



THE SECRETARIAT

"Giving Hope to People Living with HIV Through Dedicated Service."

The NAC does Capacity Building Work Sessions with Key Affected Populations

In July the National AIDS Commission and the Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition (CVC) partnered on several key and dynamic trainings designed to empower and strengthen Civil Society Organizations (CSO), NGO's and key populations within the HIV/AIDS response in Belize. These sessions were done in Belize City and in Dangriga Town, which are considered the high burden areas. The main objectives of the sessions were:

- To have greater support and involvement of the CSO's in HIV/AIDS response
- To strengthen linkages between the communities and the health care systems
- To identify barriers, gaps, areas of synergy, and future action that will assist in reaching the 90-90-90 targets

The sessions entitled: ***"Reaching the 90-90-90 targets in the Caribbean through Local Authority and Civil Society Partnerships"***, were facilitated by Dr. Carolyn Gomes, Executive Director of CVC and her co-facilitator Ms. Kandasi Levermore, Executive Director of Jamaica AIDS Support for Life (JASL). These were completed in Belize City on July 18th-19th and in Dangriga Town on July 20th -21st and focused primarily on how to achieve access to the treatment targets for the Caribbean and provided an in-depth overview of the HIV/AIDS situation within the Caribbean and Latin America as well as exploring the concept of the 90-90-90 targets and the ambitious treatment target needed in order to reach it by 2020.



In her discussion, Dr. Gomes spoke to the fact that in 2015, donors provided governments with \$7.53 billion US dollars for HIV Programs,

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a 13% decline in funding since 2014 due to competing priorities, humanitarian emergencies, refugee crises, and fiscal austerity among other factors. As funding gaps threaten to derail the response to HIV patients, countries will increasingly need to fill gaps and find more efficient and cost effective ways to fund their response. A survey of HIV focused organizations, conducted by UNAIDS in 2012 and 2013, revealed that majority of the survey respondents reported experiencing decreases in funds for HIV and human rights related work.

The experiences with PANCAP Round 9 Grant work with CSOs shows that there is a need for greater prioritization of key interventions that are evidence based and target individuals at highest risk, as well as the need for early and wide dissemination of findings and frank discussion of epidemiological data. NGOs and other implementers need to be provided with guidance on the focus their programs need to take as well as build local authority and civil society partnerships for greater success.

Dr. Gomes and Ms. Levermore spoke to hope and a stronger collaborative impact within the response in order to reach our collective national and regional goals. With regards to the CSOs and government, there needs to be a strengthening of the dialogue between them in order to have more partnerships and collaboration between all parties.



On July 26th the National AIDS Commission, Centro de Orientacion E Investigacion Intergral(COIN) and the Caribbean Voluntary Communities Coalition (CVC) once again teamed up to address the needs and capacities of the populations we serve through a one-day session entitled: **“CHALLENGING STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF HIV SERVICES IN THE CARIBBEAN”**.

Mr. Ivan Cruickshank, CVC representative and program facilitator opened the session with a statement of intent and the shared program objectives; which were as follows:

to Review and assess agency/country specific advocacy plans; to assess relevance in response to changing circumstances; to improve knowledge sharing among partner agencies; to share lessons learned so others can benefit from their experience; to develop a National Advocacy Plan using data (both quantitative and qualitative) to inform advocacy; and to make arguments that support policy proposals to help make advocacy efforts more viable. This exercise included development of effective advocacy messages specifically for target audiences.

As the purpose of the session was to empower advocates to move their agendas forward, local agencies were asked to present on their experiences within Belize and how the systems facilitate their rights and causes. Presenting agencies were: UNIBAM, CNET+, PETAL, Our Circle and TIA Belize. After the presentations and group discussion, Mr Cruickshank moved the work to developing a national advocacy action plan which focused on alleviating treatment care and support issues for the populations, to advance legislative reform that advances anti-discrimination and stream line health services for key population



and to highlight the effects of adults ARVs on children which were tied to increasing the number of persons accessing and retained on treatment country wide to contribute to the 90-90-90 targets.

After all the presentations, Ivan thank the groups for their work and indicated that all the CSOs are doing some good work and should keep doing what they are doing. He indicated that he had seen the different types of advocacy used such as: campaigns, advising, activism and lobbying all used at some point by the different CSOs. He asked the groups to look at and improve their first draft of the advocacy plan with the suggestions provided to them and address the issues in a timely manner.

