

# THE SECRETARIAT

*"Building Resilience Through Innovation and National Accountability"*



JAN - JUN 2020

## The National AIDS Commission launches Food Assistance for Persons living with HIV (PLHIV)

As part of its 'Continuity of HIV Services during COVID 19 Action Plan', the National AIDS Commission (NAC) conducted a Needs Assessment of Persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV). This was done through the existing various layers of support to PLHIV including social workers and adherence counsellors in the Ministry of Health, Peer Navigators, NAC District Committees, Civil Society Organizations and the Ministry of Health.



Our assessment revealed many PLHIV were desperately in need of food items in order to remain adherent to their medication. We provided the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation with a list of 100 persons to facilitate and expedite assistance to these individuals through the Government of Belize's 'Food Assistance Program.' We were also in discussion with two private companies and other agencies to get some food items donated to the NAC for direct distribution to PLHIV.

Thus far, the National AIDS Commission has received and distributed over one hundred (120) food packages. Packages go a long way to assist those most affected by the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic.

We would like to thank Belize Taiwan Alumni Society, Mr. Orson "OJ" Elrington, Santiago Castillo Limited & Dutch Lady, Grace Foods, Mr. Oscar Arnold, San Pedro Belize Express Water Taxi, Ms. Eva Burgos - The CSO Hub, UNIBAM - Mr. Caleb Orozco, Mr. Lee Mark Chang and Ms. Yannickah Matthews for their generous donation.



The NACs Facebook page has been a powerful tool used to empower persons by promoting healthy lifestyles, social distancing and good hygiene. Our messaging continues to focus on respect for Human Rights, condemnation of acts of violence and abuse against vulnerable groups including persons from the LGBT community, women and children as well as a call to action in collectively reducing and refraining from cyberbullying, stigma and discrimination which has seen a spike during COVID 19.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Pg. 1: NAC's Food Assistance
- Pg. 2: NAC 2019 Annual Report
- Pg. 3: NAC Peer Navigator Program
- Pg. 3: NAC District Committee
- Pg. 4: NAC Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- Pg. 5: CSOs Activities
- Pg. 11: CSO-HUB Activities
- Pg. 12: CVC Budget Advocacy Training
- Pg. 13: PANCAP's Knowledge Exchange
- Pg. 15: Upcoming events

Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

The National AIDS Commission continues to work with its social partners and communities in providing care, treatment and support services to persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

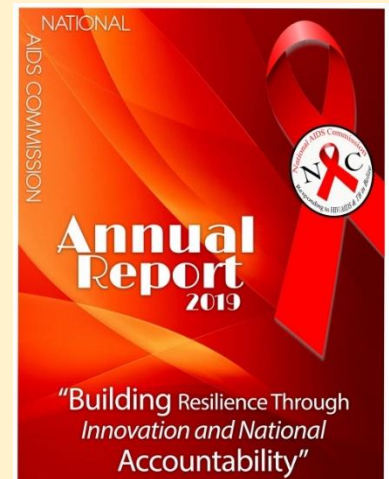


## The NAC launches the 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

The NAC's annual report provides information on the multi sectoral organization's mission and history and summarize our achievements in the past year.

It is an essential part of the reporting process to ensure our partners, stakeholders and wider network of persons are aware of the work the Commission has accomplished.

The Annual Report was completed in April 2020 and has been disseminated electronically. A copy can be found on our website at [www.nacbelize.org](http://www.nacbelize.org) and on our Facebook page @National AIDS Commission. If you would like a copy, kindly email [communications@nacbelize.org](mailto:communications@nacbelize.org). We encourage you to read through.



**Foreword**



The Global Economic landscape has changed and so has the HIV funding landscape. Donor funding has been gradually reduced and the limited resources available require more emphasis on value for money, that is funds spent for the greatest impact and in the most efficient way. Countries all over the world are now in a transition phase from Global Fund to Country-led funding of the national response to HIV and AIDS. Belize has made significant progress in gradually increasing its domestic funding and exploring options to diversify funding sources in its quest to treat all and end AIDS by 2030 through differentiated service delivery models. The increased political commitment towards country ownership, efficiency and sustainable financing is reflected in the work of the National AIDS Commission and confirms to the Government of Belize's obligation to the United Nations 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS under the theme: "Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS".

