

Spotlight

on stigma

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PANCAP

SCALING UP THE CARIBBEAN'S RESPONSE TO HIV AND AIDS

PAN CARIBBEAN PARTNERSHIP AGAINST HIV AND AIDS



SOS is a quarterly publication of the PANCAP Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit (RSDU) which showcases the anti-stigma work of the RSUD and its partners. Funded by UKaid from the Department for International Development.



PANCAP Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit

About the RSDU

In 2009, the PANCAP Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit was established through funding from the Department for International Development (UK) with a goal to contribute to the reduction of stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV, their families and other vulnerable groups throughout the Caribbean. The RSDU will assist PANCAP with developing evidence based approaches to addressing stigma and discrimination, including development of a user friendly assessment tool the SCOR-B. Go to page 3 to learn more about the SCOR-B. To date, the RSDU has made strides towards achievements of it's objectives enlisted in the CRSF 2008 – 2012 which include: provision of technical assistance for country programmes addressing stigma and discrimination, support to countries with operational research on stigma

Editorial

Welcome

Welcome to the second of Spotlight on Stigma! Spotlight on stigma (SOS), is a publication of the PANCAP Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit, which showcases the work of the Unit and its partners. The feature story of this issue *“Rural girls action – turning the tide for inclusion of rural girls”* is a two part article which highlights work that the RSDU has completed in rural communities of Guyana in partnership with the Guyana Sex Work Coalition. We look forward to your feedback!

CONTACT US

PANCAP Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit

1st Floor Kingsley
2nd Avenue Belleville
St. Michael
BB 11114
BARBADOS

Tel: 1 (246) 435 - 5827

Fax: 1 (246) 435 - 0569

Email: admin@rsdu.org

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Cover Photo: Tishauna Edwards (left) and Kinesha Thom (3rd from right), in consultation with young girls in Calcuni, Guyana under the Berbice Riverain “Rural Girls Action Project”.



Stigma Unit Advisory Group meets

As one of the activities to close off the calendar year, the RSDU held a Stigma Unit Advisory Group meeting to update regional partners, reflect on accomplishment of milestones and receive technical input in charting the way forward in the final months of implementation of the project. This meeting was held on December 5th, 2011 at the Accra Beach Hotel in Barbados. One the key agenda items was a reflection on the way forward for stigma and discrimination programming in the region.

The PLATFORM



RSDU and Guyana community based partners recognize International Women's Day by empowering rural girls.

Part I: Rural girls action – turning the tide for inclusion of rural girls is focused on empowering rural-based girls and young women between 15 and 29 years to empower their peers on human rights issues and responsibilities, life skills, including accessing youth friendly SRH and HIV prevention services and information and futures planning. This pilot sub-project falls under the RSDU's anti-stigma and human rights project, currently in its second year of implementation. RSDU Guyana partners include Guyana Sex Work Coalition, Lifeline Counselling Services and members of community and faithbased organizations.

The aim is for this sub-project to contribute to the project's overall goals of increased human rights knowledge, decreased self-

stigma and also to wider developmental foals of prevention of HIV and reduced risk of sex trafficking and abuse of less informed girls from rural districts.

The planned interventions fall squarely within the framework of the theme for this year's International Women's Day on March 8th, which is Connecting Girls, Inspiring Futures. The idea behind this year's theme is to include girls in some way in activities/events so that thousands of minds will be inspired globally. For further information on this year's International Women's Day please visit www.internationalwomensday.com



AIDS is seen as a punishment by God by less than 10% of the FBO and HCW populations surveyed while up to 30% of SW, MS and PLHIV believed that this was the case.

VOiCE

What is your SCOR?

