

Second HIV Surveillance Workshop — Nadi, Fiji, 1–5 August 2005

A second regional HIV surveillance workshop was held in August to examine the results of the first round of second-generation surveillance surveys (SGS) of HIV. Representatives from six Pacific Island countries gathered, together with project staff from the University of NSW (UNSW), WHO and SPC. The workshop was held to assist countries to review their collected data, check and correct any data-entry errors and produce initial results of the survey findings.

The six countries involved were Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Two representatives from each country attended the conference. Three surveys were conducted in most countries during late 2004 and 2005, including an HIV sero-surveillance survey of persons in an identified at-risk group, an STI prevalence survey in pregnant women and a behavioural surveillance survey in another vulnerable group, mostly youth. The aims of the surveys have been to examine levels of HIV and STI and associated risk behaviours in these subpopulations.

The workshop was designed to be an intensive and applied training in the statistical analysis methods required to compile the results of the surveys. Each country team had access to a computer and statistical software (EpiInfo and SPSS). Technical assistance with data analysis was provided to each country by technical support staff attending the workshop. A defined set of results was produced in draft form, including relevant UNGASS indicators related to HIV knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP). The indicators produced from the survey data will be used as baseline measures to evaluate the effectiveness of various HIV prevention and control programmes occurring in the region.

The workshop was labour intensive, with all survey teams making good progress with initial analyses of their survey data. At the end of the week country reports were presented of the preliminary findings. Following the workshop, the UNSW coordinators returned to Australia to complete the analysis and compile a regional report of the survey findings. This report is currently being drafted, and will be circulated to survey teams for comment prior to final release.

Results of previous, similar surveys in Vanuatu, Samoa and Kiribati can be seen at the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office website: see www.wpro.who.int and follow the STI publications link.

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