From July 27th to 28th, the NAC and CVC embarked on CSO directed Legal Literacy workshop as a part of a three-year regional project entitled: *“Challenging Stigma and Discrimination to Improve Access to and Quality of HIV service in the Caribbean.”* The project is being implemented in eight countries in the Caribbean including Belize.

The program is design to build the capacity of members of various key populations to identify and address discrimination and to contribute to increasing community participation in decision making in the national HIV/AIDS national response.



Newly Elected GO-Belize Board of Directors engage in 2-Day Workshop

The GO-Belize Alumni Association was established in March of 2011 in an effort to contribute meaningfully to: the increase in knowledge of sexual reproductive health, leadership skills building and promotion of environmental issues, affecting

Belizean youth in order to stimulate positive behavior change and communication in an atmosphere of fellowship. In February 2017 GO-Belize elected a new Board of Directors.

In part with the aforementioned, GO-Belize Board of Directors met for a 2-Day workshop in Belmopan City from September 2-3, 2017 to synergize efforts in *“Re-designing and Enhancing Strategies to decrease HIV/AIDS/TB.”* As a result, GO-Belize revised and updated its Strategic Plan and Operational plan with a latter Communication plan thereafter, that will serve in guiding the organization’s work from 2017-2020 contributing to the National Response of HIV/AIDS/TB. A response plan was also developed after the revision of an External M&E results, which was done by PHI’s M&E Consultant, PhD Julie Solomon, in 2016.



From left to right: Kelsie Ciego, Marla Magaña, Errol Longsworth, Adir Chan, Nekeisha Lima, Alisha Solis Osvaldo Cantun, Elmer Cornejo

Getting serious about Service Providers and HIV/AIDS/TB Barriers



In 2017, Belize still ranks 1st and 3rd in Latin America and the Caribbean respectively in highest prevalence of HIV, which is foremost related to Tuberculosis (TB), according to the World Health Organization (WHO) and The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

To alleviate the present situation, GO-Belize Alumni Association, as a non-profit, focused on Youth Leadership and Sexual and Reproductive Health &

Rights, sees the need of interjecting in capacity building for service providers who would include but is not limited to; Police Officers, Community rehabilitation officers, Youth Officers and social workers, to understand the “how” of responding to Belizean youth. From September 2-3, 2017, GO-Belize held a 2-Day training/workshop with the aforementioned service providers with the intent of **“Redesigning and Enhancing Strategies to decrease HIV/AIDS/TB barriers”**. The workshop was also used as a way to define legal barriers of at risk populations, identify ways of addressing stigma and discrimination and identifying ways of networking to build capacity amongst the departments present.

GO-Belize Outreach to MSM Population

A recent report published by the Ministry of Health on tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), indicates that HIV has become a concentrated epidemic among men who have sex with other men (MSM). A Behavioral Surveillance Survey conducted in 2012, reveals that a little under fourteen percent, or the equivalent of fourteen male homosexuals to every one hundred persons in that category, was infected with the virus. The study was carried out using two at-risk groups, including female sex workers and men who have sex with other men. By comparison, the prevalence rate among prostitutes, is significantly lower than that of male homosexuals.



In consequence, GO-Belize sees the need of empowering young men who have sex with men, on the risk and barriers that affect personal health including legal barriers that may result from improper sexual practices. In light of this, GO-Belize gathered a group of young MSMs at Hode’s Place in San Ignacio, Cayo, for a 2-Day workshop from August 19-20, 2017. During the 2-Day workshop, participants were presented on life experiences MSMs face as Belizeans with the primary intent of educating them on Stigma/Discrimination on HIV/AIDS/TB and its Prevention and Barriers, and lastly but equally important, the need of understanding legal barriers affecting at risk populations as the LGBTQI community.

Each participant developed a personal communication plan at the end of day two. One particular plan was the sensitizing of other young MSMs to be cognizant that UNIBAM has two in country lawyers employed to attend the legal needs of MSMs as the need arises over the next couple of years.



NATIONAL COUNCIL ON AGEING BELIZE

International Day of Older Persons,

October 1st, is celebrated as a day to acknowledge, honour and re-commit our support to older persons around the world and in our country. The National Council on Ageing is pleased to be hosting the first National Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons on October 5th, 2017 in celebration of International Day of Older persons.

