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## THE NATIONAL AIDS COMMISSION LAUNCHES GAMING APP, INFECTION

**O**n Thursday March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the National AIDS Commission launched its educational and interactive gaming app (Infection) for Android devices on Google Play. As one of the flagship programs of the NAC since 2014, the NAC Gaming App has been a vision of skill and concept design put to its fullest form. In 2014 the NAC launched the Nationwide “App Gaming Competition” which was the initial competition designed to gain national support and interest on the development of the app.

The purpose was to create a fun experience while engaging in the education and information driven app. In an effort to create a truly dynamic game, the NAC reached out to the Nation’s youth to create one-of-a-kind games and gaming ideas that can best be implemented into the app. The response was exciting, intriguing, and full of creative ideas.

The winner of the competition was a game called “*Infection*” which was designed and developed by the CODE IT Developmental Club from Centro Escolar Mexico Junior College (CEMJC) in Corozal. This team of young developers took the concepts and ideas of the program and merged it into an intense and diverse gaming concept and design.

After choosing the winner, the NAC decided to do real world tests and truly examine the game. So we sent draft copies of the game to our partners and gained very important feedback from the general public. The response was amazing. This process of fine-tuning and finalizing the app took almost one year (2015), but the results were exciting and guided the final design of the app.

In 2014, Belize recorded 221 new HIV cases which was a decline from the 241 new cases recorded in 2013. The app in no way intends to trivialize the realities and impact of HIV and AIDS on the national and global stages but rather it presents circumstances that put to the test reasoning and decision making skills. It complements national efforts designed to prevent new infections, encourage testing and compliance, and making services readily available to those who need them.

It is our hope at the NAC, to continue to find creative and dynamic ways to engage and involve all populations and sectors of the society on the issues of HIV/AIDS and its effect on our society. As we continue to serve Belize we also keep in mind that HIV/AIDS is a global epidemic and we most all play our part in the global fight.



Download **INFECTION** FREE through the Google Play Store.

Search: Infection Belize, download and enjoy!

# NAC Sub-Committee updates:

**BACKGROUND:** The NAC has the right to appoint sub-committees to fully perform the necessary duties of the NAC. The sub-committees are to consist of Government Ministries and Departments, Statutory Bodies, Non-Governmental Organizations, and private sector representatives knowledgeable in the issues and matters to be determined by the Committee, to be and to form part of the Committee. Each Committee has clearly defined Terms of References which specifies the period for which they are appointed.

Each Committee is responsible, through its Chair, to report its proceedings, decisions and conclusions to the Commission at which it is then subject to approval.

The following are the official members of the NAC Sub-committees:

## CARE, TREATMENT & SUPPORT SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE

<b>MS. ERIKA CASTELLANOS</b> <b>CHAIR</b>	CNET+
<b>MR. DARRELL SPENCER</b> <b>VICE CHAIR</b>	PRES. NURSES ASSOCIATION
<b>MS. CAROLYN REYNOLDS</b>	WIN BELIZE
<b>NR. LEAH JEX</b>	HAND IN HAND MINISTRIES
<b>MR. ANTONIO COYOC</b>	MOH
<b>NR. PAR MADRILL</b>	KOLBE FOUNDATION
<b>MS. LUWANI CAYETANO</b>	UNICEF
<b>MS. JANINE CAYETANO</b>	NDACC
<b>MR. ENRIQUE ROMERO</b>	NAC

## MONITORING & EVALUATION SUB-COMMITTEE

<b>MR. DYLAN WILLIAMS</b> <b>CHAIR</b>	NCFC
<b>MS. SUSAN REUTHER</b> <b>VICE CHAIR</b>	PASMO
<b>MR. ASSAD MAGANA</b>	UNDP
<b>NR. LORNA PEREZ</b>	MOH-NAP PROGRAM
<b>DR. PIETRA ARANA</b>	USAID/PASCA
<b>DR. DEYSI MENDEZ</b>	USAID/CAPACITY
<b>MRS. MAGGIE VARGAS</b>	HAND IN HAND MINISTRIES
<b>MR. DWIGHT ARNOLD</b>	NAC

## INFORMATION, EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION SUB-COMMITTEE

<b>MS. EVA BURGOS</b> <b>CHAIR</b>	GO BELIZE
<b>MR. KERON CACHO</b> <b>VICE CHAIR</b>	PASMO
<b>MR. ANTONIO COYOC</b>	MOH
<b>MS. MELANIE MONTERO</b>	BFLA
<b>MR. CHRISTOPHER PECH</b>	BCCI
<b>MR. ECKERT MIDDLETON</b>	DYS
<b>MR. LINDBURGH SMITH</b>	NCFC
<b>MR. KYLE MILLER</b>	YOUTH POPULATION
<b>MS. TINA GILL</b>	BELIZE RED CROSS
<b>MR. ARTHUR USHER</b>	NAC
<b>MS. CYNTHIA WILLIAMS</b>	WOMEN'S DEPT.