As a multi-sectoral response, we need to re-focus our efforts and interventions so as to accelerate activities in HIV prevention, enable people to know their HIV status, provide antiretroviral therapy and long-term care and support services to all people living with HIV, and put an end to the pervasive HIV-related stigmatization and discrimination.

**Hon. Laura Tucker-Longsworth OBE, MSN, RN**  
Chair, National AIDS Commission



Page 2

**A Message from the Executive Director**



Greetings

In 2019, the National AIDS Commission, serving as the Country's Coordinating Mechanism embarked on the oversight of the implementation of the first year of the Global Fund Grant Cycle 2019-2021. This grant is based on the transition readiness assessment workplan as well as updated National Strategic Plans. The grant activities include:

- Delivery of standardized package of behaviour change and risk reduction outreach activities to men who have sex with men and to transgender people including HIV tests through certified HIV testing trainees from civil society organizations.
- Pilot of Social Contracting using grant funds to implement HIV/TB activities.
- Capacity building of the Ministry of Health as a potential future Principal Recipient of Global Fund funding and of the CSO Hub in five functional areas to strengthen and sustain the national response.
- Capacity building for health care workers in the Standard Operating Procedures for Viral Load Testing.
- Set up navigation services to support people living with HIV navigate the health services and support PLHIV to keep them enrolled in treatment services, with adherence counsellors at health facilities, peer navigators for key populations and National AIDS Commission District Committees.

The work of the NAC continues to be centered on scaling up and advancing a human rights framework for key populations, building political will through an investment case that demonstrates the national economic cost/benefit of investing in the public-sector response along with systems and collaboration between government and civil society organizations. To this end, the NAC has embarked on the development of comprehensive legislation that seeks to address all forms of discrimination and inequality through an Equal Opportunities Legislation.

While tremendous work, effort and investments have been made in the national response to HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS continues to be public health issue where 2019 data from the Ministry of Health showed an increase in new infections from 223 in 2017 to 254 in 2018. This deadly disease is affecting our Belizean women and men at their most productive years with an average of 105 deaths annually.

Scientific evidence, however, has shown that HIV treatment can extend the lifespan of people living with HIV and effectively prevent HIV transmission. There are also many proven opportunities for HIV prevention beyond medicines, including condom programming, behaviour change, and programmes focusing on key populations. These have clearly demonstrated their capacity to sharply lower rates of new HIV infections. HIV programmes are dramatically strengthened when they are combined with social and structural approaches.

If we are to end the AIDS epidemic, we need to use all the resources available, hold each other accountable for results and make sure that no one is left behind.

**Enrique Romero, M. Econ & Public Administration**  
Executive Director  
National AIDS Commission



Page 3

Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

## The NAC Peer Navigator's Program

The NAC Peer Navigator's Program started in 2018. Peer navigators are full-time (funding permitted) workers and depending on their qualifications and experience, their work may include most or all of the following responsibilities:

- Outreach
- HIV education and risk reduction
- Condom promotion and access
- HIV counselling and testing
- Linkage of client to clinical and social services
- On-going follow up and support to newly diagnosed HIV-positive clients
- Navigation of health services for newly diagnosed HIV-positive clients
- Adherence motivation
- Identification of barriers to care and skill building to address barriers
- Patient empowerment
- Referral to support groups



For the past six (6) months the peer navigators in the Cayo district and Belize district have been working diligently to ensure they are in contact with clients especially during our current situation, battling COVID-19. The peer navigators were restricted with movements and could not conduct visits for over three (3) months, however, they kept in contact via telephone and made many referrals to the NAC office. The main focus during this time of crisis is to ensure clients have their medication and remain adherent and they are getting food. Many clients were a part of the NAC's food assessment program and received at least one food package.

## The NAC District Committees

The Commission is further supported by the NAC District Committees. The structure of the District Committee is exactly the same as that of the NAC itself. Financial support to the District Committee members is done through the NAC Secretariat who manages a fund known as the Country Coordinating Mechanism Funding Agreement with the Global Fund.

Each District Committee, with the support from the NAC Secretariat implements various activities throughout the year including outreach, awareness campaigns, presentations at schools, appearance on talk shows and health fairs. The district committee members serves on a volunteer basis and do not receive remuneration but support to implement their activities.

There are seven (7) District Committees:

- Corozal District
- Orange Walk District
- Belmopan City
- San Ignacio, Cayo District
- San Pedro
- Stann Creek District
- Punta Gorda District



Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

For the last six (6) months the District Committees has limited their outreach activities due to COVID-19 and restrictions implemented by the government. Nonetheless, a few activities were completed.

