



PANCAP Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit

Human Rights Campaign Briefing Document

Breaking down the walls of Shame and Blame



Background

As an essential element of its programme, the PANCAP Regional Stigma & Discrimination Unit (RSDU) hosted a Human Rights Advocacy and Media workshop in association with the World AIDS Campaign. The workshop brought community groups and members of the National AIDS Programme together to increase their awareness of human rights issues, build their capacity and build partnerships to develop human rights messages. Among the key points emerging from the workshop were:

- a low level of human rights literacy in the Caribbean as observed by participants from the countries represented at the workshop
- a need to develop awareness of Human Rights using culturally appropriate messaging that focus on Human Rights, with special focus on its interplay with HIV related stigma and discrimination.

To this end the RSDU established a Media & Communications Team (MCT) comprising of participants from the Human Rights Advocacy and Media workshop. The team included persons from Dominica, Jamaica and St. Lucia, who sought to develop human rights messages that address HIV related stigma and discrimination.

Objective of the Campaign

The primary objective of the pilot Human Rights Messaging Campaign is to contribute to the reduction of HIV related stigma and discrimination in the Caribbean through the development and dissemination of culturally appropriate human rights messages. Following country level assessments, the agreed areas of focus were:

- The right to healthcare
- The right to education
- The right to employment

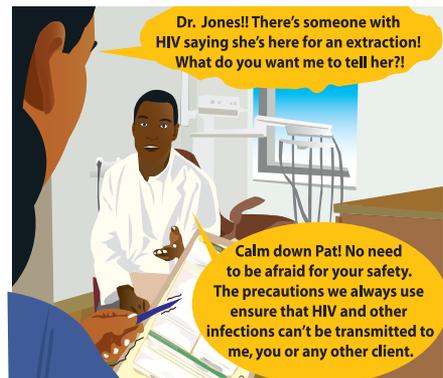
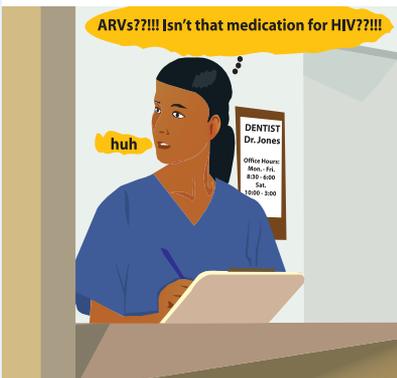
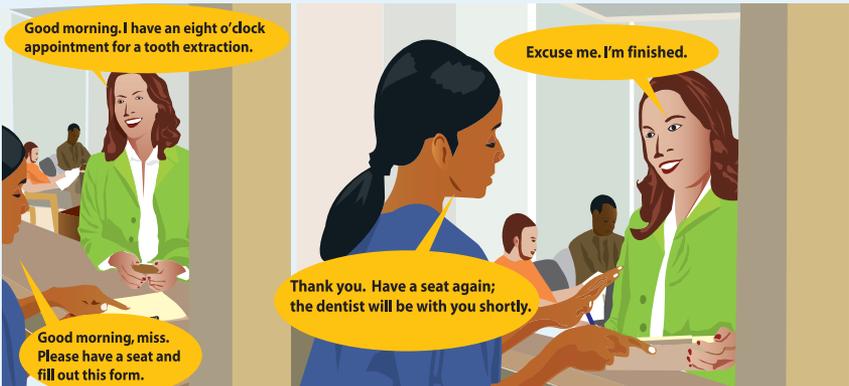
Core Campaign Messages

The campaign addresses underlying issues which contribute to discrimination and denial of rights based on HIV status (e.g. fear of contagion from casual contact). Some of the key educational points raised in the public service announcements and posters are highlighted in the following section.

Message 1: *Everyone has the right to Healthcare*

The right to healthcare posters and public service announcements follow the experience of an HIV positive woman who is accessing dental services. The key educational points raised in this scenario include:

- An HIV positive person should not be denied healthcare services based on their status.
- Since HIV can be transmitted through blood, service providers should practice universal safety precautions with all patients, in order to ensure that any bloodborne infections (HIV, hepatitis etc.) are not transmitted to their clients.
- It is important for both the clinicians and frontline members of staff to be educated on issues of HIV transmission.



Message 2: *Everyone has the right to Education*

The right to education posters and public service announcements follow the experience of a child who faces removal from school based on the reaction of parents to his mother's HIV status. The key educational points raised in this scenario include:

- HIV is not transmitted through casual contact or sharing of food.
- A mother's HIV positive status does not indicate the child's HIV status.
- A child should not be denied his rights based on his parent's status.
- The importance of institutional leadership in addressing HIV in the educational setting.



Next day in the Principal's office...



Message 3: *Everyone has the right to Employment*

The right to employment posters and public service announcements follow the experience of a young, qualified man who was once denied employment based on his HIV status. The key educational points raised in this scenario include:

- A person's HIV status is not just cause for dismissal or denial of employment.
- HIV is not transmitted through casual contact and there should be no fear of transmission based on sharing an office with an HIV positive colleague.
- The role of the employer in establishing the institutional policy and culture of an organisation as it relates to addressing HIV in the workplace.



Development of the Campaign

Step 1: Formative Assessment

- Focus group discussions were held with community members to determine the effective channels of communicating the messages and the specific human rights and stigma and discrimination issues to be addressed.

Step 2: Message Development

- A further brainstorming and creative session was held and the consensus was that a drama-oriented, story-telling approach should be used in developing the radio public service announcements and the supporting posters for the campaign.
- Drawing on the reported experiences of PLHIV and the findings emerging from the focus groups, the team identified three human rights on which the pilot campaign would focus: the Right to Work; the Right to Healthcare, and the Right to Education.

Step 3: Testing and Refinement

- The messages were tested in each country and finalised based on the feedback provided by focus group participants.

Step 4: Country Level Roll Out

- The campaigns will be rolled out in collaboration with country partners, using the strategies highlighted in the following section.

Campaign Strategies

1. *Human Rights Posters*

- The MCT envisaged that the dramatic PSAs to be broadcast on radio would be supported by the posters which would be placed in the widest possible variety of locations across the three pilot countries.
- Potential locations for the posters were identified as: commercial banks, government offices, utility companies, private medical and dental offices, clinics, supermarkets, service stations, schools, etc. (i.e. any location where people tend to gather and particularly where they tend to queue or wait for reasonably lengthy periods).

Out of various discussions regarding the dissemination of the posters and PSAs it clearly emerged that: the posters should be placed in as many locations as possible to facilitate the permeation of the messages at the community level. This could be achieved through utilising existing relationships with contacts in the healthcare, education, hotel/tourism, government and business sectors, etc.

2. *Human Rights Public Service Announcements*

The RSDU and country partners will target the radio station talk-show and call-in programme hosts/producers to engage the public on the subject matter reflected in the posters/PSAs. By hosting shows to discuss issues of stigma, discrimination and human rights, especially on popular programmes, the RSDU would be able to create conversations in the wider community. This would provide feedback on the effectiveness of the campaign and also achieve wider dissemination of the key messages. Such radio programmes would need to be closely monitored and a representative of the National AIDS Programme or RSDU should be in studio to respond to questions from the public.

3. *Community Theatre/Edu-drama*

The messaging campaign should be further enhanced by the presentation of the content in edu-drama sessions staged directly within the various communities across the three countries. Such presentations should generate opportunities for discussions on human rights.

**For further information on
The Human Rights Messaging Campaign**

Please fill out or staple your business card here.

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