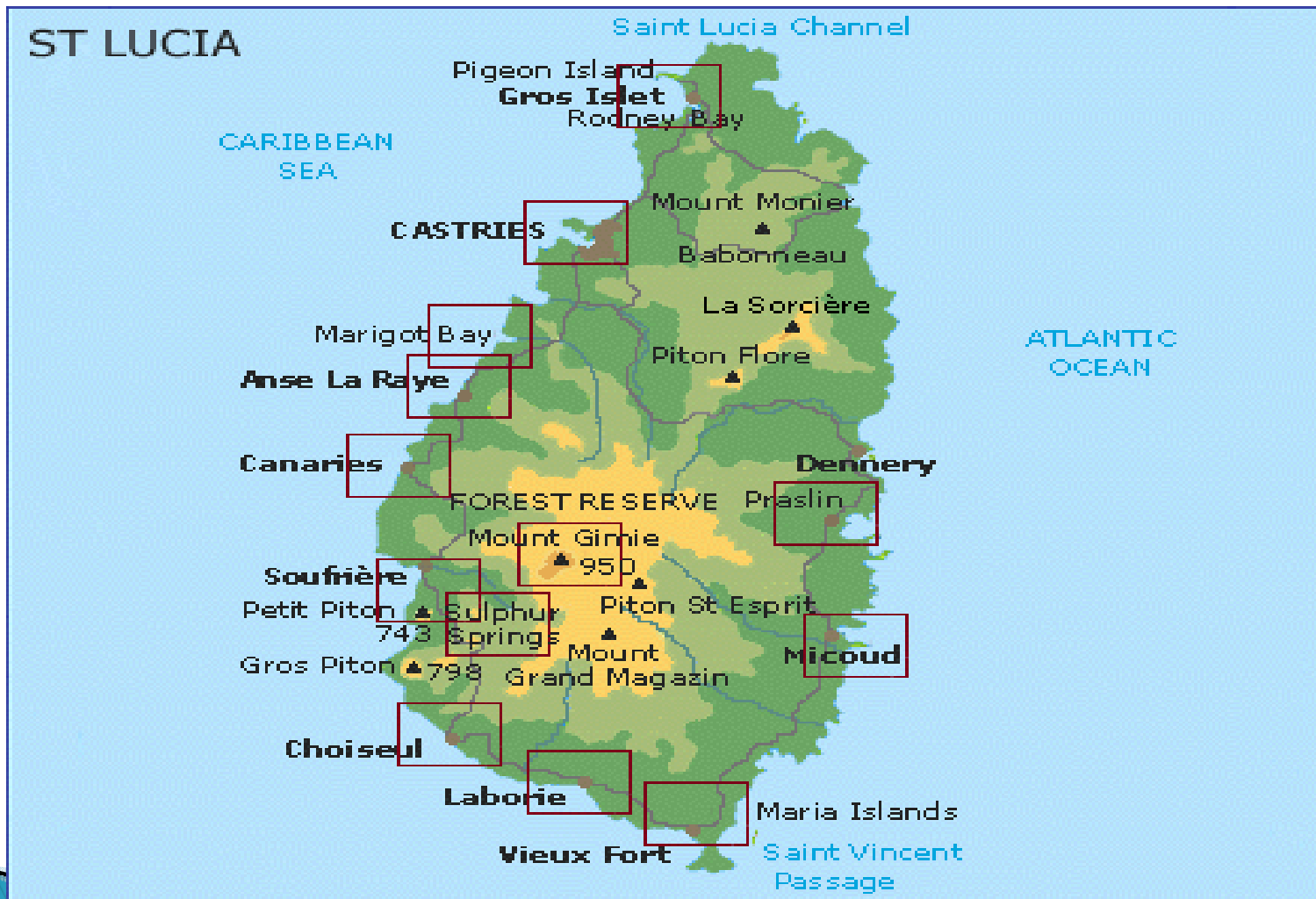


- ▶ Fully embraced by the leadership of the region
- ▶ Aims to eliminate MTCT of HIV and Congenital syphilis by year 2015
- ▶ Conceptual framework proposes four critical lines of action , one of which is the integration of HIV and SRH
- ▶ Provides a platform for strengthening of SRH agenda
- ▶ Provides an opportunity to maximize HIV and SRH benefits through alignment, harmonization and integration of both efforts





