



## Qualitative Research on Drug Use Assessing Emerging Drug Trends in the Caribbean

CICAD XXXVI, Washington DC, December 9, 2004

**Ms. Natasha Lloyd, St. Lucia**  
**Dr. Patrick E. Prince, St. Kitts & Nevis**

### PARTICIPATING PILOT COUNTRIES



## Project Background

- Gap in drug use research in the Caribbean;
- 10 out of 14 Caribbean member states unable to comply with MEM recommendations to study drug use in their populations;
  - Human, technical, financial resources needed
- Vulnerable region: drug transshipment route and stay-over drugs;



## Project Background

- French Government interest in region:
  - Departments: French Guiana and Martinique;
  - historical/cultural ties;
- CICAD interest in collaboration:
  - Work with OID counterpart-OFDT;
  - Develop Drug Information Systems in Caribbean member states;



## Collaborating Agencies

- FRANCE:
  - French Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction (OFDT);
  - Martinique Health Monitoring Center (OSM);
  - French Inter-Agency Drug Control Training Center (CIFAD);
  - French Guiana Drug Addictions Network.
- CICAD:
  - Inter-American Observatory on Drugs.



## Participating Pilot Countries

- CICAD and French government identified 6 pilot countries:
  - Dominica
  - Guyana
  - Haiti
  - St. Kitts and Nevis
  - St. Lucia
  - Suriname



## Project Objectives

- Enhance institutional capacity of 6 pilot countries to collect and analyze drug-related data;
- Provide methodological tools to conduct timely and cost efficient emerging drug trend assessments;
- Promote exchange of knowledge and best practices among 6 pilot countries and 2 French departments;
- Complement data provided by SIDUC surveys.



## Project Design

- Methodology developed by 7 European countries and published in 2003: refer to manual;
- Exchange of knowledge and best practices:
  - 2 meetings and 2 training workshops held in CIFAD in Martinique
- Data collection methodology: Focus Groups, Key Informants and secondary data;
- Data Analysis: NVivo software.



## Exchange of Knowledge and Best Practices

### *Stakeholders meeting: Sept. 2003*

- Developed Plan of Action to guide project execution, timeline and expected results;
- All participating countries committed to carrying one study using OFDT methodology using own resources.



## Exchange of Knowledge and Best Practices (cont.)

*Training Workshop: March 2004*

- Objectives:
  - Train 12 participants to identify, assess and disseminate information on Emerging Drug Phenomena;
  - Elaborated plan to develop a national Drug Information System;
  - Identified national research topics.



## Exchange of Knowledge and Best Practices (cont.)

*Training Workshop: June 2004*

- Objectives:
  - Train 12 participants on qualitative data collection and analysis;
  - Provide with one-year licenses of NVivo software;
  - Provide hands-on training on NVivo software using countries' national data.



## Exchange of Knowledge and Best Practices (cont.)

*Evaluation Meeting: Sept. 2004*

- Objectives:
  - Assess pilot project;
  - Refine and finalize national reports;
  - Make recommendations for future collaboration;
  - Proposal for standardized prison study;



## Qualitative Studies

- **Dominica:** Crack and marijuana Use Among Youth 18-35;
- **Guyana:** Identifying patterns and Types of Drugs Used Among Commercial Sex Workers;
- **Haiti:** Study of Drug Use Among Street Children in Port-au-Prince, Pétion Ville, and Carrefour Fouilles;



## Qualitative Studies (cont)

- **St. Kitts and Nevis:** Focus Assessment Study on Drug Use: Identifying Patterns Among Prisoners Prior to Incarceration;
- **St. Lucia:** A Study of Male Juvenile Offenders in St. Lucia;
- **Suriname:** The Use of Ecstasy and its combination with Alcoholic Beverages and Energy Drinks.



## Findings: Commonalities

### *Substances:*

- Most widely used substance is marijuana and alcohol;
- Most widely used combination: marijuana+cocaine;



## Findings: Commonalities (cont)

### *High Risk Behavior:*

- Marijuana use seen as positive by users;
- Early initiation to marijuana use;
- High-risk sexual behavior.



## Findings: Commonalities (cont)

### *Community/Society:*

- Dysfunctional family environments





## Findings: Commonalities (cont)

### *Safety and Security:*

- Links to violence and crime;
- Gangs and criminal activity;



## Findings: Commonalities (cont)

### *Drug Support:*

- Stealing;
- sex exchange



## Lessons Learned

### *Achievement:*

- Opportunities to explore alternative data collection;
- Exposure to new qualitative analysis software (NVIVO);
- Incorporation of OFDT Emerging Drug Phenomena Model.



## Lessons Learned

### *Challenges:*

- Limited capacity: resources (human, financial, and technical);
- Standardized format/methodology for comparative analysis
  - Standardized questionnaire;
  - standardized software package.



## Recommendations

- Proposal to continue project with original six participating countries;
- Must use standardized software package (Epi-Info + NVivo);
- More hands-on practical training on data collection tools (Epi-Info) and NVivo software;
- Develop standardized guidelines for research;



## Recommendations

- Carry out a standardized study among male prisoners prior to incarceration:
  - Age group: 18-40;
  - High-risk behaviors;
  - Methodology:
    - 5 Focus Groups;
    - 6 Key Informants (2 - police & justice, 2- prevention and 2-treatment);
    - Standardized software package.



## Recommendations

- Continue collaboration with OFDT, OSM and CIFAD;
- Develop Drug Information Systems in participating countries;
- Adapt OFDT methodology to meet countries needs and realities.

