

# WINGS STI STUDY 2005

## **Methods and Results**

# Purpose of Study

- To determine the prevalence of certain sexually transmitted infections (STI's) amongst women, aged 18-49, most typically served by WINGS, that is low-income, rural and/or indigenous, in the Department of Chimaltenango, Guatemala in order to better plan future interventions and to disseminate information to help others in planning.

# History of Study

WINGS initiated the study in 2004, when Guatemalan Board Member, Carolina Ortiz, conducted research and concluded that there was little to no information on STI prevalence rates in Guatemala and that the government was doing little to rectify this.

# History of Study Cont.

- WINGS approached the Rafael Landivar University in Guatemala City, one of the large private universities with a public health department and suggested a collaboration.
- Dr. Ana Garces agreed to oversee an MPH student who could use the study as their thesis.
- Dora Oliva, a student, agrees to do the study for her thesis.

# Preparations

- WINGS and the university began initial preparations in 2004 including deciding which STI's to include, where to work, how many women to test, which tests to use, etc.
- In 2005, the study protocol was passed by the review board, staff were hired, supplies and equipment were bought.

# Study Period

- May 2005: 10 strong staff complete week long training covering range of topics from counseling to clinical skills.
- May, June, July 2005: Tests performed on women in 10 municipalities.
- August 2005 – August 2006: Results analyzed, thesis completed.

# Participants

- WINGS staff did publicity for weeks before the actual clinics to entice participants in.
- Women were offered an educational talk, free counseling (in their mother tongue) and testing along with free treatment for the woman and her partner if tests were found to be positive.
- Women participated voluntarily and signed an informed consent form.

# STI Tests Performed

- HIV
- Syphilis
- Gonorrhea
- Trichomonas
- Chlamydia (only on under 30)

# Other Tests Performed

- Candida
- Bacterial Vaginosis
- Pap Smear

In addition, each participant was interviewed with questions focusing on their sexual history and STI risk factors as well as on family planning.

# Testing Locations and Number of Participants

- Chimaltenango 31%
- Patzun 16%
- Zaragoza 12%
- Tecpan 10%
- Acatenango 9%
- Yepocapa 6%
- Poaquil 6%
- San Martin 5%
- Comalapa 3%
- Patzicia 2%
- **TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 1095**
- **WINGS staff coordinated closely with local organizations who helped promote the clinics and provided space.**

# Demographics

- 45% of participants were Ladino and 52% Indigenous
- 48% were urban with 50% rural
- 77% can read and write, 20% can't
- 23% reported no schooling, with the vast majority only completing part or all of primary school
- 90% of women were either married or in a union, none reported a divorce

## Demographics Con't.

- Over 83% of women reported that they had only been married or 'in a union' once
- 79% of women did not work for pay
- Those who do work, work mainly in the service industry

# STI Prevalence

- HIV .09% (1/1095)
- Syphilis .64% (7/1095)
- Gonorrhea .37% (4/1095)
- Trichomonas 1.64% (18/1095)
- Chlamydia 2.26% (9/399)
- NOTE: There was one woman diagnosed HIV+ who was out of age range.
- NOTE: There were 8 cases of gonorrhea diagnosed positive on the first test, but not confirmed by a second due to the patients not returning.

# Prevalence of Other Conditions

- Candida 19% (212/1095)
- Bacterial Vaginosis 34% (371/1095)

# Sexual History

- 80% have had more than one sexual partner
- 70% had their first sexual relationship between ages 14 and 19 (their partners were slightly older between ages 17 and 25)
- Just over 90% of women had their first relationship with a boyfriend or husband, but over 3% were raped

# Family Planning

- 94% of women did NOT use a contraceptive method in their first sexual relationship
- The main reason for not using a method was not knowing any methods (45%) with other reasons mentioned being that they don't know why (17%), and that they wanted a child (10%)

# Family Planning Con't

- Of those that now use methods, they use:
  - Injections 23%
  - Pills 4%
  - IUD 3%
  - Implant .09%
  - Condom 6%
  - Tubal 17%
  - Vasectomy .64%
  - Don't Use 25%

# Family Planning Con't

- Most women had between 1-5 children, but the range was 0-12 children
- 81% of participating women had no plans to get pregnant in the near future and 65% did not want any more children

# STI Risk Factors

- Just 4% of women say they have had multiple partners in the same time period
- Only 8% admit to having had anal sex
- Nearly 20% believe that their current partners have other partners
- Nearly 10% say their partners have had an STI

# Risk Factors Con't

- 41% of participants say they know nothing about STI's
- Of those that could mention an STI, HIV was by far the most known at 34%
- Nearly 14% of participants say that they themselves have had an STI, but only 10% report having sought medical attention for an STI

# Conclusions

- Prevalence for these STI's is quite low in the population studied, but:
  - There are ample risk factors including limited condom use and partners having multiple partners
  - Participants knowledge of STI's was very limited and mostly limited to HIV
  - Participants expressed interest in getting tested and in learning more

# Conclusions Con't

- The analysis showed the need for working in family planning among the targeted population:
  - Women in these areas are having sex between the ages of 14-19 and very few knew to use a method at that age – this supports WINGS youth program
  - 25% of women report not currently using a method, BUT 81% say they have no plans to get pregnant in the near future – shows unmet need or lack of knowledge

# Future Plans

- Write up short version for dissemination
- Share information with local health personnel, local NGOs and governmental organizations
- Use data to get more detailed information on family planning by municipality