Successes (1) St Lucia





Successes (2) Suriname

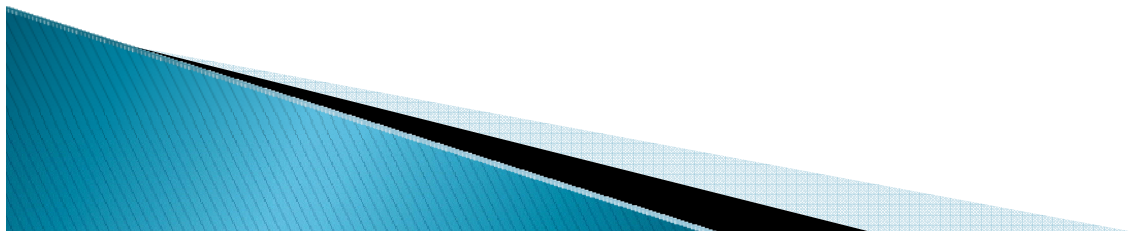




Successes (3) PMTCT Activities



- ▶ Broad national mobilisation of stakeholders to increase awareness and ownership
- ▶ Capacity building within the health sector through training and coaching





Successes (4)

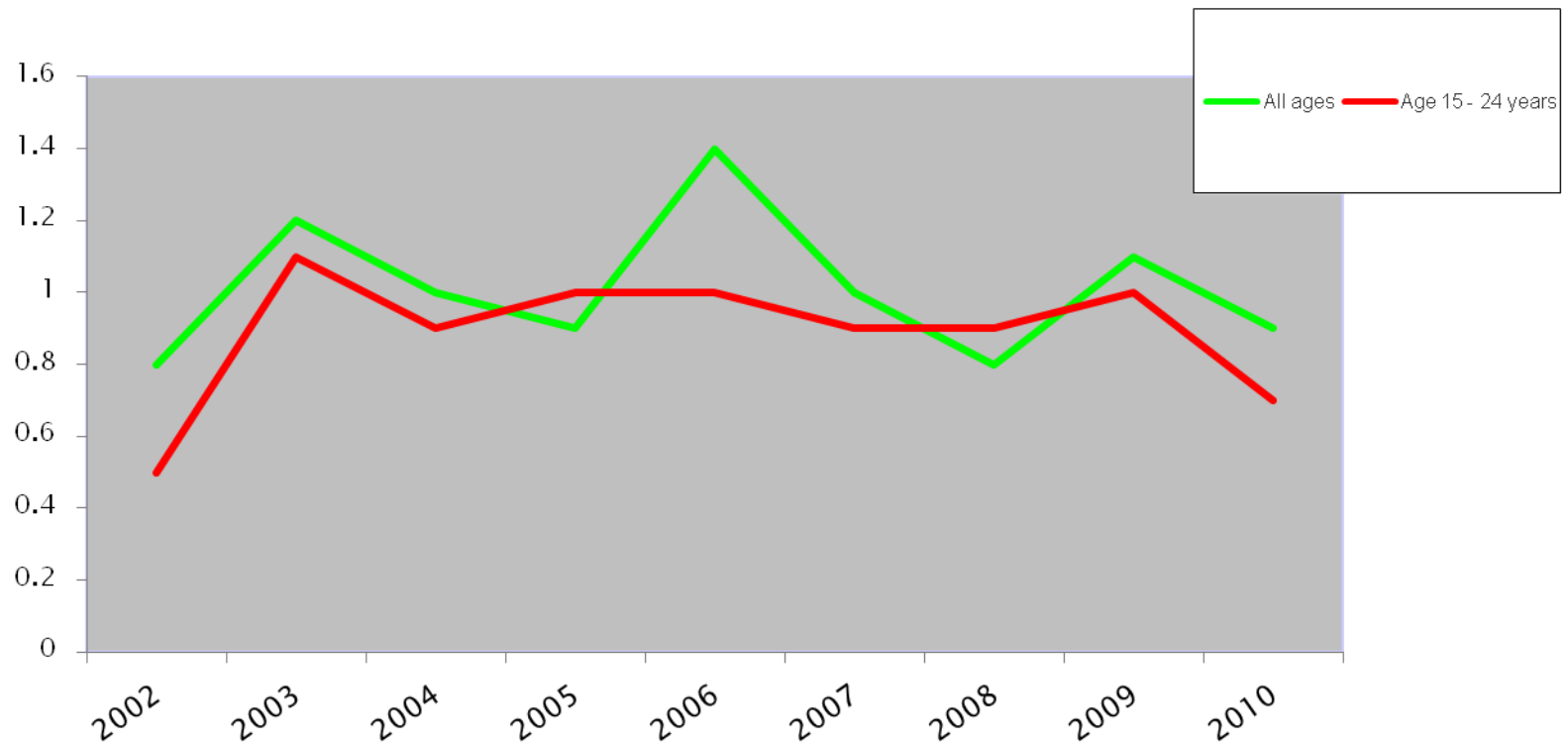
Pregnant women tested for HIV versus number of live births, 2002 -2010