This year's theme: ***“Stepping into the Future: Tapping the Talents, Contributions and Participation of Older Persons in Society;”*** is about enabling and expanding the contributions of older people in their families, communities and societies at large. It focuses on the pathways that support full and effective participation in old age, in accordance with old persons' basic rights, needs and preferences. The National conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons will bring together professionals from different sectors to discuss the rights of older persons, economic security, age friendly health care and social support highlighting the crucial role of an ageing population in Belize's development.

The first **National Conference on Ageing and the Rights of older persons on October 5th, 2017 at the Belize Best Western Biltmore Plaza starting with registration at 8:00am.**

NCABZ

The prime focus of the National Council on Ageing is to advocate for the changes that are necessary in Belizean society that will improve the quality of life for older people now and for future generations.

Learn more about NCA...

*“Old age is like everything else.
To make a success of it, you've got to start young.”*

- Theodore Roosevelt



Belize's Delegation 19th World Festival of Youth and Students:

The 19th World Festival of Youth and Students (WFYS) is an international event that will unite 20,000 young leaders from 183 countries in Sochi, Russia.

The WFYS aims to consolidate the international youth community, strengthen international ties, as well as promote international and intercultural cooperation. One of the main goals of the upcoming Festival is shaping a common vision of the future by the young leaders from different countries, trying to articulate responses to the most pressing challenges of the generation. The main agenda of the discussion program is to encompass the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by the United Nations.

This year Belize will be represented by a delegation of 7 young people from 4 different districts. The delegation comprises of 2 NYCB members - **Digna Ramirez and Sharissa Perez**, Belize Youth Movement representatives – **Angeles Itzab and Kimberly Contreras**, Seeds for Change representative - **Fabio Carballo**, Former Central American Youth Ambassador – **Erwin Wills**, and Former Student Council President (SJCJC and UB) – **Dong Hoon Choe**.

World Youth Conference Belize 2017

The World Youth Conference 2017 (WYC'17) will convene 200-250 national, regional and international youth leaders under the theme: **"Globally Running to 2030, Becoming Sustainably Strong"**. To bring the voice of youth into a transnational deliberation on how to make the post-2015 development agenda a reality, WYC' 17 will convene a Youth Conference on November 6th – 9th, 2017 in the Central American and Caribbean nation of Belize. The Conference will be organized by the Department of Youth Services in collaboration with The Ministry of Education, Youth Sports and Culture and the Government of Belize. WYC2017 is a timely response stemming from dialogue out of the global and international commitments that have been made, such as the:



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- The World Youth Conference 2016- New Delhi, India
- CHOGM Youth Forum 2015- St. Paul's Bay, Malta
- 9th UNESCO Youth Forum 2015- Paris, France
- World Youth Conference 2014- Colombo, Sri Lanka

The Conference seeks to affirm the promotion of meaningful participation, the realization of rights and the integral development of young people represents some of the biggest challenges that need to be tackled along with the priority areas of the United Nations World Program of Action for Youth (WPAY). Additionally, to recognize the active role that young people are playing in social mobilizations in many regions of the world and their willingness to assume responsibilities in the economic, social and political agendas in their countries and regions.

It also looks at identifying courses of priority action as agreed upon during the deliberations of the Ministers responsible for youth, young people, representatives of Governments, youth-led organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other development partners, in the process of mainstreaming youth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The four thematic areas for the Conference discussion include Climate Change and Environmental Action, Economic Empowerment, Well-being/ Humanity and Social Justice and Equity.

Registration for the conference closes on July 31st 2017 and interested persons can email us at wycbze2017@gmail.com, visit our website at <https://www.wyc2017.com/>, like us on Facebook at World Youth Conference Belize 2017 <https://www.facebook.com/wycbze2017/> or check the Instagram page out at handle [@wycbze2017](#).

Belize will be represented at the 5th Caribbean Youth Leaders' Summit 2017:

The 4th Summit was held last year in Belize and is now headed to the land of wood and water for its 5th round of youth and stakeholder's meetings and the acting president of the National Youth Council of Belize will be there to represent the interest of Belizean Youth. The summit is the premier transformational youth leadership development event within the Caribbean region. It is convened by the Caribbean Regional Youth Council in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI) in Jamaica, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) of the University of the West Indies, The United Nations Population Fund and other key public and private stakeholders to celebrate Caribbean Youth Day on September 30.

