



Technical Advisory
Committee on HIV/STI



**Pan American
Health
Organization**

*Regional Office of the
World Health Organization*

Presentation delivered during the
Third Technical Advisory Committee
on HIV/AIDS/STI

Managua, Nicaragua

16 - 18 September 2007

PAHO HIV TAC

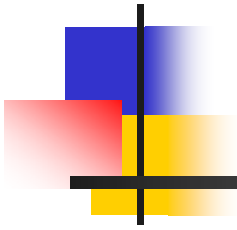
Deliberations and Recommendations



September 18, 2007

Managua, Nicaragua

Preguntas, algunas respuestas e ideas nivel





Framework statement

- All TAC's recommendation should be implemented within a framework of human rights, social justice and, wherever possible, on the basis of available scientific evidence. (*cf. pregunta estratégica 2*)



Priorities and Recommendations

- TAC encourages PAHO to
 - keep up with new challenges in prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS and related conditions (e.g. clarification of policies regarding male circumcision; emerging drug resistance; disinhibition)
 - promote food security for those persons living with HIV who need food as well as ARVs and other medical treatments



Priorities and Recommendations

- TAC encourages PAHO to continue to strengthen existing National AIDS Programs through
 - the promotion of evaluation that might lead to the improvement of strategies of implementation and to better use of resources
 - Research on epidemic trends
 - Training of personnel
 - Increased input from relevant arms of civil society



Priorities and Recommendations

- TAC urges PAHO to strengthen the emphasis on prevention based on scientific research, while continuing to emphasize universal access to care and treatment
- Programs that should be scaled up include
 - Sexual health for young people (e.g. in schools and universities)
 - Support increasing the number of tests and the quality of testing and counseling
 - Testing and counseling for all pregnant women



Priorities and Recommendations

- Where scientific evidence is not available, PAHO should support well-designed **research** in the area of prevention.
- **Studies and interventions should be focused on the most vulnerable groups and/or groups with demonstrated high incidence and prevalence rates.**



Priorities and Recommendations

- PAHO must maintain the strong emphasis on reduction of stigma and discrimination in the context of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment.
- Alliances/synergy with other sectors must continue to be strengthened, notably education and labor in the interest of prevention, care and treatment of HIV.



Priorities and Recommendations

- As AIDS programs proceed at national level it is vital that policy makers should promote strategies based on accurate **knowledge of their respective local epidemics.**
- National responses should be guided by local epidemic specificities and trends (*cf. pregunta estratégica 2)*



Priorities and Recommendations

- Training of health personnel and community-based workers in all aspects of care and treatment must be promoted and improved
- Surveillance/tracking of ARV and TB drug resistance is becoming of vital importance
- Programs to reinforce adherence, monitoring of resistance and publishing guidelines for salvage therapy must be emphasized

Priorities and Recommendations

Continued advocacy for

- lower prices of second-line drug therapy
- availability of vital drugs for treatment of opportunistic infections in certain countries
- ↑ access to laboratory tests, including resistance testing to facilitate decisions about selection of salvage therapy
- elimination of fees for services to the poor



Priorities and Recommendations

- TAC acknowledges the value of the PAHO strategic fund, which helps several countries to procure diagnostics, medications and other supplies
- TAC recommends an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the fund



Priorities and Recommendations

- Track the use of “copy-cat” medications in Latin America and strengthen quality control measures across the region in order to stem this dangerous trend.
- Generic medications, which are extremely valuable to the region, should also be subject to pre-qualification procedures.
- PAHO should move to monitor the network of drug-testing laboratories in the region.



On Prevention and Treatment

- TAC urges PAHO to strengthen the emphasis on prevention based on scientific research, **while continuing to emphasize universal access to care and treatment**
- Prevention should be underlined as a cross-cutting theme within every critical line of action.
- **Prevention and treatment are inextricably linked.**
- Programs should be long-term rather than short, interrupted campaigns



Priorities and Recommendations

- The **practice of prevention** must emphasize early detection of HIV infection – voluntary, free of cost and confidential.



Priorities and Recommendations

- Research related to prevention should include **acknowledgement of likely structural causes of risk/vulnerability, e.g. gender discrimination, poverty and exclusion.**



Pregunta estratégica 1

- At present the degree of interaction and inclusion of relevant civil society groups is variable across the countries in our region.
- PAHO should facilitate and promote greater inclusion of relevant civil society groups in UNAIDS Thematic Groups and in national AIDS programs/commissions* in all countries.
- * not just with Ministries of Health



Pregunta estratégica 2

- PAHO is urged to promote the human rights approach in response to the HIV/AIDS/STI epidemic, with regard to autonomy, social justice, intimacy, the right to information and care...