With the constitutional challenge still a topic of regional discourse, issues of stigma, discrimination and respect for human rights, remain at the fore. From March to April 2011, the RSDU completed the SCOR-B (Stigma Community Response Baseline) in Belize, St Lucia, Guyana, Dominica, St Vincent, Grenada. Over 850 respondents were surveyed, representing key community groups, including: faith - based organizations group leaders, uniformed forces, people living with HIV, sex workers, Health care workers and men who have sex with men. The findings from this assessment are providing insights into the experiences of stigma and discrimination of affected groups, attitudes of community groups towards PLHIV, MSM, transgendered persons and SW, levels of human rights awareness and community participation in the country and stigma action. The RSDU will be supporting national AIDS programme managers' in disseminating the findings of the assessment. In brief, the findings demonstrate:

1. Over 50% of MSM and PLHIV surveyed demonstrate moderate to high levels of internalized stigma, In most target countries PLHIV demonstrate highest levels of internalized stigma. However in countries where violations of the rights of MSM and LGBT at the hands of uniformed workers or exclusion from FBOs have been reported, higher proportions of MSM demonstrated moderate to high levels of internalised stigma. However the degree to which these variables contribute to/are associated with internalized stigma has not yet been tested.
2. Sex workers demonstrate lower levels of internalised stigma than the former 2 groups.
3. Although knowledge of the concept of human rights are fairly high, levels of respect for human rights varies dramatically - with less than 15% citing respect for all 17 basic key rights highlighted in the SCOR-B tool. With rights to marriage, to bear a child, to

confidentiality of status demonstrating up to one third of target groups did not agree that PLHIV should be afforded these rights.

4. The concept of equality regardless to differences was unacceptable to 5 to 10% of groups targeted.
5. Fear of contagion is relatively low among HCW compared with all other groups surveyed, but less fear in HCW was also linked to exposure to training and duration of working with HIV patients. Non-specialist /non-dedicated HIV care staff demonstrated high levels of fear. FBOs intermediate fear and group leaders demonstrate the highest levels of fear but this group were also the least exposed to HIV, anti stigma and human rights interventions at the start of the RSDU project period.
6. There is a prevailing cultural and religious belief that anyone who has HIV has done something wrong and that AIDS is a punishment for bad behaviour.
7. AIDS is seen as a punishment by God by less than 10% of the FBO and HCW populations surveyed while up to 30% of SW, MS and PLHIV believed that this was the case.
8. Up to 15% to 20% of MSM in selected countries reported violence toward them in the past 12 months and more than 40% reported the threat of violence to them and members of their families.
9. Opinions on homosexuality differ significantly between groups and between countries whereby up to 50% have no opinion on homosexuality or the legality of anal sex.
10. Across the countries surveyed, up to one third of MSM have been rejected by their family, 70% verbally abused and 46% threatened with violence.
11. Majority of marginalised populations cited main perpetrators of enacted stigma as community members, friends disclosed to employees and not employers, police and other children

to their children, HCW and media were not cited across all countries as main perpetrators.

12. Judgment blame and enacted stigma was greater towards MSM than towards PLHIV, perhaps as a result of the fact that less than 50% of PLHIV survey had disclosed their status to more than their HCW and a close family member. However when explored by those that had disclosed, intensity of enacted stigma was less than that enacted toward MSM.
13. As a result of pervasive enacted and judgment stigma that MSM continue to experience, across the target countries, between 20% and 60% of those surveyed were exposed to anti - stigma sessions; due to self exclusion and marginalisation, PLHIV have been much less involved in such action and sensitization sessions; their membership in support groups has also stagnated.
14. The finding that in most of the countries surveyed showed that up to 70% of respondents cited that if their family member was HIV positive they would want it to be kept a secret - demonstrates high levels of shame still associated with being HIV positive and this is likely also to failure of PLHIV to disclose or to join support groups, seek social support and empowerment.
15. Between 10 and 25% of PLHIV still attend health care elsewhere in order to avoid recognition by their friends and family, while up to 10% have avoided seeking health care altogether.

