

“Giving hope to people living with HIV through dedicated service.”

The **SECRETARIAT** e-newsletter

Jan – Dec 2015

2015: A YEAR IN REVIEW

JAN-MAR:



Global Fund Round 10 HIV/TB Concept Note for Belize

Belize had a successful submission, approval and grant making activities for our Concept Note (January-May 2015). The National AIDS Commission would like to thank all its partners for their technical support, guidance and vision in finalizing the Global Fund Round 10 HIV/TB Concept Note for Belize. Special thanks goes out to Mr Joe Hendrix, project consultant, for his dedication and strength throughout the process. We now look forward to a successful three year implementation of the project.

PANCAP Mission to Belize by Dr. Edward Greene, UN Secretary General Special Envoy for HIV in the Caribbean - Justice For All (PANCAP consultations.)

The Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP) initiated a Justice for All programme in September 2013 designed to achieve broad based goals for ending AIDS in the region. They revolved around the following elements:

- **Enhancing family life and focusing on those in need**
- **Increasing access to Treatment including affordable medicines**

- Reducing gender inequality including violence against women and girls
- Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights, including age appropriate education
- Achieving legislative reforms for modifying and repealing AIDS related discriminatory laws

The UN Special Envoy for HIV in the Caribbean has been requested to lead a series of engagements that would seek to adopt a phased implementation of the actionable recommendations of the PANCAP Declaration taking into consideration the new 90-90-90 targets.

The aim is that by 2030 we would: get to 90 % of people with HIV tested; 90% of those tested on treatment and 90% of those on treatment with viral loads low enough to prevent transmission.

The discussions will also have to consider the possibility that the post 2015 sustainable development agenda is trending toward one universal health goal with complementary components including HIV, TB, Malaria NCDs and other health conditions such as Ebola. In this regard the emphasis will have to be placed on health systems strengthening, building capability, and increasing financial sustainability, highlighting shared responsibility among government, private sector and civil society.



Under these circumstances *The Justice for All Programme*, while retaining its original elements, will focus on: What will it take to end AIDS by 2030? What role can stakeholders – parliamentarians, Faith leaders, civil society, private sector, youth and media – play to achieve the goal of ending the AIDS epidemic? What would a road map look like with immediate, medium and long term actions to end AIDS?

Completion of the Sexual Reproductive Health Bar Project

The National AIDS Commission Island Committee submitted a proposal to the US Embassy to embark on a pioneering project to engage patrons of local bars on Ambergris Caye & Caye Caulker to discuss the myths, facts & taboos of HIV.

The project aimed at opportunities for advocacy and prevention communication as well as opportunities for a re-awakening of the general public to the importance of HIV/AIDS as a public health issue affecting us all; furthering the general public's awareness of the extensive impact HIV/AIDS has on communities.

The project further aimed at replacing "misunderstanding" or "misinformation" of risky behaviour patterns with strategic information in innovative ways that challenged the way the targeted population; (Youth, MSM, SWs, LGBT) approach their sexual and reproductive health and experiences.

Through the SRH Bar Project, the committee was able to connect with our target population in a safe space where they felt comfortable and willing to engage in the discussions.

The establishments that were engaged include: In San Pedro: Crazy Canucks, Pedro's, Luna Loca, Lola's, Cholos, Rehab Lounge, Fido's, DJ's, Sandy Toes, Senior Marlins and Captain Iguanas. In Caye Caulker, we visited: Barrier Reef Sports Bar, Voodoo Lounge and West Beach Club.



Team members that contributed actively were: Mr Dennis Craft (Island Committee), Ms. Diana Sanchez (Peace Corp), Mr Arthur Usher (NAC Secretariat), Mr Jamin Castillo (former NAC Secretariat), Mr Keron Cacho (PASMO), Ms. Robertha Herrera (Island Committee), Ms. Lezel Cayetano (Island Committee) and Talina Lima (PASMO).

