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PN/ABL858

RESEARCH AGENDA FOR THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Summary of Research Conducted/Planned

- 1988: Condom skills assessment among female sex workers.**
Formative research to develop condom educational sticker/subsequent distribution audit.
- 1989: KAP survey among men who have sex with men (including developmental focus groups).**
Focus groups for materials development: poster for sports enthusiasts; train the trainer module for health messengers, and educational module for adolescents.
Formative research for development of national media campaign including television, radio and print materials.
- 1990: National KAP survey.**
Formative research to develop materials for men who have sex with men/subsequent impact evaluation.
Formative research to develop materials for female sex workers (in collaboration with AIDSTECH)/ subsequent impact evaluation.

(NOTE: (AIDSCOM, THROUGH THE RESIDENT ADVISOR, PROVIDES ON-GOING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL COUNTERPARTS IN THE AREAS OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION. PROJECTS OUTLINED ABOVE REPRESENT AIDSCOM SPECIFIC PROJECTS.)

I. BACKGROUND

The AIDSCOM program in the Dominican Republic represents a significant commitment of funds and human resources, and if successful, will offer a model for programmatic sustainability which may be replicable in other sites. Through placement of a resident advisor in August 1988, AIDSCOM has become fully integrated into the national AIDS prevention effort in the DR.

The AIDSCOM mandate, as articulated in the PIO/T, is to contribute to the development of a mass media campaign as well as to the production of materials designed to maintain and reinforce an awareness of AIDS in the following terms:

1. AIDS exists and is a potential health threat for everybody.
2. AIDS kills.
3. AIDS can be prevented.
4. Correct condom use is the best prevention.

The above goals will be achieved through collaboration between the national AIDS prevention program (PROCETS/CONASIDA), the AIDSCOM resident advisor, and Technical Assistance from AIDSCOM home office. The implied objective of this undertaking is to train local counterparts in social marketing methodology and application, as well as actual implementation of program strategies.

Four broad areas of impact are set forth in the end of project indicators developed by AIDSCOM in collaboration with AIDSTECH and USAID/DR. They are described in the following paragraphs.

Evaluation indicators for the intervention will be those that best describe the particular goals established for each of these four areas. Indicators will, therefore, be illustrative of a style or process of intervention not readily quantifiable in a traditional, summative manner. The following is a discussion of evaluation or end-of-project indicators by intervention area.

A. General Population

Effective implementation will be determined vis a vis the delivery or presence of the following:

- Media plan/communications strategy (to be updated each fiscal year).
- Number of TV spots produced.
- Number of radio spots produced.
- Number and content of print materials produced (articles, folders, posters, stickers, etc.).
- Periodic campaign tracking studies among general population to determine level of awareness of key message points among target audiences
- In so far as possible, assessment or estimate of reach (geographically and in terms of numbers of people) of the integrated national plan.

B. High Risk Behavior Intervention

AIDSCOM will contribute to the development of targeted communications and education interventions among groups of individuals known to practice high risk behaviors. The overriding goals of these interventions are:

1. To increase knowledge with regard to prevention measures, including abstinence, monogamy, adoption of safer sex techniques, and the effective use of condoms.

2. To increase awareness of correct transmission routes of HIV and reduce levels of incorrect knowledge of same.
3. To improve predisposition to using condoms during sex, as well as improve levels of actual use (as self-reported).
4. To improve access to condoms.

Accordingly, pre/post KAP surveys in years I and IV will be employed to gauge the impact and effectiveness of materials produced among targeted high risk behavior groups. Additional evaluation indicators will be:

- Number of materials produced (for each group).
- Success in integrating community-based group and/or NGOs into the dissemination effort for materials produced.
- Development of a social marketing approach to condom distribution as well as an analysis of distribution alternatives.
- Number of condoms distributed under the social marketing campaign, as well as inserts for condom usage.

C. Institutionalization

AIDSCOM, through its Resident Advisor and related technical assistance assignments, will contribute to the improvement of counterpart (PROCETS/SESPAS) skills and capabilities in the areas of communications and AIDS education.

The primary indicator of success will be the existence of a methodological approach to strategic communications planning with PROCETS/SESPAS. PROCETS/SESPAS will effectively and efficiently manage all three components of a successful communications approach: planning, intervention, and evaluation.