## POLICY & LEGISLATION SUB-COMMITTEE

<b>MS. MARGARET NICHOLAS</b> <b>CHAIR</b>	NCFC
<b>MR. CALEB OROZCO</b> <b>VICE CHAIR</b>	UNIBAM
<b>MR. ANIKI PALACIO</b>	Senior Labour Officer- Ministry of Labour
<b>MS. JOAN BURKE</b>	Executive Director- BFLA
<b>MR. JOHN NEWPORT</b>	Acting Director- QUADS- Ministry of Education
<b>ENRIQUE ROMERO</b>	NAC E.D.





## A DREAM IN PROGRESS



As we begin a new year at our Outreach Center, our challenge of having the ideal place of which to provide our services, remain the same until our new building is completed. This world has people that have been given tenfold, and share what they have with those who need, and some of those same people have come together to support our dream of having our very own building.

It all began years ago with a simple dream, which at the time was definitely impossible. As time went by this dream was lingering in the back of someone's mind and it was not until two years ago, that it changed its status, to a dream set on paper napkin, then as a plan in the sand and finally transformed into an actual approved blueprint building plan. Now it became obvious that having a plan would be worthless if finances were not readily available to put the plan into action.

Sure enough, God sees the needs and He uses people as His instruments to help those who need. This was such a case, as one man with a golden heart, could readily envision the future with a hope for many of those less fortunate in Belize...if we only had our very own building to work from. This individual from the United States decided to provide an initial finance and challenged our organization to come up with more finances to begin this "Dream" building.

There are many who have seen what Hand In Hand is all about, and what we do to impact the lives of many children and their families. As one of our directors say: **"we help the good, the bad and the ugly"** in our society without discrimination. There are many individuals and organizations that have contributed to this dream becoming a reality. For that we are thankful! In October of 2014 the initial stages of getting the land prepared began through landfill, piling, reinforcing steel, etc. We have come a long way and we are prepared to finish the journey with God on our side. Below are just a few pictures that tell our story and show where we are now!

As a faith based organization, we trust and believe in that the support we need, will come, and we will see the completion of this project. May God continue to bless those that have contributed so far, and may He touch the hearts of many to join us in this venture, and help us make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. We receive blessings daily, and as a people we are called to share our blessings with those who need





## HIV QUICK FACTS:

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus, which is the virus that causes HIV infection.

Between 1986 and 2014, Belize has had a total of 6,326 reported HIV cases

The use of HIV medicines to treat HIV infection is called Antiretroviral Therapy (ART). ART prevents HIV from multiplying and reduces the level of HIV in the body.

# National Youth Council Elections

**O**n Friday February 19, 2016 rallies were held in each district to launch the National Youth Council Elections. After a short parade through the main streets, candidates gave short presentations on why they are most suitable to be elected. On Monday February 29, five YAM Members contested in the Belize National Youth Council elections. A total of 431 delegates came out to cast their votes on behalf of their respective youth groups from across the country. This resulted in all five members elected: *Ms Dominique Noralez from Belize City—Vice President, Ms Joslin Alvarez from Orange Walk—Vice President, Mr Jamall Swaso—President, Mr Dewayne Don Neal—Public Relations and Ms Antonette Nunez—Treasurer all from Dangriga.*

The Youth council is responsible for ensuring that the voices of youth are heard as well as to lobby and influence policy decisions made by the Cabinet and the House of Representatives.

The Belize Family Life Association would like to congratulate our YAM Members for taking on this challenge and for their successful election, we would also like to extend our appreciation to those who voted and supported the campaigns in any way. Thank you again!



# WOMEN'S MONTH 2016:

**“PLEDGE FOR PARITY: STRONG WOMEN, STRONG WORLD, IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL”**

## RECOGNIZING MRS. PHYLLIS CAYETANO nee MIRANDA

International Women's Day is acknowledged across the globe on March 8<sup>th</sup>, but over the years in Belize we have evolved to dedicating the entire month of March to recognize and celebrate the various accomplishments and contributions that women have made to Belize's society and economy. It is a month of collaboration as governmental, non-governmental and community-based organizations join together in organizing and executing activities focusing on women's advancement and women's rights.

