

Women and chronic disease: the Caribbean perspective

NCDs: A Woman's Health Priority Panel Discussion for 2011 Commission on the Status of Women,
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“The Caribbean is the Region of the Americas worst affected by the epidemic of chronic disease. The human and economic cost burden of these conditions is not sustainable and could undermine the development of these small, fragile countries”

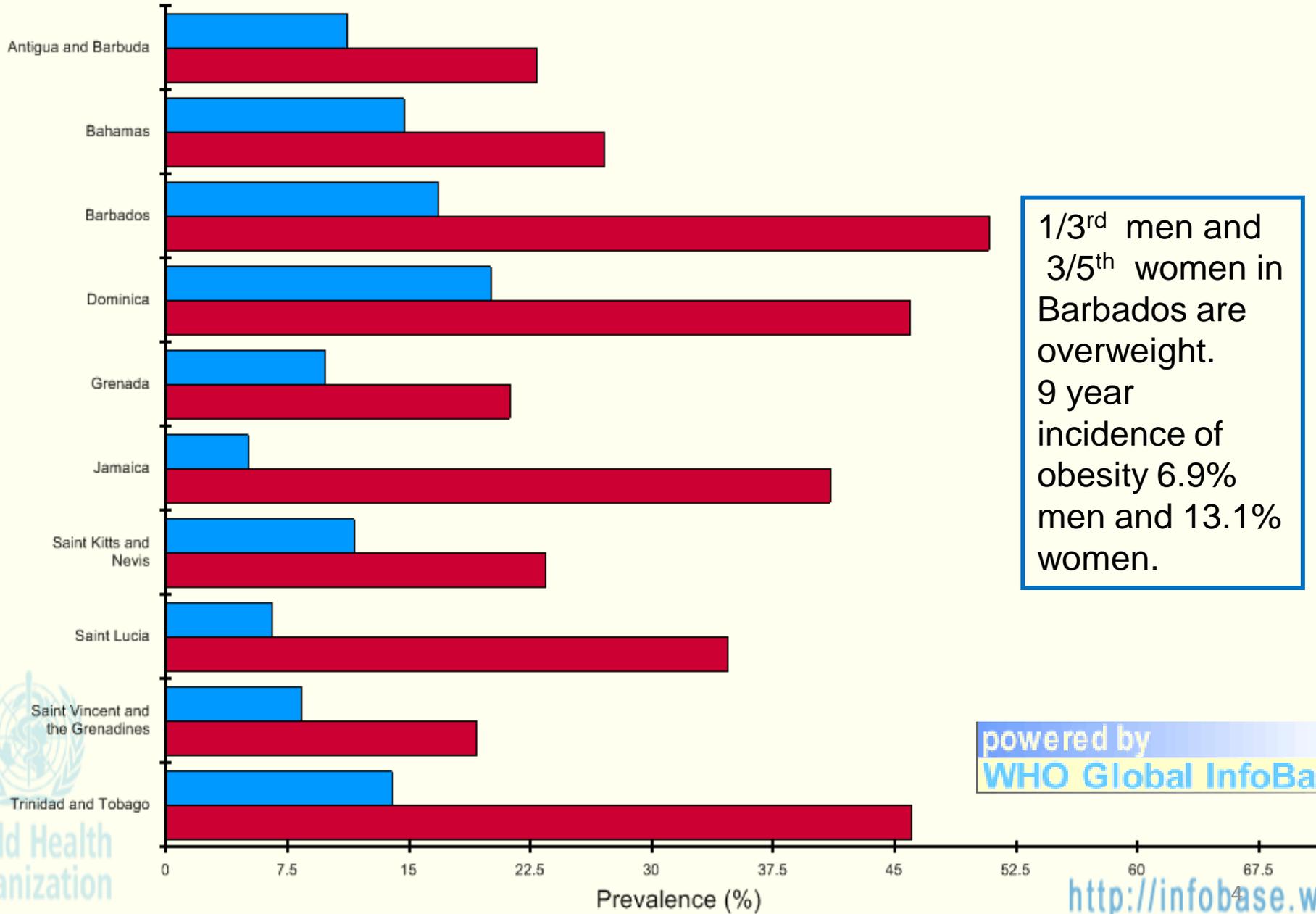


The Hon. Tillman Thomas, Prime Minister of Grenada and Chairman of CARICOM

Age-standardized estimates for Obesity (BMI ≥ 30 kg/m²)
by country for ages 15+ years, estimates for 2005

