



***NETWORK OF CHRISTIANS
RESPONSE TO HIV AND AIDS IN
SIERRA LEONE-NECHRAS***

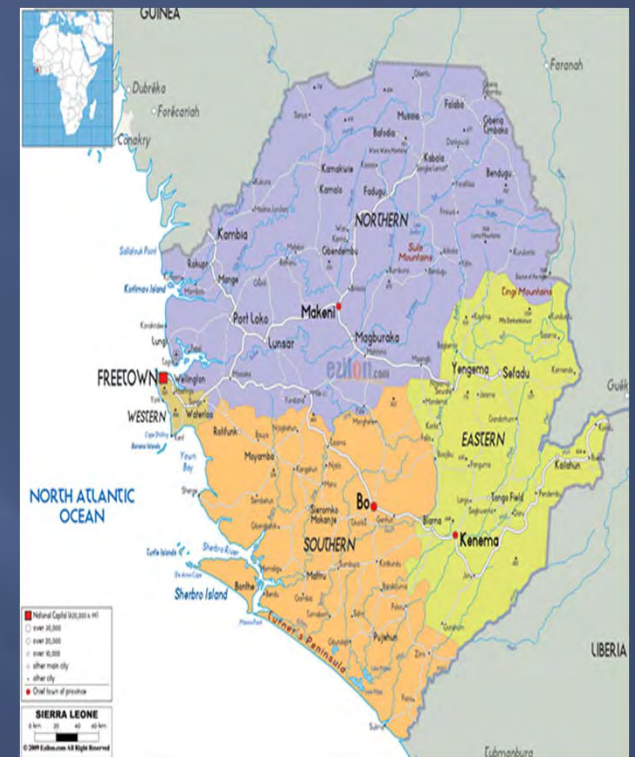
“Attaining scale and scope by
harnessing the media”

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BRIEF COUNTRY PROFILE

Sierra Leone a country of about 6.4 million people, has a ranking of 158 out of 169 countries in the Human Development Index, and is the eighth lowest ranked country on the Human Poverty Index with an average life expectancy of 48.2 years.

Poverty reduction remains a major challenge for the Government. The Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey conducted in 2003/2004 indicates that 70% of the population lives below the poverty line and poverty remains pervasive and endemic.



Brief Situational Analysis of HIV Epidemic in Sierra Leone



The first case of AIDS was reported in 1987. Between 2002 and 2005 the incidence of HIV increased from 0.9% to 1.5% among the 15 -49 age group and has since stabilized at this level (DHS 2009).

Prevalence for men was estimated at 1.2% and women was 1.7%. There were no consistent patterns of HIV prevalence by age among either men or women; rather the levels fluctuated by age group.

