

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

**Boca Chica, República Dominicana
22-24 January 2005**



Prevention in Vulnerable Populations

Suriname's Programme for
Commercial Sex Workers

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Context of the CSW Programme

- First case of HIV/AIDS in Suriname in 1983
- Establishment of the National AIDS Programme in 1989
- HIV prevalence study among club sex workers in 1990: 2.5%



History of CSW programme

- Situation Analysis in 1990 of CCSW and SCSW
- Strategic Planning sessions: focus on SCSW; include CSW as staff
- Training and close collaboration with police and other key actors
- Link with Government STI Clinic



Development of CSW Programme

- Reorganization in independent programme in 1992
- Continued support from Government through provision of staff, testing and other materials



Current CSW Programme

- Drop in centre
- Counseling & testing
- Ongoing street outreach (information-sharing, one-on-one education)
- Condom distribution
- Social & emergency support
- Advocacy with policy makers
- Research



Achievements 1992-2004

- Maxi Linder clearly established as presence in CSW community and on policy level
- Visibility of CSW, issues and concerns based on human rights
- 2004 study: stabilization of CSW seroprevalence at 21%; HIV knowledge average to high; condom use average
- CSW included in NSP



CSW in NSP

- Targets:
 - Rights-based regulation of CSW
 - Establishment of support networks for CSW
 - Intensified BCC programmes for CSW



Challenges

- Persisting criminalization of CSW
- Lack of clear political support
- Monitoring of HIV status of CSW without increasing stigma & discrimination:
 - Increased attention could be interpreted as confirmation that they are “dangerous”
 - High prevalence could increase fear and criminalization
- Development of sustainable and comprehensive programmes for CSW:
 - Multi-faceted
 - High investment per capita



Reaching out to CSW

- Facing old realities: CSW will always be there.....
- Accepting new truths: CSW are a vulnerable population to contract HIV and transmit to the general population...
- Accepting the consequences: CSW will have to be addressed without violation of human rights....