■ Males ■

Country



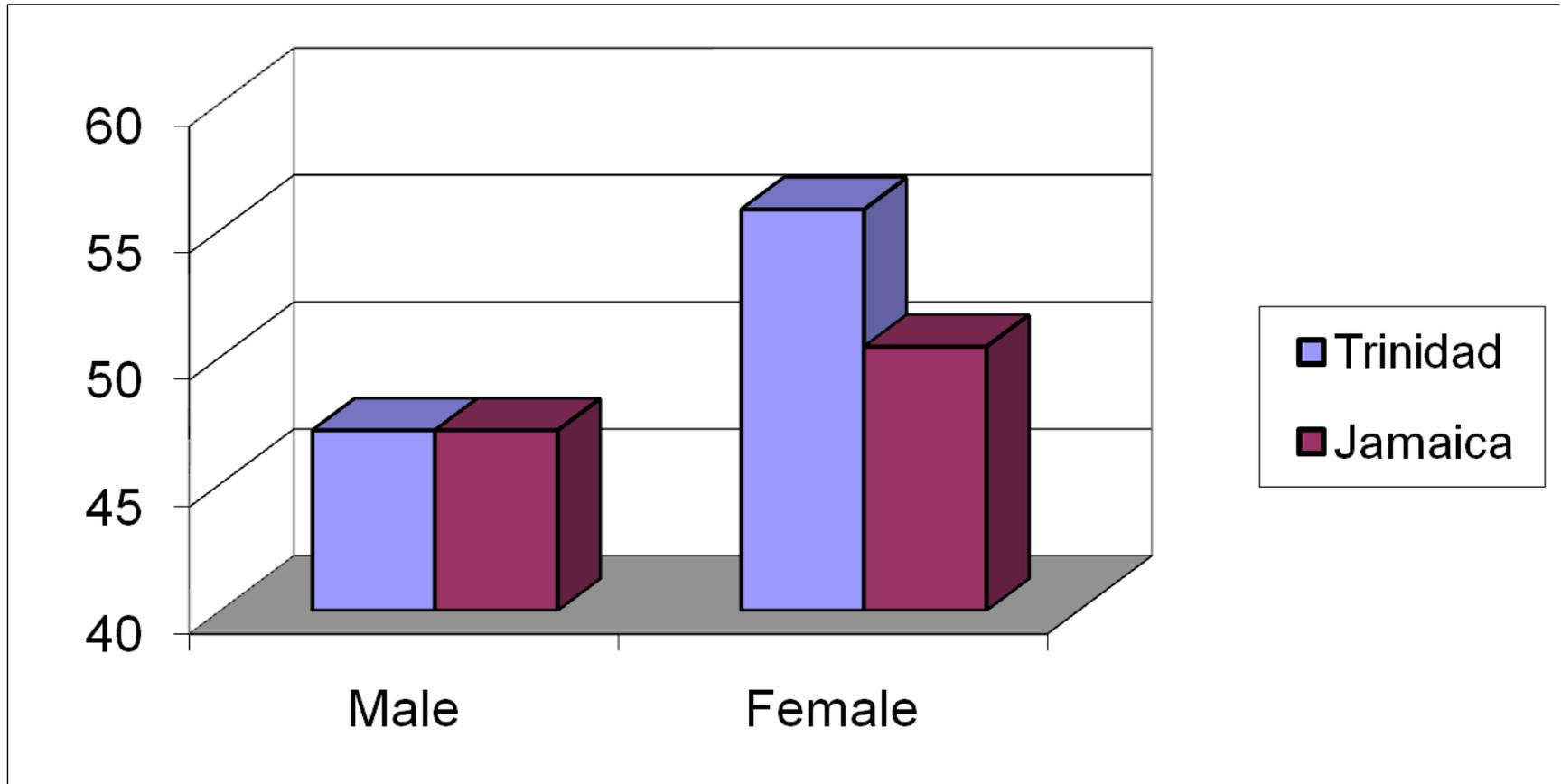
1/3rd men and 3/5th women in Barbados are overweight. 9 year incidence of obesity 6.9% men and 13.1% women.