While the bar project was successful, it was not without its challenges including the methodologies used to implement the activities. These challenges have lead us to readjust and learn from them and as in any pioneering venture, we expect difficulties; but we most grow from them. Our hope is to use this project as a guide to design future interventions with the key affected populations and hopefully implement this program's design in future activities. The NAC Island Committee wishes to thank the US Embassy for its continued support in the fight to end HIV/AIDS!



APR-JUN:

District Committees' Evaluation and Planning Workshop''

The National AIDS Commission, along with its local and regional partners, remain committed to the work of eliminating the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030 by focusing on achieving the national goals of: **Zero New Infections; Zero AIDS Related Deaths and Zero Stigma and Discrimination by 2016.**

As the National coordinating body for the HIV/AIDS response in Belize, the NAC has established District Committees in all the districts and the Islands in an effort to impact key constituencies including people living with HIV. Without their assistance and coordination at the constituency level, success at the national level will be limited. In an effort to strengthen the capacities of the District Committees and enhance the legal framework under which the program operates, the NAC, in collaboration with the USAID/Capacity Project, embarked on an official **Nationwide Two-Day District Committee Training Workshop from April 29th to 30th at the Las Vegas Hotel (Corozal District, near the Free Zone).**

Present at the workshop were: DC members, NAC Chair and Vice Chair, NAC Executive Director, MOH Representative, UNDP Representatives, Ms. Myrna Manzanares, PASMO, MHDST, DYS, USAID Capacity Project & BFLA.

The goal of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of the District Committees and have a declaration of commitment from the heads of departments of the agencies that govern the district Committee members. The program focused on developing the following skills: leadership, conflict resolution, financial budgeting, measurement methodologies and measurement instruments.



DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

1. Recognizing that the National Response to HIV in Belize calls for multi-sectoral involvement; and,
2. Recognizing that multi-sectoral participation calls for coordinated cooperation and collaboration for effectiveness; and,
3. Agreeing that the National AIDS Commission and the Country Coordination Mechanism are stewards of Global Fund resources; and
4. Agreeing that our collective responsibility is to serve, care for, and improve the quality of life of persons living with or affected by HIV/AIDS; and,
5. Acknowledging that strategic and strong partnerships are critical to overall success in the National Response, and
6. Reaffirming our commitment to attaining the overarching goals of the National Response as laid out in the Strategic Documents (Plans) of the Ministry of Health, the National AIDS Program, and the National AIDS Commission, and
7. **DECLARING UNANIMOUSLY AND CONSENSUALLY OUR COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE DISTRICT COMMITTEES, WE AFFIX OUR SIGNATURES HERETO, PLEDGING TO WORK IN UNITY FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF THE GLOBAL HIV GOAL OF – 90% TESTED, 90% ON TREATMENT, AND 90% KNOW THEIR STATUS.**

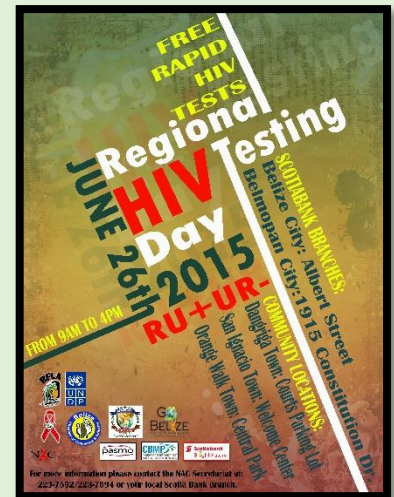


REGIONAL HIV TESTING DAY 2015

Over the last 4 years, Belize has participated in the Caribbean Regional Testing Day initiative led by the Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP). In 2015 the National AIDS Commission in partnership with Scotia Bank, the Ministry of Health, BFLA, PASMO and other supporting organizations proudly joined PANCAP and twenty countries in our region to celebrate Regional Testing Day (RTD) on Friday June 26th, under the theme: Are You Positive You Are Negative...Know Your Status!