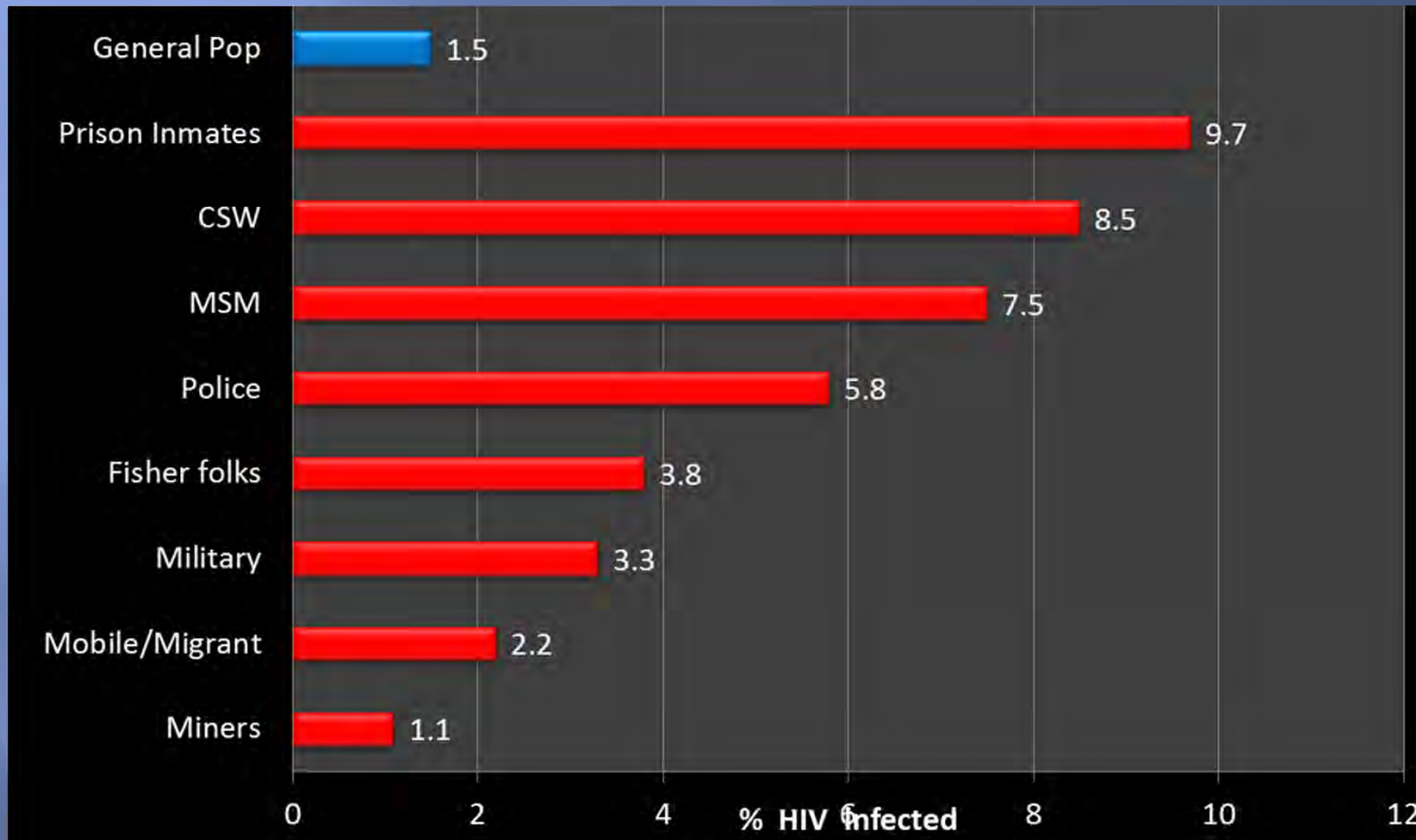
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HIV prevalence peaked at 45-49 years among men, while it peaked among women at 30-35 years.

HIV prevalence among pregnant women attending antenatal clinics (ANC) is 3.2% (NACP 2010) and is significantly higher than the national prevalence.

HIV prevalence among pregnant women over the years show declining trend from 4.4% to 3.5% between 2007 and 2008, and to 3.2% in 2010, respectively

HIV Prevalence by Various Population Sub-Groups



(DHS,2009)

NECHRAS SIERRA LEONE



- ❖ Established in 2003
- ❖ Revived by PACANeT in 2006
- ❖ Has a Board of 12 members including a PLHIV and three Regional representatives .
- ❖ Has regional committees.

NECHRAS IN BRIEF



GOAL

Coordinated network, research and information flow in the Churches

TARGET

Church Pastors & Congregation.
Para Church Organizations.
Individuals.

VISION

A coordinated Christian response to combat HIV and AIDS in Sierra Leone

OBJECTIVE

To foster HIV and AIDS activities in Churches and Para Church organizations

MEMBERSHIP

Has membership in all Four Regions in Sierra Leone

MISSION

To mobilize and equip the Church and Christian organizations to bring positive spiritual and physical transformation in the lives of People vulnerable to HIV and AIDS through-Teaching and Training, Advocacy, Networking, Care and Support and Research

SOME KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE NETWORK FOR 2011



The network has been involved in the following activities during the period of Jan-Nov,2011

TRAININGS

- Trained 120 Pastors each in all the regions on HIV and AIDS.(30 each per 4 regions)
- Trained 70 Pastors on project Cycle Management in all the 4 regions

RESULTS

Increased knowledge on HIV and AIDS

Increased the interest and basic knowledge on Project Cycle Management.



NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

Networking has been on-going. The project has been networking with both local and international

Achievements

- ❖ Acquired full recognition by the UN family as one of the formidable Faith Based Organization
- ❖ Strengthened Partnership with the National Body.
- ❖ Team work on the harmonization of HIV and AIDS friendly messages with other faith based organizations.