The Punta Gorda committee completed the **Mabilha Village Health fair** on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.



The Stann Creek committee conducted a “Needs Assessment” for persons living with HIV. This assessment revealed many persons in the southern villages were in need of food items and sanitizing supplies. Medication was not a concern as many persons received two month supply prior of restrictions.

Twenty-three names were submitted to the NAC Secretariat for food assistance and each person received a food package.



## **THE NATIONAL AIDS COMMISSION MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK**

Monitoring and Evaluation is used to assess the performance of projects, institutions and programmes set up by governments, international organisations and NGOs. Its goal is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact.

In the case of the National AIDS Commission(NAC), we are looking at how the country’s response mechanism is performing in regards to combatting HIV and TB. As you may be aware the NAC does not carry out interventions but it coordinates them with the help of the Ministry of Health, Peer Navigators, District Committees and Civil Society Organizations. All these organizations have a goal and that goal can be found in the core values of the National Strategic Plan. This NSP is directly linked to a work plan with clear precise targets and indicators that are used to track their achievements.

Some of the indicators that we track specifically in regards to HIV/TB are:

- Percentage of population tested for HIV
- Percentage of persons aged 15-49 years diagnosed with HIV in the last 12 months.
- Percentage of children born to HIV -infected mothers who are infected.
- Percentage of people in ART by treatment line.
- Domestic and International AIDS spending by category and funding sources.
- Percentage of women & men aged 15-49 who report discriminatory attitudes towards people living with HIV.
- Proportion of ever-married or partnered women aged 15-49 who experienced physical or sexual violence from a male partner in the past 12 months.
- Percentage of young people aged 15-24 reached with HIV prevention programs.
- Coverage of HIV prevention programs among KPs.
- Percentage of HIV-positive pregnant women who receive ARTs to reduce the risk of mother-ro-child transmission.
- Percentage of people in ART tested for VL with VL <1000 copies /ml after 12 months of therapy.

Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

- Percentage adults and children known to be alive on treatment 12 months after initiation of antiretroviral therapy.

Looking specifically at these indicators one may ask well how does keeping track of these things help us in regards to knowing if we are running an effective intervention program? Let me offer an explanation. Suppose we have a population of 10,000 people and of that we test a certain amount it gives us a very good idea of how the disease is spreading, of course ideally we would want to test the entire population but realistically unless we make it a law that's not possible. But by using things like spectrum estimates we are able to make estimations as to what the results would be like for the entire population.

In keeping with the goals of the 90-90-90 rules we try to test as many people as possible. Once we have tested and we know who are infected we aim to get them in the system and on ARVs. Once we have them on medication our goal is to keep them there. So how can we know if we are doing a good job of this or not? The answer lies in monitoring the numbers.

A perfect example of this would be the very successful Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) Program. We try to test all pregnant mothers for HIV. If found positive we recommend certain steps to ensure that the virus is not transmitted to the child. All these indicators are things that we track. The resulting performance based on the different indicators allow us to know if our program is going according to plan.

In the next newsletter we will share some more insights on data collection and other aspects of the monitoring and evaluation process.



## Thank you to our Nurses!

Nurses need to be commended for their courage and dedication to their work, as they serve those that require medical assistance, where ever they are stationed.



One such example is our nurses in our Outreach program! During the time of mandatory lockdown due to COVID-19, they stayed the course and maintained communications with their HIV clients (children) via various media platforms. Just to highlight some of their work, they assist with checkups, Lab works and deal with challenges such as anemia, trauma, ear infections, cough, respiratory tract and lung infection, to name a few. They continue to encourage adherence to parents/guardians of children in our programs. During the chaos of this pandemic, they had clients that needed immediate attention and they made the

Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

necessary visits to provide needed medications. It was a bit of a challenge, nevertheless, they did their utmost best to keep serving, until they were able to return to work.