Belize identified the following prime locations to conduct the testing:
Orange Walk Town: Central Park; Belize City: Scotiabank Albert Street Branch; Belmopan City: Scotiabank 1915 Constitution Drive; San Ignacio Town: Welcome Center; Dangriga Town: Courts Parking Lot.

Aside from these testing sites, the RTD planning team embarked on a 6-week On-site testing campaign (taking the HIV testing to the business community and other organization throughout the country) leading up to RTD 2015. RTD 2015 also incorporated various social media competitions and campaigns (selfie & video competitions and the "bring a man" campaign) which addressed stigma and discrimination attached to HIV testing in a fun and creative manner. The NAC hereby takes this opportunity to thank all its supporters and sponsors for their continued support in addressing the national response to HIV/AIDS.



1928 HIV Tests were done Nationwide.

JUL - SEPT:



NATIONAL HIV PREVENTION STRATEGY FOR ADOLESCENTS & YOUTH



The National AIDS Commission in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched a National HIV Prevention Strategy for Adolescents and Youth and also held a 2½ day workshop aimed at building technical capacity of national and district level stakeholders in the development and implementation of evidence-based social and behavior change communications strategies and programs for HIV prevention among adolescents and youth. The opening ceremony was held on July 07, 2015 at the Inspiration Center in Belize City.

Speakers at the launch included Mrs. Laura Longworth (Chairperson NAC), Ivan Yerovi (UNICEF Representative in Belize), Gustavo Perera (Executive Director -NAC), Shirlene Neal (Consultant) and Mr. Eckert Middleton (HIV Unit -Department of Youth Services.)

Stakeholders from across the country met at the workshop to discuss establishing an effective strategy to improve the HIV/AIDS response for youth. Five youth consultants were hired and met with youth (in and out of school) from across the country to get their opinions and views on the HIV/AIDS situation in Belize. The findings from the consultations were presented to all stakeholders to provide them with a view of the HIV/AIDS epidemic from the youth's perspective. The workshop was facilitated by Marion Scott, Karlene Temple Anderson, Novia Condell-Gibson, Sharlene Jarrett and Claudette Pios representing the Ministry of Health and UNICEF Jamaica.

Launch of the **Knowledge Attitude and Practices in Sexual Behaviour and HIV (KAP) 2014 Report.**

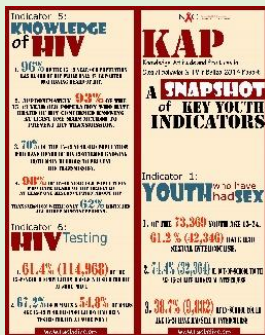
On Wednesday September 16, 2015 the National AIDS Commission hosted the launch of the Knowledge Attitude and Practices in Sexual Behaviour and HIV (KAP) 2014 Report at the ITVET conference room. Present at the launch was facilitator Ms Jacqueline Small from the Statistical Institute of Belize as well as the Executive Director of the NAC Mr Gustavo Perera, Mrs Joan Burke- NAC Vice Chairperson and Ms Allison Green- UNDP Project Manager-GF.

The 2014 Country Report on Knowledge, Attitude and Practices in Sexual Behaviour and HIV in Belize (KAP) provides us with the most recent indicators and trends in prevailing sexual practices among the younger population ages 15 to 24 years and existing knowledge and attitudes toward People Living with HIV in the wider population 15 to 49 years.

The findings provide new insights into sexual behaviour and attitudes which differ among ethnic groups across geographic locations pointing toward an opportunity for innovation and increased effectiveness in prevention strategies particularly those targeted at the younger population.

About 52 percent of the population (187,347) falls within the 15 to 49 year age group and 20% is in the 15 to 24 year age group being 73,369. Of this number 38,361 are under 20 years. At 2012 there were an estimated 3,100 persons living with HIV in Belize, which included approximately 2,800 persons over the age of 15 years. (UNAIDS 2013).