Successes (5)

HIV prevalence among pregnant women
2002 - 2010





Successes (6)

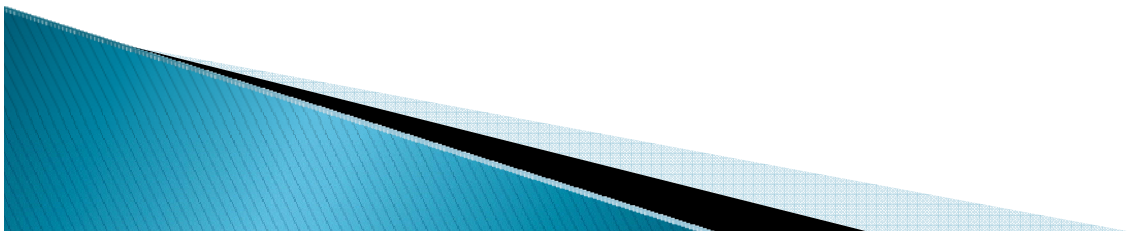
YEAR	BABIES	PCR+
2010	79	4
2011	108	3
2012 (JUNE)	37	1



Actions leading to successes



- ▶ A Focal Point in 2010
- ▶ Revised guidelines and training of healthcare workers
- ▶ Mass media campaign
- ▶ The integration of PMTCT into maternal- and child health services





Challenges



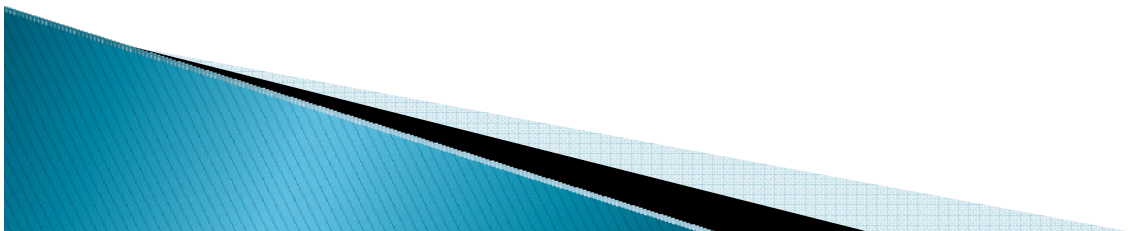
- ▶ Development of an integrated approach in the prevention and reduction of unintended teen pregnancies and risk of HIV/STI infection
- ▶ The vulnerability of communities, groups, and individuals due to HIV related stigma and discrimination, gender inequalities, poverty and socio-cultural barriers
- ▶ The elimination of transmission of HIV from mother to child
- ▶ the insufficient utilization of the existing health services, in particular by marginalized and vulnerable groups
- ▶ sustaining and improving current achievements while major grants have ceased to exist
- ▶ Men's health and involvement in SRH
- ▶ Persistent elements of machismo ideology facilitating gender based violence and other forms of gender inequality



The way forward



- ▶ **Community capacity building:**
 - Identification of four communities for implementation
 - Implementation training in each community
 - Supervising the trained persons in carrying out a fanciful activity that is specially aimed at their community





Finally

- ▶ Progress to tackle the HIV epidemic in the region

- ▶ Challenges remain:
 - stigma and discrimination and specifically homophobia
 - Reducing gender based violence
 - Reducing prevalence rates among sex workers and MSM
 - More and better evidence based interventions
 - Strengthening monitoring and evaluation to increase evidence based interventions