The human rights approach must be the framework for specific actions such as:

- HIV testing, communication of diagnoses and epidemiological surveillance.
- Dignified and respectful care to everyone, including traditionally stigmatized and excluded populations, avoiding penalization of groups or activities, e.g. criminalization of non-exploitative sexual work.
- Promotion of respectful treatment, free of stigma and discrimination in health, education, work and access to social support programs on the grounds of HIV or the assumption of having this condition and other social factors such as poverty.



Pregunta estratégica 3

- We recognize the importance of the recent evaluation in the Dominican Republic.
- PAHO should strengthen its skills in monitoring and evaluation and can support monitoring and evaluation done by other agencies or by civil society.
- Monitoring and evaluation of programs are not the function of TAC.



Pregunta estratégica 4

- TAC fully endorses actions aimed at better articulation between HIV/AIDS services and sexual & reproductive services but emphasizes the need to go beyond the “titanic” approach (women and children first)
- PAHO should now promote better articulation at country level between HIV/STI programs and sexual and reproductive health programs



Pregunta estratégica 4

Three priority points

- Guarantee access to sexual health services, including prevention of STIs
 - for adolescents and youth
 - to populations that are traditionally neglected or excluded, including sex workers, MSM and drug users
- Promote HIV testing to young women, all pregnant women and the partners of these persons



Pregunta estratégica 5

- Emphasize early diagnosis of HIV in children born to HIV+ pregnant women using appropriate technology
- Offer appropriate counseling and testing for HIV and syphilis to all pregnant women.



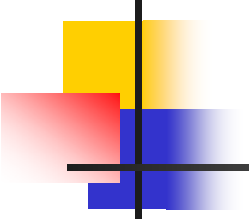
Pregunta estratégica 6

- Disseminate best practices in HIV care at primary level in the region.
- Reinforce care of STI and detection of HIV at primary level by ensuring that adequate resources are available and that training of relevant workers continues to take place.
- Administrators must be persuaded that the integrated approach at primary care level is advantageous.



Pregunta estratégica 7

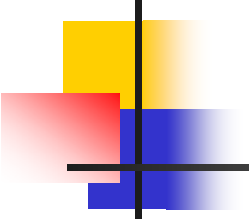
- Reinforce and accelerate the use of the PAHO revolving fund



Recommendations for functioning of TAC (Q. 10)

■ AGENDAS

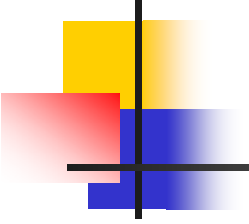
- Should be prepared jointly in advance by the HIV Unit and TAC.
- The focus of each meeting and its objectives should be agreed upon to allow for preparation.
- Sufficient time should be allotted for internal discussions of TAC.



Recommendations for functioning of TAC (Q. 10)

- MEETINGS

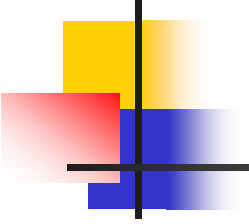
- Different types of TAC meetings could be considered:
 - small TAC meetings such as the current one
 - expanded meetings, which might include headquarters units, PAHO country representatives, HIV/AIDS Heads of National Programs, etc.



Recommendations for functioning of TAC (Q. 10)

- FOCAL POINTS

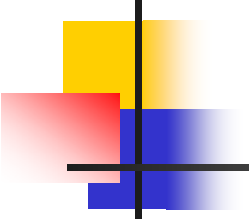
- Consider the designation of two permanent TAC focal points within the HIV unit, one for technical matters and one for administrative and logistics issues



Recommendations for functioning of TAC (Q. 10)

■ INFORMATION

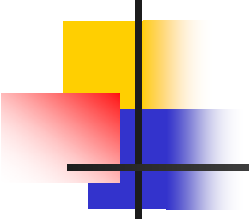
- TAC members should receive periodical updates from the HIV Unit via E-mail, Sharepoint, etc.
- This information should include information on regional program implementation and progress in implementing TAC recommendations, relevant events within PAHO, technical and policy documents.



Recommendations for functioning of TAC (Q. 10)

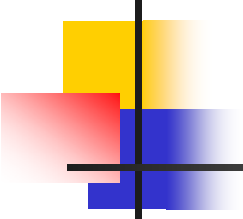
- INTERSESSIONAL PERIODS

- Sharing of information alluded to previously will keep TAC alive and active during intersessional times. We are open for suggestions from the HIV Unit to keep TAC members in constant interaction with PAHO (e.g. Elluminate).



Recommendations for functioning of TAC (Q. 10)

- FEEDBACK
 - TAC members need to receive clearer feedback on how its recommendations are being used



Recommendations for functioning of TAC (Q. 10)

- NEW MEMBERS
- As a courtesy to current members of TAC, information on new members should be provided ahead of time



Pregunta estratégica 11

- Participation of TAC in technical and strategic debates of the Secretariat might occur either via the group or by individuals, based on their special expertise – either at the request of the Secretariat or at the initiative of members of TAC if adequately briefed.