The Women's Department, under the theme: ***“Pledge for Parity: Strong Women, Strong World, Improving Opportunities for All”***; once again has chosen to honour women from each district for their outstanding contribution to their communities and for being role models to girls across the country. This year the Department recognized six women for their role in challenging us to be the change we want to see in Belize and nine women were honoured by their respective organizations for the outstanding contributions they have made to the communities they serve. It is because of these women and the many others like them that we celebrate this month. It is important that we take note of all their contributions and use this momentum to reenergize our efforts in the path that leads to women's empowerment and the respect of their human rights. Congratulations to you all!

It is in this spirit that the NAC would like to take this opportunity to recognize Mrs Phyllis Cayetano nee Miranda as one of the fifteen outstanding women honoured by the Women's Department's official ceremony on Tuesday March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016 at the Biltmore Best Western.

Mrs Cayetano pursued her high school studies at St. Catherine Academy and sixth form studies in Belize City. After teaching high school for a few years, she attended Belize Teachers College and later St. Louis University where she earned a Bachelor's Degree. Mrs Cayetano taught at Ecumenical High School from 1976 and later became Principal/Dean of the institution.

Over the years she has given much of her time and commitment to many organizations including the Garifuna Settlement Day Committee, the Waribagaba Dance group, NGC, BFLA, National Women's Commission, National Arts Council, Board of Delille Academy, National AIDS Commission and the Dangriga Town Council where she was Deputy Mayor in 1998.



As chairperson of the Settlement Day Committee in 1977 she lobbied for Stann

Creek Town to be renamed Dangriga and for November 19<sup>th</sup> to be celebrated as a Public and Bank Holiday countrywide. She is a member of the Red de Mujeres Afrodescendientes de latino America through which she has travelled extensively in Latin America looking at Women's Issues. Mrs Cayetano is also a Commissioner of the Supreme Court and was awarded the M.B.E. in 2004.

In keeping with her committent to the presevation of the Garifuna Culture, she spearheaded the founding of Gulisi Community Primary School through the NGC. This school follows an IBE program and she is presently the

manager of the school. She is married to Mr E. Roy Cayetano and is the mother of three sons and two granddaughters and several adoptees.

**Mrs Cayetano in her words:**

***“On Tuesday (March 22<sup>nd</sup>) I was the recipient of an award from the Women's Commission in recognition of the work I have done over the years on behalf of women and the people of Belize, on a whole.***

***I was very pleased/ proud to receive the recognition of the NWC but my 'cup literally ran over' when I was presented with a second plaque on behalf of the National AIDS Commission! I was overwhelmed, deeply touched and VERY surprised because I did not know NAC was going to do that.***

***When you work from the heart because you see a need that must be addressed, you do not expect rewards except that which the Almighty may bestow on you. But when your colleagues take time to show their appreciation for what you do, it touches your soul and lets you know that 'you did well'.***

**Thank you for all you have done and continue to do...**

## **USAID | PASCA LMG Shares Methodology for Developing HIV Workplace Policies**



Belize City, Belize, 22 March 2016 – USAID | PASCA LMG facilitated a training workshop for the Ministry of Labour at the Radisson Fort George Hotel in Belize City. In attendance were the Labour Commissioner as well as labour and employment officers of 10 stations or branches across the country of Belize.

Besides introducing participants to the UNAIDS 90-90-90 target in her opening address, Chairperson of the National AIDS Commission, Mrs Laura Longworth, reminded participants of horizontal violence in the workplace. She then emphasized national and international legal references to the right to work citing recent cases of wrongful termination that have reinforced workers' rights against stigma and discrimination in Belize. Diego Grajelez of The Collaborative Network of Persons Living With HIV in Belize (CNET+) focused his presentation on stigma and discrimination, primarily on how perceptions of gatekeepers such as public officers affect their work with the general public.

Aniki Palacio, HIV Focal Point in the Ministry of Labour, then gave a history of HIV Workplace policies leading to the training session facilitated by USAID | PASCA LMG's Country Representative, Dr. Peitra Arana. At the end of the session, participants received an assignment as well as the methodology for developing HIV Workplace policies in their receptive jurisdictions. It is hoped that a follow-up workshop next month will further enable participants to build capacity for creating HIV Workplace policies, ensuring sustainability of an initiative to which USAID | PASCA LMG has been providing technical assistance for the past four years.

# PANCAP Partners Commit to High Impact Cost Effective Interventions For Sustaining HIV Response

Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP) partners committed to implementing high impact cost effective interventions to sustain national and regional responses. This commitment was made at the Fourth Annual Meeting of National AIDS Programme Managers and Key Partners, which concluded today, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016 in Trinidad and Tobago.

