

SURINAME

Report prepared by the Joint UN Team on AIDS

JOINT TEAM

UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO-PAHO, UNAIDS SECRETARIAT

JOINT PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTIONS AND RESULTS IN 2020-2021

The Joint Team's effort in 2020-2021 focused on building the capacity of healthcare providers and civil society to improve HIV prevention, sexual and reproductive health, and gender-based violence services in Suriname. Technical assistance was provided for the development of the Caribbean toolkit to scale up in- and out-of-school comprehensive sexuality education. To raise public awareness and eliminate gender-based violence, the Joint Team implemented various activities, including mural painting depicting gender-based violence. A population and housing census toolkit was launched to improve the quality of data collection, analysis, utilization, and reporting, thus improving development and implementation of evidence-based health programmes.

HIV PREVENTION

Under the Spotlight initiative, the Joint Team provided technical assistance for the adoption of international guidance for out-of-school comprehensive sexuality education to the Caribbean context; and development of Caribbean toolkit to guide civil society organizations for the implementation of out-of-school comprehensive sexuality education. Civil society in Suriname play a critical role in building grassroot level partnerships, including with young people, parents, and other trusted community members to plan and execute formal and informal comprehensive sexuality education programmes.

The Joint Team also supported the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) through the Lobi Foundation (national family planning structure) in Suriname in ensuring the provision of sexual and reproductive health services targeting the most vulnerable populations.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The Joint Team conducted a five-day workshop for 12 healthcare providers, including physicians, nurses, social workers, and HIV counsellors to build their capacity on clinical management of rape cases. The training also introduced the World Health Organization's protocol on management of intimate partner violence and rape, and the delivery of client-centred services, including in humanitarian settings.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated gender-based violence cases in Suriname, and to help mitigate these challenges, the Joint Team in partnership with civil society organizations supported various initiatives actively participated in the 16 Day of Activism against gender-based violence. For instance, technical and financial support was provided members of the Youth Advisory Group, youth volunteers and local artists to paint a gender-based violence mural in the Commewijne district over four weekends.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTEGRATED SDG AGENDA

In Suriname, lack of current, reliable, and disaggregated data on HIV prevalence continues to impede effective policy making and implementation of health and development programmes. In response, financial assistance was provided for the recruitment of a senior technician to support National Statistics Offices in ten countries in the region to conduct high-quality modern censuses and improve the quality of data collection, analysis, utilization, and reporting.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Economic challenges, including the devaluation of national currency and inflation, triggered significant cuts in public spending for health sector financing including the national response resulting in frequent shortages or stockout of antiretroviral treatment. There is a need to intensify high-level advocacy based on concrete evidence, such as findings from the Investment case conducted in 2016 to ensure continuity and sustainability of HIV services. A new investment case is needed to produce more recent data on the HIV response in Suriname.

One of the key lessons that the Joint Team has learned is the critical importance of advocacy and creating champions through strategic partnerships and alliances. Presentations on core issues around gender-based violence and adolescent sexual and reproductive health were made to the National Parliament on International Women's Day and on the National Population Policy to the Board of Ministers. In recognition of the importance of an integrated sexual and reproductive health agenda that recognises intersecting vulnerabilities such as ethnicity and indigenous population groups, a presentation of the findings of the review of the social determinants of adolescent pregnancies among maroon youth in Suriname for youth was made during the Regional Maroon gathering.

Report available on the
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