The report specifically addressed the following indicators: **(1) Youths Who Ever Had Sexual Intercourse;** **(2) Mean Age at First Sexual Intercourse;** **(3) General Condom Use;** **(4) Multiple Sex Partners;** **(5) Knowledge of HIV;** and **(6) HIV Testing.**



NAC MEETING WITH THE CEO CAUCUS

On August 5th, 2015; as part of the NAC's mandate to advocate for issues affecting the response, the NAC Secretariat met with the CEO Caucus to discuss some major issues of concern in the national response. Ms. Joan Burke (NAC, Vice Chairperson), Mr. Gustavo Perera (NAC Secretariat, Executive Director) and Mr. Arthur Usher (NAC Secretariat, Communication & Programs Officer) presented on the issues of concern.

The four points of interest presented to the CEO's were:

1. Pending Cabinet Paper on the 'Justice for All Campaign' led by PANCAP
2. Procurement and distribution of ARVs; its Implications for the 90-90-90 Strategy* and for PLHV, in particular children.
3. Pending Letter of Commitment from Line Ministries supporting the work of the NAC District Committees and USAID Capacity Project.
4. HIV/TB Challenges at the Kolbe Foundation, Belize Central Prison

** 90% of People Living with HIV tested and know their status, 90% receiving treatment, and 90% adhering to treatment.*



As a result of the meeting, the following agreements were reached:

Point 1: The NAC will prepare the letter to Cabinet, source the funds to conduct national consultations on the issues. There also need to be more spaces for greater involvement of the Evangelical churches and leaders on the issue.

Point 3: The NAC will prepare and submit a one page summary on the roles and functions of the District committee. Provide a list of all District Committee members. Provide a list of the key ministries to be represented on each committee. The Cabinet Secretary (Carlos Perdomo) will follow up with the respective CEOs to provide support.

Point 4: The NAC is to research best practices for condom policies in the region. There needs to be follow up with Kolbe's clinic staff to find the best way to provide condoms in the meantime. Develop education package and conduct education sessions in the prison. Explore ways to engage inmates on the issue of making condoms accessible to them. CEOs Lovell & Sylvester, both board members, will table the matter at the Board meeting.

The NAC District Committee (DC) Strengthening Program



As the Cabinet mandated entity to coordinate the national response to HIV, the National AIDS Commission has developed programs and policies and has advocated for multiple changes within Belize as it relates to those infected and affected by HIV. While much of what the Commission does is at a much needed national level, there is an ongoing arm of the Commission that many people often times overlook. The NAC is unable to advocate and perform its national duties without the consistent and dedicated members of its national branches --- the District Committees (DC).

The NAC has established DCs in the following areas except Belize (as the Secretariat is housed in the Belize district): San Pedro Town (serving Caye Caulker as well), Corozal Town, Orange Walk Town, Belmopan City, San Ignacio Town, Dangriga Town, and Punta Gorda Town. The DCs are made up of representation from Government Ministries, volunteers, members of the business community, people living with HIV, NGO's, and concerned citizens. They are a true representation of the community they serve.



The role of the DC is as follows: (1) to serve as a strong steering committee for HIV/AIDS by coordinating related activities and collaborating with non-government organizations, community based organizations, government ministries and the private sector for program implementation. (2) to mobilize resources, including medical and other support for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, (3) to advocate for and support safe and friendly, voluntary counselling centres, (4) to support the NAC in the implementation of its policies and (5) to create awareness on HIV/AIDS and support initiatives for its prevention and de-stigmatization.

In an effort to assist the DCs, the NAC Secretariat embarked on a one-month strengthening visit of all the DCs and addressed relevant pertinent issues that were concerns to the DCs. The Secretariat addressed many of the issues specifically the revitalizing of the DCs executive bodies in order to create efficiencies and effectiveness in their work.

The NAC takes this opportunity to applaud all the hard work that the DCs are doing and recognize them for their dedication and strength. With these new revitalized executives and support from the agencies they represent, we are sure to have dynamic and innovative programs to address the national response to HIV/AIDS in Belize. Thank you.