The meeting's participants were challenged to identify the national and regional guiding policies and actions needed to sustain an effective HIV response. They were also challenged to fast track the end of the AIDS epidemic by 2030, notwithstanding the current global economic environment and declining donor funds for HIV.

The economic implications of sustaining Care and Treatment for All and access to affordable medicines and commodities were discussed. Strategies for operationalising new approaches for HIV prevention and treatment at the national level were agreed, and the need for the integration of HIV into health systems was reaffirmed. The cross-cutting role of civil society in the response to HIV, including service delivery and advocacy, was also reaffirmed.

Partners reiterated and agreed that the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital Syphilis was within the Caribbean's reach. Cuba was validated in 2015 as the first country in the world to achieve this target and 17 other countries in the region are working towards validation in 2016.

## The outcomes of the meeting are:

- **New 2015 WHO guidelines for the use of antiretroviral drugs for the treatment and prevention of HIV disseminated, and challenges and opportunities for their implementation identified;**
- **Strategies, based on cost analysis, for the sustainability of "care and treatment for all" in the Caribbean defined;**
- **Integration and alignment of the Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission strategy with other key services to ensure sustainability of gains discussed; and**
- **PAHO Action Plan for the Control of HIV/STI 2016-2021 and the Caribbean Cooperation in Health (CCH) IV revised.**

PANCAP collaborated with the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Caribbean Office and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) to convene the meeting.

Participants included National AIDS Programme Managers from 18 countries, selected Chief Medical Officers, development, regional and civil society partners.

PANCAP is a Caribbean regional partnership of governments, regional civil society organisations, regional institutions and

organisations, bilateral and multilateral agencies and contributing development partners. 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 (CRSF) to maximise efficient use of resources and increase impact, mobilise resources and the build capacity of partners.



## **“Latin America & The Caribbean Risk Forum: Effective Risk Management for Sustainable Transitions from Global Fund-Financed Programs”**

Belize was represented at the Risk Management Forum for Principal and Sub Recipients of the Global Fund by Mr Enrique Romero (NAC) and Ms Erika Castellanos (CNET+). The forum was held TRYP- Wyndham Hotel in Panama City, Panama from March 21-22, 2016.

The forum was an initiative of The Developing Country NGO Constituency (DCNGO), with technical and funding support from The Global Fund, German BACKUP Initiative (GIZ), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF). The Global Fund and its partners value collaboration with Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and National AIDS Programmes (NAP), who are instrumental in the design, development and implementation and monitoring and evaluation of Global Fund and other external donor programmes. In order to help CSOs and NAPs continue their successes and strengthen their capacity in this regard, the Risk Management Forum provided a unique opportunity to share effective risk prevention and risk management strategies to improve the efficacy of programmes and efficiency in Grant management where sustainability and transitioning are key factors.



### **The objectives of the Implementers Risk Management Forum were to:**

- **Dialogue on Global Fund sustainability and transition policy and its integration with risk management;**
- **Prioritize risk factors associated with sustainability and transition from Global Fund financed programs in Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC);**
- **Share current approaches and good practices among LAC implementers (particularly civil society), Global Fund Secretariat and partners to mitigate sustainability-related risk factors;**
- **Discuss alignment opportunities across partners’ sustainability plans and strategies.**

The forum was opened to select Implementers and included constituents from country-level and LAC regional civil society organizations as well as people living with HIV (PLHIV) and key affected and vulnerable populations, all with varying expertise in the response to AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.



# FAREWELL TO A COLLEAGUE, FRIEND AND MENTOR....

We bid goodbye to our dear colleague and friend Asad Julian Magaña, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer for the Global Fund Round 9 HIV Project managed by UNDP Belize. Asad took office on 01 April 2011 up to March 31, 2016.

Prior to this Asad served as Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist for the Belize Rural Development Programme (BRDP) funded by the European Union (2006-2008), and before he held the post of Rural Financial Expert with the Community-Initiation Agriculture Rural Development Project (CARD) funded by CDB and IFAD (2001-2005). Asad also worked for 10 years at the Development Finance Corporation (1991-2001) holding various positions in Belmopan, Punta Gorda Town, Corozal Town and Belize City Offices.

Asad holds a Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture from El Zamorano University, from Honduras and pursued an MSc. In International Development and Project Management from Lund University in Sweden.

Asad departs to hold Office at the Caribbean Development Bank in Barbados as their Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist for the Community Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (CDRRF) in the Environmental Sustainability Unit of the Projects Department. You will be missed. Thanks for your service.



## COMING SOON: REGIONAL TESTING DAY, JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup> 2016