The Summit is scheduled for September 30 – October 3, 2017 in Runaway Bay, JAMAICA under the theme: *"Re-routing our GPS: Governance, Peace & Security."*

The key feature of this year's Summit will provide a unique opportunities for engagement through:

- ♣ The Youth Leaders' Forum
- ♣ The Stakeholders' Forum

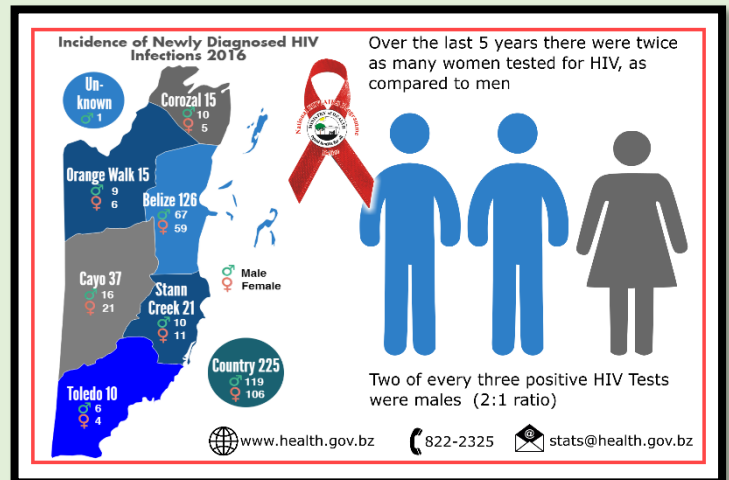
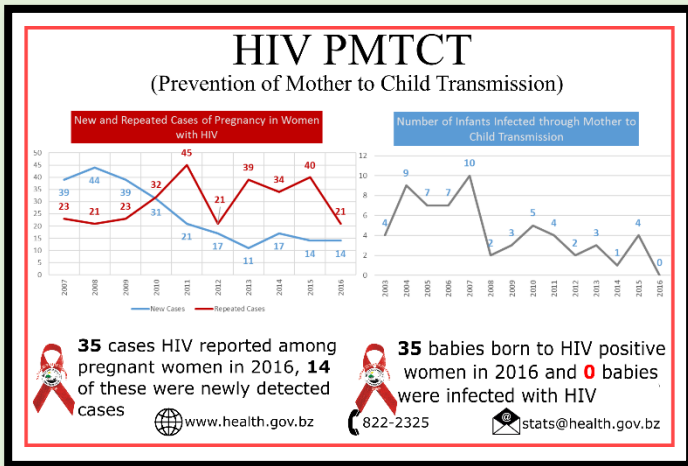
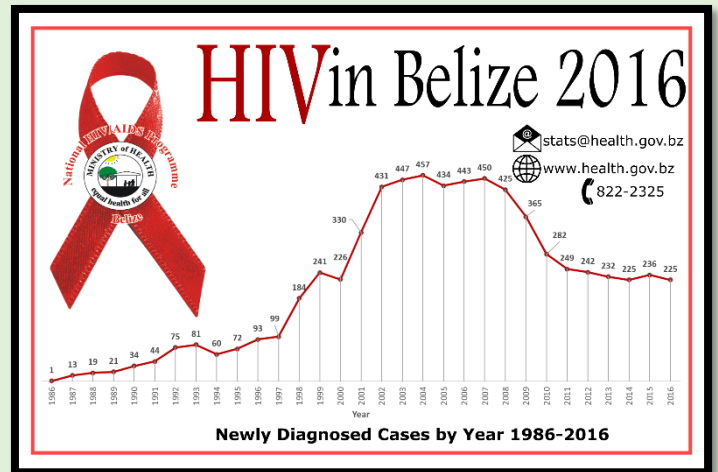
The Summit aims to provide a unique opportunity for young leaders, youth development practitioners, academics and policymakers to meet together to discuss research and programming priorities and capacity building workshops for youth in the Agenda 2030: Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). We are expecting 150 – 200 participants from across the Caribbean region and the wider world to offer speeches, research papers, training workshops, assessments of good practice and cultural presentations at the Summit.