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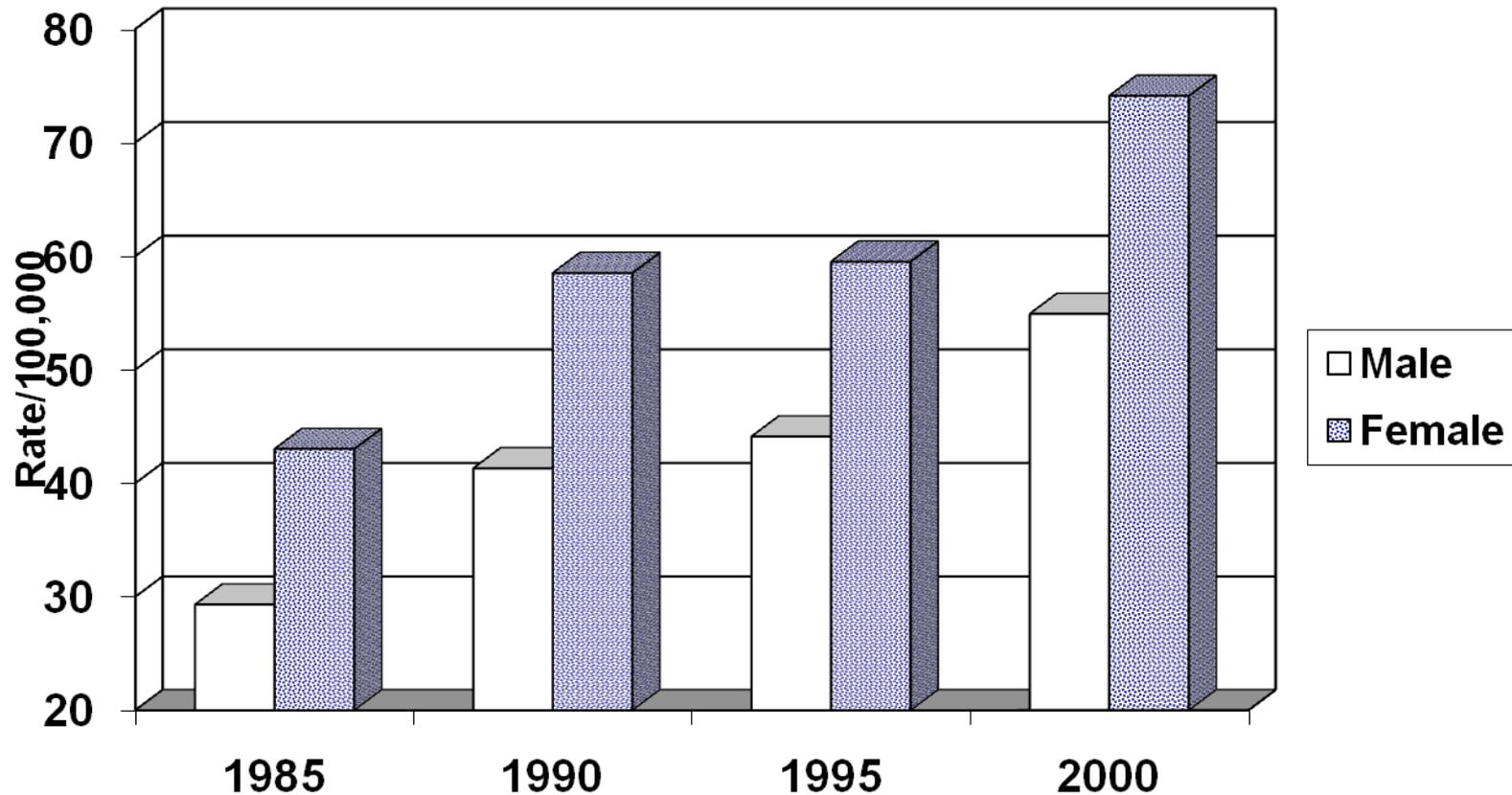
<http://infobase.w>

Sedentary lifestyle



Household surveys with 24 hour activity recall

Caribbean trends in Diabetes Mortality



Prevalence of diabetes: 11-18 %. M. Boyne, Insulin, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2008, pages 94- 105