D. Private Sector Mobilization

In conjunction with AIDSTECH, AIDSCOM will contribute to the efforts of the National AIDS Committee to effectively and efficiently mobilize the resources of the private sector in the battle to halt the spread of HIV. These efforts will include creating awareness within the private sector, including NGOs of HIV and channeling voluntary interest and resources, both human and financial, appropriately and expeditiously.

In broad terms, success will be measured in terms of the number of non- PROCETS/SESPAS individuals, groups, and programs involved in the National AIDS Control Plan.

For AIDSCOM, there will also include involvement of private sector market research firms and advertising/marketing agencies. In collaboration with AIDSCOM, AIDSTECH will develop a plan for private sector mobilization for AIDS-related activities, currently planned for FY 1990.

The line between formative and summative research is straight forward in the DR. (Unlike other sites, where quasi experimental design incorporate formative as well as summative evaluation as part of an overall project.) Summative research will be used, to the degree possible, to meet the objectives set forth in the evaluation plan. This effort will be under taken by the Annenberg School of Communications, under the direction of Dr. Robert Hornik.

E. AIDSCOM Research Activities: 1988-89

1. Condom Skills Assessment

This project was designed to test female sex workers skills in condom placement and removal. (Later, the project was expanded and became the basis for the Eastern Caribbean Condom Skills Assessment module). Sex workers from brothels, bars and streets were recruited by Health Messengers and asked to place a condom on a surrogate device as they normally would with a client. Results revealed significant shortcomings in skills, particularly in unrolling the condom before placement. It was also discovered that most sex workers do not actually put on the condom...their clients do. (See separate report of findings and analysis.)

2. Development of Condom Educational Sticker

Based on the results of the skills assessment, a need was determined for educational materials for condom use. Focus groups were used, in which a local artist worked directly with the sex workers to develop appropriate and understandable messages for an educational sticker. The resulting product was placed in brothels throughout the red light district where clients could readily see it. (In fact, subsequent distribution checks revealed that the sticker was placed too prominently...next to the bed...and in many instances had been removed. Anecdotal indications are that clients found it too intrusive.)

3. KAP Survey Among Men Who Have Sex With Men

A local market research firm was selected to conduct a KAP survey among men who have sex with men in selected cities nation wide. As a first step, focus groups were conducted to develop the survey instrument and appropriate language. Initial results were made available in June, 1990, and are currently pending analysis. (See separate report.)

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4. Focus Groups for Materials Development

a. Health Messenger Training Module

Train the trainer modules in AIDS education and prevention were developed for Health Messengers, using focus groups as the resource and test/refine vehicle. The resulting module emphasizes skill building in the area of interpersonal dynamics. Once the results of the AIDSTECH KAP are available, they will be incorporated, as appropriate, into the modules .

b. Adolescents

AIDSCOM was asked to develop, in collaboration with Profamilia, an AIDS education module for their Family Life series, which is offered in select schools throughout the DR. Additionally, the request was made by the government for similar materials for non Profamilia schools, as well as those schools reporting to the Roman Catholic Archdioceses. Materials are currently being developed and refined and should be ready for the Fall 1990 school term.

5. Materials Development for Mass Media

AIDSCOM assisted the GODR in the selection of Young and Rubicam/Damaris as the advertising agency to implement to mass media educational program for the DR. The campaign includes television, radio and print. Focus groups were used to develop concepts, test materials and to gather feedback from appropriate target audiences. A separate contract was let to evaluate and monitor placement of messages. AIDSCOM, through the resident advisor, provides ongoing technical assistance and training in this effort.

Campaigns will be evaluated and changed annually, and are supported through PI480 fund locally.

F. AIDSCOM Research Activities: 1990

1. National KAP Survey

The Annenberg School of Communications will conduct the first of two impact evaluations. Using the KAP format, impact of the mass media educational effort will be assessed. Results are expected in late 1990.

2. Formative Research for Materials Development

Focus groups will be used to develop intervention materials for Men who have sex with men as well as female sex workers. Concepts for materials will be derived using results of KAP surveys conducted among both groups (see earlier paragraphs). Work on these projects is expected to begin in September of 1990. Results of both interventions will be measured through tracking studies and final impact evaluations

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