HIV AND AIDS TEACHING

HIV and AIDS Teaching in Bible College and Institutions is on-going.

Achievements

- ❖ Pastor's knowledge increased on HIV and AIDS before graduation.
- ❖ Reduction of some myths and misconceptions

MONTHLY AND QUARTERLY REVIEW MEETING

Monthly and quarterly meeting has been on-going.

Key achievements

Sharing of relevant information

Development of HIV and AIDS policy in process.

Developmental issues of the network is clarified.

15 minutes presentation on important issues by members of the network in each meeting.



BOARD MEETING

There has been 3 Board meetings for the year

Key achievements

Discuss on plans for networking and sustainability

Sharing of update to other members on the status of the network.

Move made to partners in developing and strengthening partnership



MONITORING VISIT

Monitoring visit conducted in the Regions.

Achievement

Identified gaps that needs to be addressed.

Successes stories, experiences and challenges shared.

Discussions and clarification made on issues raised and observed

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DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRIBUTION of IEC MATERIALS



7,000 IEC materials which were focusing on HIV stigma and Discrimination, HIV SAVE message, HIV questions and answers on critical issues like divine healing, and the network's brochure was produced. Distribution is on-going.

KEY ACHIEVEMENT

- Increased information on HIV and AIDS.
- Publicized the network to a wider number of the public
- Helped in reducing some myths and misconceptions

- ❖ Gives the opportunity for a large number of the public to boldly ask a lot of questions that are of doubt to them.
- ❖ Helps in the reduction of some myths and misconceptions related to HIV and AIDS.
- ❖ Some Pastors integrating HIV and AIDS into their normal activities
- ❖ NECHRAS has been appointed as an executive member of the Sierra Leone Inter-religious AIDS Network-SLIRAN as a result of the radio programs.
- ❖ Some Pastors can now openly talk about HIV and AIDS to their congregational members.
- ❖ Recognized by the UNAIDS as one of the formidable faith based organizations in the country



Monthly Radio discussion

The network is involved in monthly Radio discussions and airing of jingles in the 4 regions in Sierra Leone

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ❖ Increased knowledge on HIV and AIDS
- ❖ Increased awareness on HIV and AIDS to a wider number of the public.
- ❖ Publicized the network to a wider number of the public that are moved for partnership
- ❖ The network has been attracted to the print media

CHALLENGES

A. THE RADIO PROGRAMS

- Radio discussions are done for short period of time- this does not allow more people to call and ask questions
- ❖ Difficulties in getting expert panelist
- ❖ Use of only one Christian Radio station because of inadequate funds.

CHALLENGES CON'T

- ❖ Follow-up issues on concerns raised by listeners is challenging.
- ❖ The church has not been involved in Selecting panelist for the radio programmes.
- ❖ The Radio discussions have not been aired in local communities due to funding limitation.
- ❖ No monitoring tool developed to fully measure the impact of the messages in the communities.
- ❖ Conflicting messages are posing more confusion

GENERAL CHALLENGES

Institutional Level



Phases of development of the network- Enough time is not given for maturity at one level before going into another phase.

The founding members do not have phase out strategies.

People taking up key positions in the network are rushed in quickly without much coaching and mentoring .

The network has not made the CHURCH to own the network- therefore finds it difficult to get support from the church. For this reason the

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selection criteria for those we trained did not involve the participation of the Church. There is need for the Church to select its members and not the network.

Churches see the Network and its activities different from their own and therefore need time to find space for them.

Low capacity of the Church.

LESSONS LEARNT



Radio Programs offer people the opportunity to ask questions that they are shy to ask facially in meetings.

Churches are willing to respond but they lack technical expertise.

Networking requires dedication and perseverance as every Church/Organization has different approach.

The Church can support the Network if it sees it as it own.

WAY FORWARD



The Church must be made to own the Network from the onset.

Network must not see itself as implementer, but rather as facilitator.

Increase the time and coverage of radio discussions

Allow the Church to select those to be trained for follow up purposes.

Strengthen networking and collaboration with other partners.

PHOTOS ON RADIO DISCUSSION PROGRAMS



Radio discussion Prog.









BOKU ; BOKU

TENKI!