Prevalence of diabetes: 9.8% men and 15.7% women. R. Wilks et al, Diab. Med. 1999

Amputation of the lower limb



- A complication of diabetes and blood vessel disease
- Total of **223 amputations, 205 were diabetic**
- **113 female and 92 male**
- One and five year survival 69% and 44% in study group and 97% and 82% in control group



Prevalence of hypertension in adults 25 – 64 years



Country	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Jamaica	18.0	27.2	22.6
St. Lucia	24.1	27.4	25.8
Barbados	25.9	28.2	27.1

Ref. Pan Am. J Pub Health 10 (4), 2001, Pedro Ordunez et al.

Stroke



- Incidence and case fatality rates of first ever strokes in entire Barbadian population
- **During first 12 months, 352 patients registered with stroke, 142 males and 210 (59.7%) females**
- **Incident rate 1.15 for males and 1.63 for females**
- Crude incidence was 1.40 per thousand for black Barbadians

Ref. Incidence and case fatality rates of first-ever stroke in a black Caribbean Population. Corbin D.O.C., et al, Stroke.2004;35:1254-1258

Chronic disease in the elderly



SABE study- the Barbados arm

Self reported disease ≥ 60 years

- Cross sectional survey to evaluate health and well being among the elderly in 7 LACs
- Self reported health was directly related to socio-economic indicators of education, occupation and level of income
- **All measures of adiposity highlighted considerable excess of obese women**
- **CVD prevalence was slightly higher in women than men, and they reported statistically higher rates of hypertension, diabetes and obesity, and lower rates regular physical exercise**