Global Fund Consultants – CCM Strengthening

On September 24th to October 7th, the NAC hosted Mr Kevin Luthi and Dr. Juma Kariburyo, global Fund consultants, who did an assessment of Belize's current Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) and its functions in relation to Belize HIV/AIDS response. The assessment focused on: conducting stakeholder interviews with NAC-CCM members, hosting a CCM Strengthening workshop and presenting their findings and recommendations at the October 6th CCM meeting.

An initial performance assessment was conducted in April 2014, and coming out of that evaluation was an Improvement Plan designed to bring the NAC-CCM into full compliance status with the CCM eligibility requirements. In January 2015, the NAC-CCM approved the improvement Plan Roadmap and the NAC began the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Improvement Plan. However, the NAC Secretariat sought guidance from the Global Fund as to the best structure for the CCM Secretariat and the Project Oversight Monitoring Committee (POMC) which the NAC saw as the next very important step in bringing the Belize CCM into full GF-CCM Eligibility Requirements.

The following are the recommendations set for the by the GF Consultants based on their dialogues and assessment:

- 1. NAC to be the only coordinating body of the response to HIV/AIDS and TB**
- 2. Membership of the NAC to be revised and downsized**
- 3. There needs to be clarification of roles and responsibilities**
- 4. There needs to be effective oversight**
- 5. Capacity building**
- 6. Development of an effective conflict of interest policy**
- 7. Communications Dynamics must address internal, external and information sharing**



Sex Thing for Adolescents in Stann Creek: Preventive Interventions for HIV, STI and Unplanned Pregnancy.



The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) of Belize (2011) reported comprehensive knowledge of HIV at an average of 42.9% for female adolescents (15 to 24 years), 56.4% in urban centres versus 34% in rural communities. Although only 5.3% of female adolescents (15 to 24 years) reported they had initiated sex life, a more plausible indication of sexual activity contradicts this assertion. MICS revealed an adolescent birth rate for the Stann Creek District of 84, the highest in the country and higher than the national average.

According to the MICS 15.9% of adolescent women (15-24 years) confirmed a male sexual partner 10 years or older in the last 12 months, 2.1% of women 15-49 years of age report having sex with more than one partner and only 28.6% had used a condom at the most recent sexual encounter.

A year later, Buszin released their findings on multiple partnerships and risk for HIV among the Garifuna in the Belize, Cayo and Stann Creek District: 51.9% of participants were from Stann Creek; 50.2% of confirmed having had more than one sexual partner in the last 30 days, with men averaging 4 and women 2 partners within the last 30 days; 53.5% of participants were between the ages of 15 and 25 years and 40.6% had had an STI within the last year. These results provide a clear epidemiological profile of the adolescent and youth in the Stann Creek District as a subpopulation at high risk for negative sexual health outcomes in an environment where HIV incidence is increasing while protective behaviours such as basic knowledge, condom use and mutually-exclusive sex partners are decreasing.

These figures are further supported by the Labour Force Survey of 2013 which consistently demonstrates an increase in unemployment in Stann Creek District from 14.9% (2012) to 15.1 % (2013). Implicit in these figures of high levels of unemployment are personal and social vulnerabilities including lack of food and shelter, sexual exploitation, health problems, limited access to services, low standard of material life, low academic achievements, lack of safety, helplessness, powerlessness, isolation, exclusion and general insecurity. Many of these factors combine and potentiate each other, contributing to a fertile environment for a vulnerable population with low recognition of risk for HIV, STI and unplanned pregnancy and even less protective attitude and behaviour.

