



# TV UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

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## SYPHILIS IN HAITI

### VIDEO

PORT AU PRINCE

MILITARY ON ROADSIDE /

PEOPLE IN MARKET AND ROAD

SYPHILLIS ON SMALL CHILDREN

INTERIOR OF ALBERT

SCHWIETZER HOSPITAL /

STREET SCENES

BABY PHILLIP

DR. HESLEY OLIBRUCE ON  
CAMERA

### AUDIO

#### NARRATION

Haiti, situated in the Caribbean is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, dogged for years by political unrest and violence. Hundreds of children's lives are lost every year to a hidden, age old killer – syphilis (16').

The deadly infection is transmitted sexually and then passed unknowingly from a mother to her unborn child. Half of all infected babies die, and those that survive can go on to become blind, deaf and suffer brain damage (13').

Philip was brought to the hospital over a year ago, his body covered with blisters. Baby Philip is being tested for the disease by Dr. Hesley Olibruce who works at the Albert Schwietzer Hospital. (9')

DR. HESLEY OLIBRUCE (ENGLISH)      **M**

*"He got all the symptoms like nasal discharge and the spleen was enlarged and also the liver*

*was enlarged." (5')*

NARRATION

TREATING BABY

His life-threatening illness was caught just in time. He was given penicillin to clear the infection which had been passed to him during his mother's pregnancy (6').

MOTHER, (FRENCH) F

MOTHER ON CAMERA

*"I was told I had Syphilis but I never had any symptoms." (3')*

NARRATION

INTERIOR HOSPITAL

Leading specialist Dr. Jean-William Pape is fully aware of the nation-wide problem (4').

DR. JEAN-WILLIAM PAPE (FRENCH) M

DR. WILLIAM PAPE ON CAMERA.

*"We believe that Syphilis could account for at least one fifth of spontaneous abortions or neo-natal deaths in Haiti. The major problem we have with Syphilis is patients don't feel a thing, they feel well". (13')*

NARRATION

VOODOO SCENES

Doctors say mothers often blame the deaths on superstition in a culture where Voodoo traditions still play a dominant role in many people's lives. The result is that syphilis goes undiagnosed and continues to flourish (14')

MOTHERS WITH BABIES

Lack of access to testing and treatment makes

matters worse. In rural Haiti, a pregnant woman may have to walk twelve hours to a clinic where testing is offered (10').

DR. ROSANNA PEELING  
ARRIVES

But a new simple test recommended by the World Health Organization could change that. Dr. Rosanna Peeling, a tropical disease researcher, led the evaluation of rapid syphilis tests, to identify which ones actually worked in these remote settings where there is often no electricity. (18')

DR. ROSANNA PEELING ON  
CAMERA

DR. ROSANNA PEELING (ENGLISH) F

*"It would allow you to have a laboratory diagnosis of Syphilis in 15 minutes It's very easy to use."*

*"In Haiti the potential is to save several thousand babies a year from congenital syphilis and in Sub-Saharan Africa there's the potential to save half a million babies". (20')*

MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

NARRATION

At just 20 to 50 cents, the new test should be affordable for developing countries. The World Health Organization now plans to take it to even more remote parts of Haiti, and other hard-to-reach corners of the developing world. Doctors hope the age old disease can at last be defeated (20')

UN LOGO

This report was prepared by WHO for the United

Nations 8').