Disease	Male (%)	Female (%)
Arthritis	31	56
Hypertension	39	53
Diabetes	19	25

SABE Survey 2000, PAHO

Cancer of cervix and breast



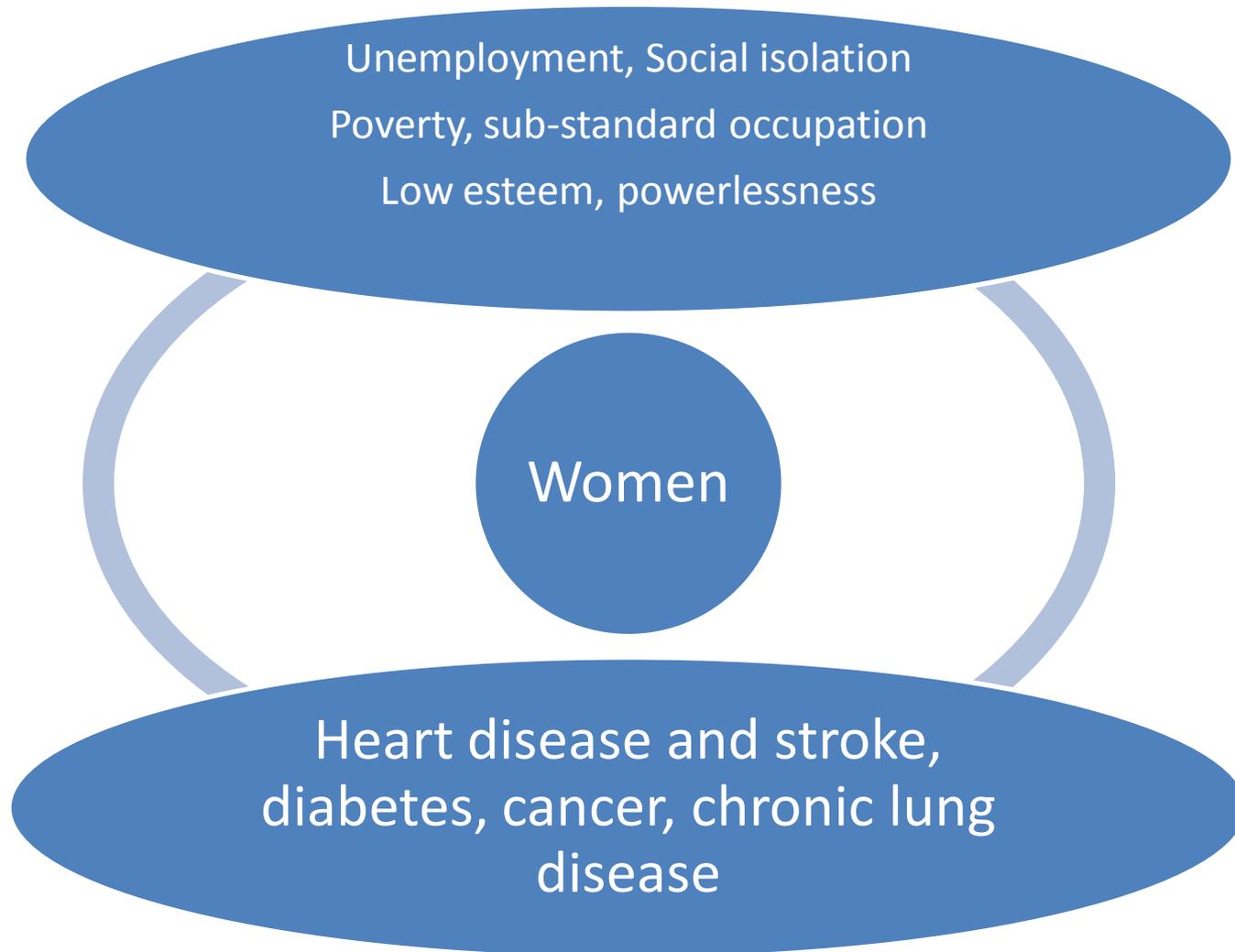
Cancer of breast

- **All age groups mortality (death) from cancer of breast is higher than in other sub-regions of the Americas**
- Incidence of cancer of breast per 100,000 in Caribbean in 2000 was 33.8 and 32.9 in 2002

Cancer of cervix

Per 100,000	2000	2002
Incidence	35.8	32.6
Mortality	16.8	16.0

The vicious cycle: social inequalities and chronic disease



Estimated Economic Burden (\$US Million, 2001)



	BAH	BAR	JAM	TRT
Diabetes	27	38	221	467
Hypertension	46	73	266	250
Total	73	111	487	717
% GDP	1.4	5.3	5.8	8.0

Response: policymakers



Major regional initiatives

- Caribbean Cooperation in Health Initiatives
- Caribbean Commission on Health and Development
- Caribbean **Regional Strategic Plan of Action** for Prevention and Control of NCDs 2010-2014
- **Heads of Government of CARICOM Summit on NCDs**, September 2007

Selected achievements

- National NCD summits
- **Caribbean Wellness day**
- **Establishment of inter-sectoral NCD Commissions**
- NCD Secretariat established
- Workshops with Faith Based Organizations
- Workplace & school Wellness initiatives
- **No Smoking legislation in public places**

Response: Academia



- Epidemiology Research Unit, Jamaica: **Spanish Town study**
- Chronic Disease Research Centre, Barbados: **NCD National Registry**, breast and prostate cancer studies, and a **National study on salt intake**
- Institute of Critical Thinking, UWI, Trinidad: IDB funded **Regional NCD Surveillance System**
- Caribbean Epidemiology Research centre (CAREC)
- Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI)

Response: Civil society



- **Healthy Caribbean Coalition:** a civil society network to combat NCDs
- **Membership** includes: NGOs and health care organizations, trade unions, faith based organizations, youth and women groups
- Main activity: **advocacy** through information gathering and sharing via website www.healthycaribbean.org.
- Due to shortly launch a **Caribbean-wide social and traditional media campaign to secure text messages of support for the UNHLM**

Caribbean women and gender organizations and NCDs



- Recognition that NCDs are first a **“women’s issue”**
- Recognition that women **“hold the key”** in responding effectively to NCDs
- **Advocate for particular focus** on this especially vulnerable group
- Use influence to ensure that **research** is undertaken on effects of **gender**, poverty, lack of empowerment on **NCDs** in the Caribbean, **economic cost of NCDs among women** and **cost effective NCD strategies for women**
- Use increasingly visible **political positions to influence national and regional policy** around women and NCDs

United Nations High Level Meeting, September, 2011



Women and gender groups in the Caribbean should support establishment of a Civil Society Taskforce under the Office of the President of the General Assembly of the UN, and advocate for the inclusion of civil society in member states' national delegations, with specific representation by women and gender organizations