Prevention through behaviour change is known to be one of the most effective strategies to reduce the incidence of HIV and other adverse sexual outcomes such as sexually transmitted infection (STIs) and unplanned pregnancy. For this reasons a communication-based program of interventions targeting vulnerable adolescents and youth of the Stann Creek District was and accepted proposed as means of

- ***increasing awareness of sexual risk***
- ***improving knowledge of protected sex as prevention of HIV, STI and unplanned pregnancy and***
- ***developing attitudes and skills that increase intention to use a condom***

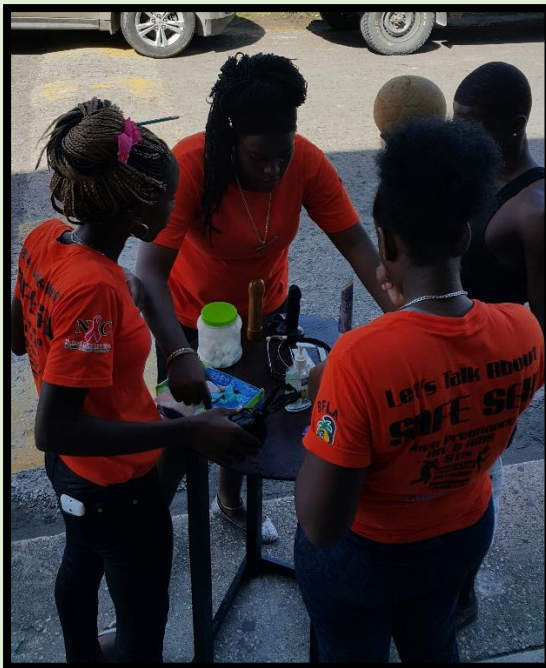
The ***Sex Thing for Adolescents in Stann Creek*** program was developed by adolescents and youth and delivered to their peers. It contextualized the experience of young people in specific areas with the objective of bringing about behavioural change in a vulnerable adolescent population by increasing awareness of sexual risk, improving knowledge of protected sex as prevention of HIV, STI and unplanned pregnancy and developing attitudes and skills that increase intention to use a condom. This change in behaviour and attitude was in turn reflected in young people's willingness to access on-site sexual and reproductive health services.

As a result of the program:

- 9 core participants were trained to use participatory street theatre and to become peer educators;
- 31 community mobilizers including 5 youth and adolescents served as points of contact in their communities to disseminate information of and about ***Sex Thing For Adolescents***;

- 260 youth and adolescents registered for services and received counselling from POWA educators on sexually transmitted infections, unplanned pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, & proper use of condoms;
- 187 youth and adolescents received a full package of services that included counselling, physical examination, HIV testing, condoms and/or Pap smear from the BFLA nurses;
- Approximately 630 youth and adolescents in three communities received peer-to-peer education through community outreach;
- Approximately 3 youth and adolescents were referred to public health care to confirm test results and to receive counselling and support.
- As reported by BFLA, 247 youth and adolescents went to the Dangriga clinic for sexual and reproductive health services in the week after the ***Sex Thing For Adolescent Program***.

The ***Sex Thing For Adolescent Program***, has become a huge success as they continue to perform and engage the public in their creative and innovative style of information sharing throughout Dangriga and other districts. The Program was also played an instrumental part in the success of the World AIDS Day National Youth Symposium and we look forward to more in 2016 from this dynamic program.



OCT - DEC:

3rd Meeting of the National AIDS Programme Managers and Key Partners (PANCAP)

The 3rd Meeting of the National AIDS Programme Managers and Key Partners was convened on 28-30 October 2015, in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

Representing Belize at this meeting were Arthur Usher-Programs & Communications Officer and Enrique Romero-Monitoring & Evaluation Officer of the NAC Secretariat.