## Collaborative Network for Persons Living with HIV UPDATES:

C-Net+ conducted a few outreach activities prior to COVID-19 lockdown. These included:

- THE MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUPS for PLHIV in February and March
- IMPROVING THE ENGAGEMENT OF YOUTH IN GLOBAL FUND PROCESSES IN BELIZE, JAMAICA & SURINAME February 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> 2020
- IMPROVING THE ENGAGEMENT OF Key Populations IN GLOBAL FUND PROCESSES IN BELIZE, JAMAICA & SURINAME March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 2020



Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission



## Trans In Action **UPDATES:**

Many activities were delayed due to the current global pandemic. TIA Belize has participated in many zoom meetings and encourage the TRANS Community to remain calm during the difficulty time. Many persons were assisted with the navigation of the COVID Relief funds via the Government of Belize.

The most recent project has been the Care packages that we have worked on, by getting funds from Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition (CVC) through United Caribbean Trans Network (UCTrans). We manage to get a \$1000.00 US which we put to good use. We reached out to 35 Trans male and female including gender non confirming individuals who needed the help most. We also manage to give a small donation to Tikum Olam, as Elisa and her community have been instrumental in community outreach. Zahnia Canul has been working closely with a few members on how to grow small business that could create income, as well as referrals to doctors for medical checkups and ensuring that our PLWHIV get the assistance and care they need.



## Promoting Empowerment Through Awareness for **Lis/Bi Women UPDATES:**



“Bridging the Food Gap”

PETAL was pleased to announce that forty (40) of its beneficiaries received a PETAL Wellness Basket and utility subsidy on May 15th, 2020. This was financed by

COC Netherlands and other private donors.

Maintaining especially Lesbian and Bisexual Family Wellness.



Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

## Empower Yourself Belize Movement UPDATES:

EYBM hosted an outreach workshop for Human Rights, Gender Based Violence, & EQB with LGBTIQ, different government departments, stakeholders and a certification on Human Rights Training. This was funded by Canada Funds for Local Initiative.



### Parents of Gay Children Speak Out Session

This is the first information session for parents with gay children for 2020. An open discussion was started with the questions: Are you aware of the 'Live and Let Live' Campaign? What are your thoughts about the campaign?

Parents shared their experiences about these question. One of the parent shared that, she is featured in one of the ads and she felt proud to publicly state her position as a Christian parent regarding her child's sexual orientation. Parents were very interested in understanding the Equal Opportunities/Anti-discrimination Bill, particularly the claim that the bill will legalize gay marriages in Belize. The host organization has promised to seek opportunity for those interested to attend one of the information session in the near future.

Participants were invited to share some challenges they are facing as parents of gay children. These challenges included:

- Exclusion from the wider family
- Divorce/separation
- Conflict with the education system
- Unpleasant experiences when seeking employment
- One parent and child family that attended expressed the challenges Trans women faced in seeking employment. She further explained that due to lack of employment opportunities in industries outside cosmetology and hospitality, she is forced to work in the sex work industry, which sometimes could be very risky.
- One parent shared her experience and the evolution of her relationship with her estranged mother. She shared the liberating feeling she felt when her mom finally accepted her partner.

The discussion progressed in an open fashion and participants discussed grandparents' relationship to them and their gay child. Most parents shared that grandparents were way more supportive and understanding than fathers and brothers.

Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission



# GoJoven Belize UPDATES



## Direct Observation Therapy (DOTS)

Interventions provided by trained and certified fellows, coordinated by GOJoven Belize Alumni Association, focused the provision of service to rural communities in the Cayo and Stann Creek Districts, and was vital to planned activities for the first year of the Global Fund/UNDP grant. The service package delivery included glucose check, blood pressure, temperature, weight, condoms/lube, TB screening, and HIV, with a testing reach of 1,500 individuals. As an added benefit, these activities helped to build the capacity of GOJoven fellows while working amongst the

communities.

The DOTS, up to date, has met its target of 1,500 individuals, of which, 816 were provided service within the first quarter of the year 2020. These individuals were met in a one-on-one home visit strategy, ensuring each individual received education/pre-post counseling, and maintaining confidentiality and discretion. Communities visited were all approached with support from the village council, community health workers, and HECOPAB coordinators.



## BELIZE FAMILY LIFE ASSOCIATION UPDATES

### 1. Advocacy

Three Youth Advocacy Movement (YAM) members previously trained in advocacy for sexual and reproductive health were panelist during the Spouses of Caribbean Leaders Action Network's (SCLAN) Adolescent and Youth Forum held in February. The theme was "Adolescents engaged for change & a sustainable future." The goal of the forum was to address issues of gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS, cervical cancer, mental health, adolescent pregnancy and climate change. YAM members Lezli McCullough, Jared Cain and



Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission



Ceejay Morrison represented well as they shared their experienced in working with youth in SRH and the importance of meaningful youth participation.