Follow the summit on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/caribbeanyouthsummit/> or visit the website at <https://caribbeanyouthleaderssummit.wordpress.com/>.





MINISTRY OF HEALTH HIV DATA PAGE:



BELIZE HIV QUICK FACTS

- 225** new infections reported Jan-Dec 2016
- 104** persons died of HIV related conditions in 2016
- An estimated **3,665** living with HIV
- 1,353** HIV infected persons are receiving anti-retroviral drugs at December 2016
- 32,635** HIV tests in 2016 with a 0.7% positivity rate
- 36** cases of TB/HIV coinfection in 2016

stats@health.gov.bz



CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE: ENDING AIDS BY 2030

The Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP) relaunched its Champions for Change Initiative originally inaugurated in 2004 but which has been in abeyance since 2008. This event took the form of a Forum comprising of a cross section of partners around the theme **“Champions for Change: Ending AIDS by 2030”**. The Forum was held in Georgetown, Guyana on 12-13 September 2017.

The objectives of the Forum were to:

- a) Establish the criteria for designating Champions for Change, their mandates and catalytic roles for fast tracking the end of AIDS;
- b) Align the expected contributions of the Champions for Change with international and regional commitments. These include the UN High Level Meeting Political Declaration (June 2016); the Caribbean Cooperation in Health IV (2016) and the PANCAP Justice for All roadmap (2015/2016) and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals;
- c) Assess the impact of new programme directions for overcoming barriers to ending AIDS identified by major international and collaborating agencies, especially the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) and The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- d) Take into consideration the recommendations from the recent PANCAP consultations of Faith Leaders (February 2017), National AIDS Programme Managers and Key Partners (March 2017), Youth (April 2017), Parliamentarians (May 2017), and other related fora such as the Caribbean First Ladies/Spouses (February 2017) championing the **“Every Caribbean Woman Every Caribbean Child Commitment”**.

The National AIDS Commission would like to take this opportunity to recognize Mrs. Laura Tucker-Longworth, Chair of the NAC, for her dedication to the work and receiving the assignation of PANCAP **“Champion For Change”**.





Climate Comic Contest

Exciting news! In the lead up to the 23rd Conference of the Parties (COP23) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), join us for our global **Climate Comic Contest** - inspiring children and youth to take climate action through creativity!

Call for Submissions

October 5-22 - Launched at ComicCon NY

UNICEF is asking young people, up to 25 years old, to come up with an original superhero that's fighting climate change - for a chance to develop and publish their own comic. Submissions will be received through our [campaign website](#).

Global Online Vote - November 6-17 (during COP23)

Through a selection process, creative editors at UNICEF NYHQ and our partner Comics Uniting Nations, will select up to 25 entries from all over the world. The top submissions will be featured on the campaign website where people have the opportunity to vote for their favorite climate comic hero. In parallel, a UNICEF delegation will be at COP23, highlighting the creative work with governments and partners. The winner will be announced at the end of November 2017.

The winner will then work with a comic artist and the professional team at Comics Uniting Nations to develop their very own comic with the superhero they created - hooray!

Comic Launch

April 22, 2018 - Earth Day

The launch of the comic will be April 22, Earth Day. On this day and during other key moments throughout the year, the comic book will be promoted and disseminated worldwide through

a series of digital activations and at key climate events such as COP24 and Climate Week during UNGA.

- **A climate comic hero workshop with children and youth between September 18 and October 22. (date to be announced for Belize)**

Key dates for your calendar:

October 5 - October 22: Contest opens for submissions

November 6-17 during COP23: Global Online vote opens using a voting gallery in a microsite.

April 22, Earth Day: Comic launch, showcase finalist and link to published comic.



BFLA Summer 2017



For the month of July BFLA hosted their annual Youth Awareness Month activities in Belize City, Orange Walk, Dangriga and Cayo. These activities included Summer Nights, where the Mobile Youth Center & Clinic were taken into four Southside Communities. A short basketball tournament was also organized for teams of three with a \$300 first place prize in each location.

