



Office of Caribbean Programme Coordination



Caribbean Private Sector Response to Chronic Diseases (Port-of-Spain, Trinidad & Tobago, 8–9 May 2008)

Executive Summary for HIV/AIDS

Employers and company managers have an important part to play in creating work environments free from the AIDS-related stigma and discrimination. Implementing HIV/AIDS policies in the workplace can curb such unfair employment practices as compulsory HIV testing and can help meet the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS in terms of confidentiality and assistance.

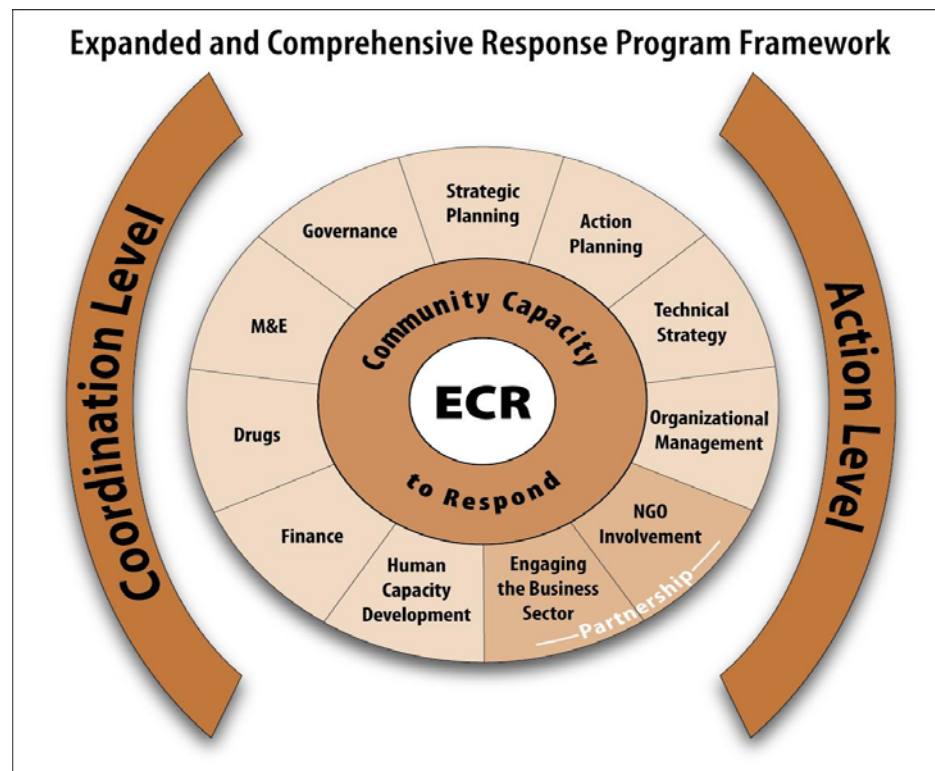
HIV/AIDS Facts and Figures

√ AIDS deaths per day	8,000
√ New infections per day	137,000
√ Children ages 0–4 living with AIDS	3 million
√ Living with AIDS by end of 2002	42 million
√ Children who have lost one or both parents	14 million
√ Deaths due to AIDS in Guyana , 2003	1,100
√ Adults living with AIDS in Guyana , 2003	18,000
√ Women living with AIDS in Guyana , 2003	7,100
√ Population of Guyana	750,000

The Social and Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS

- √ Reduced supply of labor
- √ Loss of skilled & experienced workers
- √ Absenteeism and early retirement
- √ Stigmatization of, & discrimination against, workers with HIV
- √ Increased labor costs for employers
- √ Health insurance to retraining
- √ Reduced productivity, contracting tax base and negative impact on economic growth
- √ Weakened demand, investment discouraged and enterprise development undermined.

A Strategic Response to HIV/AIDS



Examples of how the private sector can assist

- ✓ Create workplace program
- ✓ Implement HIV/AIDS related policies
- ✓ Provide access to Volunteer Counselling and Testing (VCT)
- ✓ Develop programs with community to combat the stigma and discrimination of HIV/AIDS
- ✓ Promote greater involvement of people living with HIV/AIDS
- ✓ Work with communities to develop community outreach programs

Some of the benefits to the private sector when they become actively involved

- ✓ Increased employee productivity
- ✓ Improve morale and workplace cohesion
- ✓ Help to retain employees
- ✓ De-stigmatises disease for employees
- ✓ Foster a higher level of employee commitment and respect for workers rights
- ✓ Healthier workforce and community
- ✓ Decreased absenteeism due to illness and caring for dependents
- ✓ Decrease healthcare costs
- ✓ Reduced recruitment and training costs
- ✓ Compliance with national laws an international standards