2. The Association engaged PRfect Green Belize to develop 4 policy briefs on the *National Gender-Based Violence Action Plan: A Multi-Sectoral Plan to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence in Belize 2017 – 2020*. Recognizing that the life

of this plan expires in 2020, BFLA found it oppotune to assess the progress and status of the GBV response. Through dialogue with the National Women’s Commission and other stakeholder in the Gender Based Violence response the briefs were concluded summarizing key notable points for each thematic area as outlined in the plan with a view to inform a way forward for the revision of the National Gender Based Violence Action Plan which according to the National Women’s Commission should be underway.



3. Over 4000 young persons directly participate in a CSE session. The promotion and engagement of adolescents and youth in comprehensive sexuality education session continues to be of paramount importance for the Association.

These sessions provide young people with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health.



4. Mobile clinical services - The COVID 19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown greatly impacted the access to service. The Association had to halt clinical operations at the end of March; however, cognizant that confinement can contribute to an increased need for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) especially contraceptive services, the Association conducted contraceptive

mobile clinics in Cayo and Stann Creek districts serving over 400 individuals.

5. In collaboration with partners such as Promoting Empowerment Through Awareness for Lis/Bi Women (PETAL), Our Circle and Productive Organization for Women in Action (POWA) the association was able to reach out to at-risk-population with products such as condoms, lubricants and emergency contraceptive (FSW) during the lockdown period. The networking with Our Circle facilitated the support received from the Belize Defense Force (BDF) in the delivery of packages to the districts.



Visit us @[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission



## CSO-HUB ACTIVITIES UPDATE



The Civil Society Organization Hub (CSO- Hub) conducted their first Recap Meeting for 2019, at the Belize Biltmore Plaza. This meeting hosted all members of the CSO-Hub to discuss programmatic year review, and solicit/discuss feedback from CSO-Hub pilot activities. Additionally, the programme evaluation was conducted by the local fund agent (LFA).

The meeting was also called to discuss new challenges and their implications for 2020. Overall the conference was deemed a success, and at the end of the session, the unanimous consensus by member

CSOs was to support the country's strategies in the response to HIV/TB.

### February 6th, 2020

The CSO-Hub conducted part two of the programmatic meeting, a continuation of the meeting held on February 4th, 2020. The meeting was held in collaboration with BFLA and NAC's Communication Officer. The discussions were focused on the 2020 work plan for the second year of the Global Fund Grant Agreement.

Some of the topics discussed were: programmatic overview, HIV 101, reporting mechanisms, the CSO-Hub work plan activities, integration of the peer-navigators, and a standard reporting template for the MSM service delivery package.



### CSO-HUB SUPPORT SERVICES

#### SUPPORT GROUPS for PLWHIV

As part of our commitment to persons living with HIV, the CSO-Hub provides assistance to two (2) support groups: one in Belize City and one in San Ignacio, each consisting of ten (10) members. In San Ignacio, the support group is better structured and established, having agreed on the name "Luz de Apoyo" or "Light of Support", as well as selecting executive members to provide directions on topic such as HIV/TB 101, Mental Health, and wellness. The group is under the supervision of Ms. Emma, the HIV Counselor in San-Ignacio, and supported by CSO-Hub member GOJoven Belize. In Belize City, the support group is headed with support of C-Net+ and GOJoven Belize.



Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

## CSO-HUB and COVID

As a consequence of COVID pandemic and loss of income by individuals, the CSO-Hub's response effort was in part to mitigating the economic and alimentary impacts of persons living with HIV/TB. The CSO-Hub supported twenty individuals, the majority of whom are members of our support groups. The aim is to provide a monthly food pantry for a period of three months.



---

## Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition (CVC) conducts BUDGET ADVOCACY TRAINING in Belize

On March 5-6<sup>th</sup> 2020, Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition hosted a two day Budget Advocacy Training in Belize at The Princess Hotel & Casino facilitated by Ivan Cruickshank.