The annual summer camps were held in each of the four districts offering life skills sessions and sporting activities. In Belize City, BFLA collaborated with Gateway Youth Center, Red Cross, CYDP and the Belize Defense Force as well as other partner organizations to coordinate Summer Experience Camp, in Cayo the Youth Empowerment Camp was a collaboration between BFLA, DYS, Sports Council, Community Police and other partners from the area as well. In total, BFLA managed to reach over 1300 young persons with positive activities

Mix & Mingle
Games Night

A FREE EVENT FOR MEN & WOMEN

Food & Drinks on Sale
18+

Friday October 13th
5:00 pm - 9:00 pm
BFLA HQ
2621 Mercy Lane

Upcoming Mobile Drop In

On Friday October 6th, the BFLA Belize City Youth Department along with the Youth Advocacy Movement will be hosting a Sexual Health Mobile Drop-In at the Yarborough Basketball Court from 3:00 pm – 8:00 pm. Free Sexual Health Services will be provided along with interactive information sharing.

BFLA would like to invite members of the community to come out and take advantage of this free opportunity. If any partner would like to be a part of this event please contact BFLA at 203-1018 and ask for Ms. Sheena Gentle or email programmeofficer@bflabelize.org

Sexual Health Mobile Drop-In

FREE SERVICES

FRIDAY OCTOBER 06
YARBOROUGH BASKETBALL COURT
3:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Confidential Sexual Health Screenings
Contraceptives
Counseling
Referrals
Games
Information & more.....

3 on 3 Basketball Tournament
\$300 1st Prize
Spaces for 6 teams only
Inbox for details

Belize Family Life Association
203-1018
www.kisslounge.org
www.facebook.com/YAM501

Dr. Carissa F. Etienne re-elected for second term as PAHO Director



In Washington, D.C., September 27, 2017 (PAHO/WHO) - Dr. Carissa F. Etienne was re-elected for a second five-year term as Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) by the Member States of the organization.

Ministers of Health at the 29th Pan American Sanitary Conference voted unanimously to re-elect Dr. Etienne. Her candidacy, which was not contested, was submitted by the Government of Dominica, her native country. She will assume her second term as Director of the

Pan American Sanitary Bureau, PAHO's Secretariat, on February 1, 2018.

In her acceptance speech, Dr. Etienne cited her “commitment to deliver to all of our peoples, from all walks of society, a long and productive life, with quality care into our senior years; access to quality health services without fear of impoverishment; access to medicines and vaccines that we can afford, including effective antibiotics; freedom from preventable diseases, with reduced exposure to disease vectors.”

She said access to sexual and reproductive health services; to healthy, nutritious food; and to clean water and adequate sanitation were important, along with safe refuge and adequate health care in the face of disasters and health emergencies.

During her tenures at WHO and PAHO, Dr. Etienne has led efforts to promote universal health coverage and renew primary health care to strengthen health systems to be more integrated and to function better. She has also spearheaded policy directions for reducing health inequalities and advancing health for all through universal coverage, people-centered care, the integration of health into broader public policies, and inclusive and participatory health leadership.

She has been heavily involved in the struggle to help countries reduce the growing burden of non-communicable diseases through efforts to combat obesity and curb the tobacco epidemic. She has also supported expansion of immunization programs in the Americas, and earlier this month accepted the Measles and Rubella Initiative Champion Award for PAHO's work to eliminate measles and rubella from the Americas.

Dr. Etienne produced the World Health Report on “Health Systems Financing: The Path to Universal Coverage,” which was recognized worldwide for its agenda for action by all countries to reach universal coverage and improve health outcomes. She also chaired the International Health Partnership (IHP+) initiative, which seeks to commit partners to work together and put into practice international principles for effective aid and development cooperation in the health sector.



NOTE: Belize was elected to serve on the Executive Committee of PAHO, a position that had not been held since 1994 and the period is for 3 years. Minister Marin has committed to ensuring we are meaningfully represented in the process going forward as we now start our term in this committee.

EMPOWER YOURSELF BELIZE MOVEMENT: ACTIVITY UPDATE



1. LGBTIQ document replacement project funded by UNDP supports 100 LGBTIQ person in acquiring much needed personal documents: such as birth certificate, police records and social society card. This is in an effort to assist the LGBTIQ population in accessing services. This program also helps the Trans-gender population to do deep poling services in order to facilitate the name changing process.