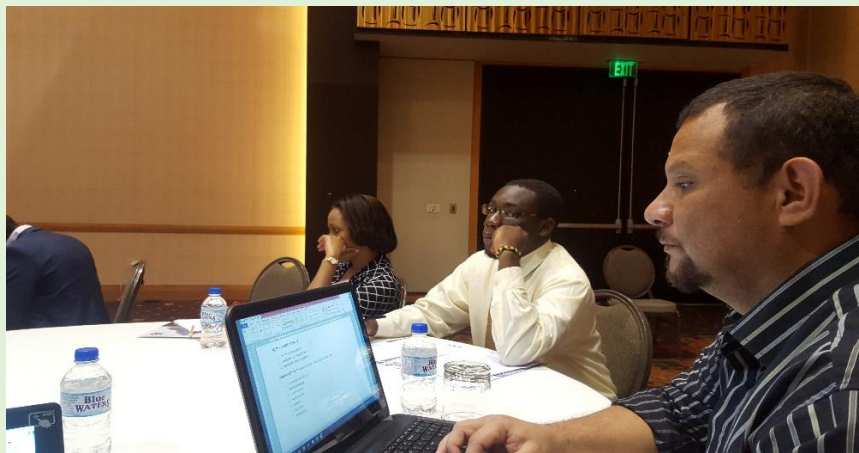
The meeting of NAP Managers and Key Partners provided an opportunity for joint decision-making in setting programmatic priorities and partner contributions in order to strategically align efforts in the fight against HIV. The meeting agenda was intended to allow for in-depth discussion of the status of the epidemic and the response for the countries' needs and consensus on our regional goals. PANCAP acknowledges the need for greater attention to country-to-country linkages and maximizing synergies, and for a mechanism which would bring regional public goods through national programmes to ensure on-the-ground impact.

NAP Managers and key national and regional partners discussed and outlined the strategies for the implementation and monitoring of the proposed global **"90-90-90 Targets"** on prevention and discrimination which were agreed at the Second Latin American and Caribbean Forum on the continuum of HIV care held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 18-20 August 2015 under the theme "Enhancing Combination HIV Prevention to Strengthen the Continuum of Prevention and Care".

This forum followed the First Latin American and Caribbean Forum on the continuum of HIV care held in Mexico City, on 26-28 May 2014 with the theme "From diagnosis to effective treatment: optimising the stages in the continuum of care". The targets aim at increasing the proportion of people who know their status, the proportion of those who are HIV+ on antiretroviral treatment and the proportion of those who are HIV+ with a suppressed viral load to 90%. The First Forum generated a "Call to Action" subscribed by all participants, with key recommendations to guide the efforts of countries in the Region in expanding sustainable and equitable access to, and coverage of, quality HIV care and treatment services. That Forum also endorsed a fourth goal, namely reducing the proportion of late diagnosis of HIV infection (<200 CD4 cells at diagnosis) to less than 10%. These were discussed and endorsed at the Second Annual NAP Managers and Key Partners Meeting which was held in October 2014 in Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition, the meeting provided a forum for the required dialogue around the focus of the PANCAP's and CVC-COIN's Concept Notes, both of which will be submitted to the Global Fund by 1 February 2016. As PANCAP's current grant from the Global Fund comes to a close at the end of the 2015, the Principal Recipient and Sub-Recipients will report on the status of the grant implementation and on regional public goods including best practice models that countries can benefit from in the future, as well as issues of sustainability. The findings of the evaluation of the Round 9 grant will be presented,

since these will be used to strengthen the development of the concept notes being prepared by both PANCAP and CVC-COIN.



Redesigning of the NAC website

The National AIDS Commission secretariat has decided to upgrade and improve the flow and accessibility to the NAC Website. As such we are in partnership with 501 Enterprise to re-construct the website, making it more user-friendly and easier to access and coordinate information, giving the Secretariat a more expeditious website and one that the general public can access. The NAC realizes the importance of relevant, and accessible information sharing and has strived for quicker, creative, interactive and more effective ways of communicating.

As we move on to 2016, the NAC website will be a very effective tool for all partners and the general public to access and utilize in an effort to create a true National Response to HIV in Belize.

Meet us online at: www.nacbelize.org

WORLD AIDS DAY YOUTH SYMPOSIUM 2015



The National AIDS Commission in collaboration with the University of Belize and the United Nations Development Programme, commemorated World AIDS Day with a National HIV/AIDS Youth Symposium on December 1, 2015, from 9 AM to 2 PM at the University of Belize's Jaguar Auditorium on its Belmopan Campus. The agenda included a variety of presentations and performances including songs, poetry, and drama and culminated with a keynote address by Dr. Peter Weller, a clinical psychologist who spearheaded the development of a coordinated and comprehensive counselling and welfare program for people living with HIV in Jamaica. The Symposium was celebrated under the theme: **"Youth: Breaking the HIV/AIDS Epidemic by 2030"**.