Countries have made some progress in improving key population HIV programming through the efforts of CSOs and more recently, through national program efforts to adopt innovative prevention and adherence programming. In the 10 Caribbean countries that have committed to Treat All, national programs understand the value of CSO and community engagement in planning, direct service delivery to KPs, training and capacity building for service providers, and monitoring to enhance effectiveness and quality. The Bahamas, Barbados and the Dominican Republic have been implementing PrEP and are considering how to scale-up and sustain this as part of a package of effective combination prevention services for KPs. As donor funding for HIV in the Caribbean continues to decline, the challenges associated with financing parallel systems of KP service delivery are increasingly evident. Sustainability of Treat All and new approaches to service delivery for KPs, requires a multi-sectoral approach that is consolidated under national programs to enable access to feasible, long-term resourcing include from domestic sources.



The Budget Advocacy Training served as an introduction to budget processes and analysis and lobbying strategies related to access and influencing budgetary decision.

Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

Participants were trained to understand and participate in budget processes, analysis, lobbying strategies related to access, and influencing budgetary decision in Belize. Civil Society Organizations understanding of the role they can play in the budget process.



## PANCAP KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE PROMOTES

### SUCCESSFUL MODELS OF CARE FOR KEY POPULATIONS



The Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP), *the mechanism that provides a structured and unified approach to the Caribbean's response to the HIV epidemic*, collaborated with the Integral Orientation and Research Center/Centro de Orientación e Investigación Integral (COIN) to facilitate a learning exchange focused on Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and successful HIV testing strategies for key populations to access prevention and treatment. The capacity-building initiative was held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic from 17-21 February 2020. The two entities previously collaborated on a learning journey in June 2018.

The initiative was led by Dr Shanti Singh-Anthony, Knowledge Coordinator, PANCAP, who explained that the learning exchange was designed for participants to experience first-hand the process utilised by COIN to coordinate and collaborate with the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, other civil society organisations and stakeholders to deliver comprehensive HIV services in communities and to key populations.

The learning exchange also exposed participants to components of a Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) programme, which serves as a highly effective prevention modality, and successful HIV testing and linkage strategies for key populations.

At the conclusion of the learning exchange, participants were tasked with developing country-specific action plans to enhance in-country collaboration among civil society organisations and representatives of the national HIV programme to improve how key populations access prevention, testing and treatment.

Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

The countries which participated in the learning exchange were Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Participants comprised of country teams of National AIDS Programme Managers and civil society organisation (CSO) representatives. A total of ten persons from the six countries participated and interacted with representatives of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, Dominican Republic, COIN, and other CSO representatives. Participants also engaged with the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, National HIV response and community-based organisations through site visits to clinics and outreaches.



The learning exchange was supported with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

To view a video on the learning exchange, [click here](#).

– ENDS –

### **What is PANCAP?**

PANCAP is a Caribbean regional partnership of governments, regional civil society organisations, regional institutions and organisations, bilateral and multilateral agencies and contributing donor partners which was established on 14 February 2001. PANCAP provides a structured and unified approach to the Caribbean's response to the HIV epidemic, coordinates the response through the Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework on HIV and AIDS to maximise efficient use of resources and increase impact, mobilises resources and build capacity of partners.

### **What is the Integral Orientation and Research Center/Centro de Orientación e Investigación Integral (COIN)?**

The Integral Orientation and Research Center/Centro de Orientación e Investigación Integral (COIN) is a private, social interest institution of the Dominican Republic, created on November 28, 1988, by a multidisciplinary team of people with shared experience in community and health work. Born as a result of the emergence of the HIV and AIDS epidemic and trafficking in persons in the Dominican Republic, COIN has concentrated its efforts on implementing educational programmes.

COIN's programmes focus on prevention, health care and social discrimination. The entity implements innovative strategies and approaches that serve to empower key populations. In their work with marginalized populations, COIN promotes the integration of the community in the identification of their

Visit us @:www.nacbelize.com or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission

needs and problems and works with them to define policies and execute solutions. COIN currently operates in the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Haiti with 82 staff.

**Contact:**

Timothy Austin

Senior Project Officer, Communications

PANCAP Coordinating Unit

CARICOM Secretariat

Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana

Email: [taustin.consultant@caricom.org](mailto:taustin.consultant@caricom.org)

Tel: (592) 222-0001-75, Ext. 3409 | Visit [www.PANCAP.org](http://www.PANCAP.org)

---

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- **CCM Retreat - July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020**
- **CCM Orientation and Induction Training - TBA**
- **National Testing Week - TBA**

Visit us @:[www.nacbelize.com](http://www.nacbelize.com) or like us on Facebook at National AIDS Commission