2. With funding from COC Netherlands and UNDP, EBYM facilitated a workshop on the Belize's Labour Laws as it relates to the LGBTIQ community and how the laws affect them as an employee and what part of the labour law protects them as a LGBTIQ individual.



3. Empower Yourself Belize Movement Executive Director Mr. Kendale Trapp attended the first even LGBTIQ Leadership Academy under the theme: "Building Leaders from the Inside out.", with representation from Belize, Guyana, Suriname, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, and Dominican Republic.

4. With funding from COC Netherlands and UNDP, EBYM conducted a workshop on the benefits of social security and applying for a social security card. EBYM will also be in consultation with the Social Security Board to review the policies and give recommendation on how to include LGBTIQ couples to benefit from the Social Security scheme by accessing survival benefits as a same sex couples and paying into the scheme. This workshop also included a Human Rights aspect where the LGBTIQ community further reviewed the Human Rights violations as it related to their specific issues.



SOCIAL SECURITY CARD APPLICATION & REPLACEMENT

Empower Yourself Belize Movement is providing assistance with Social Security Card application and replacement for lost/damaged cards for LGBTIQ individuals.

SERVICES INCLUDE

1. Fees to cover application/replacement cost for Social Security ID card
2. Fees to cover supporting documents

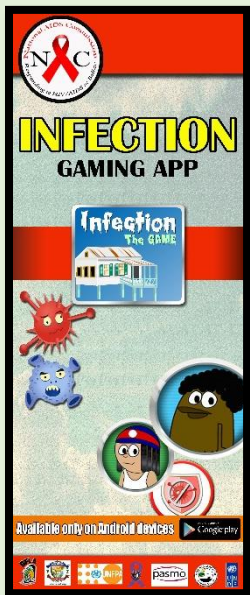
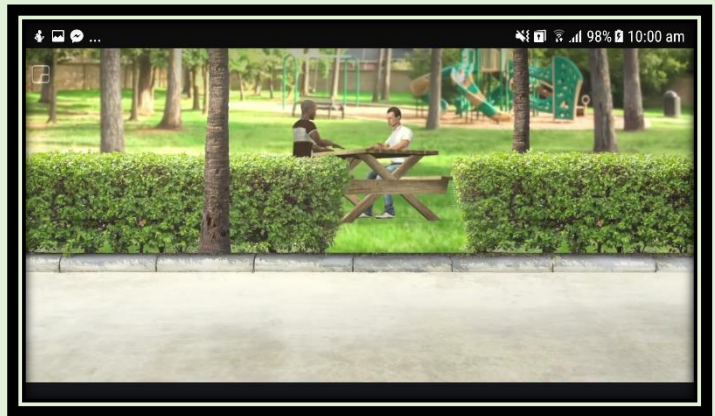
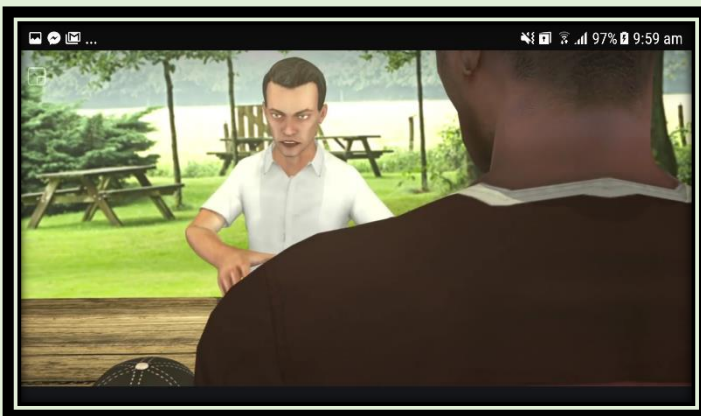
If you or someone you know is in need of this service please text your FULL NAME and number to 604-1911 to start the process



The National AIDS Commission Launches its TB/HIV Co-Infection Awareness Campaign

Starting October 2nd, 2017; the NAC in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, and The Ministry of Health, will launch an innovative TB/HIV Co-Infection Awareness radio campaign. This campaign will target the general public through a radio ad done in the Creole, Spanish, English and Garifuna languages for a period of eighteen months.

There is also a visual 3D video ad that will be aired on social media and on the NAC website (www.nacbelize.org)



DOWNLOAD the FREE “Infection” gaming app for android devices on Google Play Store.