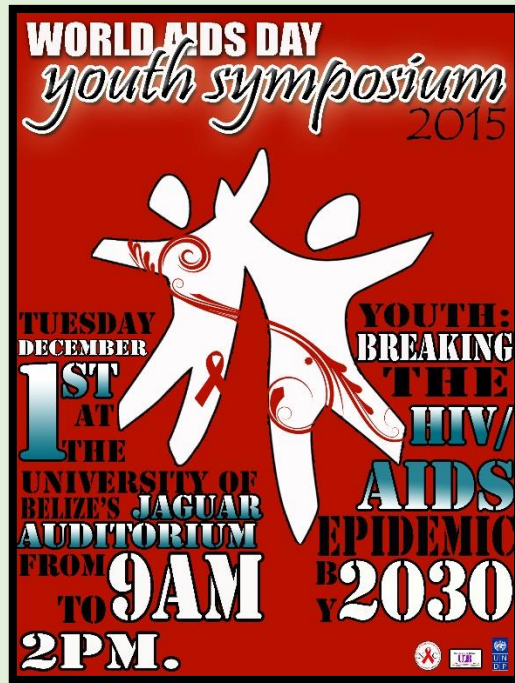
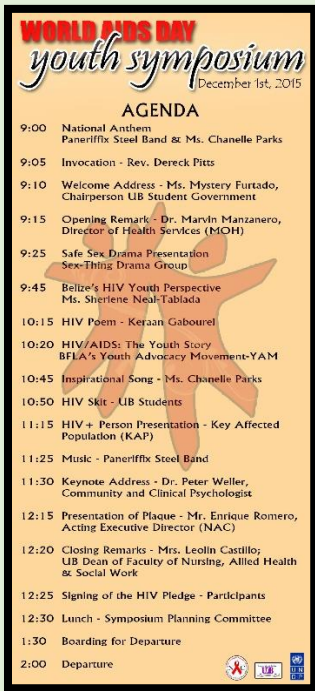


The National Youth Symposium was another dynamic and successful attempt by the National AIDS Commission to create the space and venue for the HIV/AIDS conversation to move from the "dinner table" to the open public forum. The symposium was hailed as a monumental success by partners, participants, the media and the public alike. With ongoing HIV testing been hosted by BFLA and their very dynamic youth friendly program, the Symposium delivered on all aspects. The Symposium targeted the three main districts in Belize with the highest HIV burden: Cayo, Belize and Stann Creek. The NAC coordinated with the District Committees in each of these districts who then coordinated with the respective schools in order to have the students participate in the program. In total approximately 210 participants attended the symposium, including: high schools students from Dangriga, Belize City Belmopan and San Ignacio as well as UB students, out of school youth and the general public.

Besides the symposium, the NAC District committees in Corozal, San Pedro, Orange walk and Punta Gorda; also had dynamic outreach programs and engaged the population on their level by providing rapid HIV testing and other relevant information on a wide range of health topics.

The NAC would like to take this opportunity to thank the following members of the planning committee and supporters:

The Belize Family Life Association, the Belize Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Pan American Social Marketing Organization, The University of Belize, the Department of Youth Services, The Belize Red Cross, The National Committee for Families & Children, The Women’s Department, Mr Peter Williams, Ms. Tharon Butcher, The United Nations Development Fund, Dr. Peter Weller and the NAC District Committees. Thank you all for your continued support and we look forward to working with you in 2016.





The National AIDS Commission takes this opportunity to thank all its partners, supporters, staff members, friends, colleagues and families for their drive, passion, strength and love in 2015 which without all that we could not have achieved all we did. We will also like to extend a happy, safe and blessed Christmas Season to everyone and we hope have all your support in 2016 as we move forward responding to HIV/AIDS in Belize.

COMING IN 2016: LAUNCHING OF THE NAC GAMING APP ... INFECTIONS.