The findings are currently being disseminated for discussion on the implications for sustained longer term action with NAPs and country level advisory boards prior to region wide dissemination. For further details contact:

Sarah Adomakoh – RSDU Team Leader
(sadomakoh@rsdu.org)

The RSDU and Partners at the Conference PANCAP – HPP Stigma Exhibit

PANCAP, in partnership with USAID's Health Policy Project organised an exhibit at the Caribbean HIV Conference in the Bahamas to showcase the stigma and discrimination work of partners in the Caribbean. The booth featured work of a number of partners, for which the RSDU has become a repository. The displays included the CARE Barbados S & D manual, anti-discrimination posters of the St. Lucia Red Cross, the RSDU Human Rights Posters and the PANCAP Stigma and Discrimination Framework. At the booth, attendees were invited to make a pledge to reducing stigma and discrimination. This banner was unveiled during the closing ceremony of the conference.



Conference Exhibit Hall

Credit Photo: Steve Shapiro/2011 Caribbean HIV Conference

CBMP leads the media response to HIV in the Caribbean

CBMP marked their 5th anniversary on World AIDS Day 2011 with a Media Leaders Summit at the Amaryllis Hotel in Barbados. The summit was an opportunity to reflect on their achievements, share plans for upcoming programmes and engage media practitioners to renew their commitment to the regional HIV response. Falling on the heels of the November 2011 Caribbean HIV Conference in Bahamas and on HIV's busiest day, the event was a meeting place for regional advocates, programme implementers and funders who acknowledged the tremendous progress made through the partnership.

Regional players including UNWomen, UNICEF, PANCAP, CVC and PSI, shared key points on their partnerships with CBMP and the pivotal role it has played in garnering media support for the HIV response in the region. A Caribbean son, the Vincentian born retired NBA player and

World Sport Humanitarian Hall of Fame Inductee – Mr. Adonal Foyle, delivered the keynote address. Foyle spoke of his passion for empowering youth to become healthy, well-educated leaders through the Kerosene Lamp Foundation. His work with the youth in the Caribbean is played out in a new CBMP public service announcement, also launched at the event. Other panelists included LiveUp Heroes and media personalities Corey Layne, Alex Jordan and entertainer Rupee who made thought provoking contributions to the day's discussions.

The summit served as an opportunity to launch upcoming campaigns initiated through CBMP. One such campaign is the human rights campaign of the RSDU. Sarah Adomakoh, Team Leader of the RSDU, was on hand to deliver brief remarks in support of the official launch of these CBMP – RSDU

video public service announcements, which were developed with partners from St. Lucia, BVI and Jamaica. Sarah remarked "...Key to achieving the goal of stigma reduction are the regional implementing partners who have over the years developed successful strategies and interventions addressing S&D and HIV prevention. It should come as no surprise therefore, that the RSDU's partnership with the Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV and AIDS (CBMP) is instrumental in achieving our stigma-reduction goal...". The messages of non-violence and protection of rights to healthcare and privacy were developed based on S&D assessments that were completed in the respective countries.

To view to PSAs visit: www.youtube.com/rsdubarbados.

Rachel Charles, passionate human rights advocate and Liaison Officer for the RSDU in Grenada coordinated a series of radio panel discussions in observance of International Human Rights Day. These discussions were held with partners from GRENCHAP, the week immediately following Saturday December 10, 2011. Rachel gives an account of the work of the partners and an RSDU led Human Rights discussion. Credit Photo: Steve Shapiro/2011 Caribbean HIV Conference

RSDU participates in International Day of Human Rights Day Activities in Grenada

by Rachel Charles

International Human Rights Day in Grenada is always a huge deal for the NGO's and CSO's whose life work and passion is focused on the protection of Human Rights for all. Whether it be GNOW, advocating for women's Rights; GrenCHAP for health and human rights for of most at risk populations; HOPE-PALS on behalf of people living with and affected by HIV; GNCD on behalf of persons with Disabilities; Legal AID and Counseling Clinic on behalf women and children affected by all forms of abuses; or the Grenada Association of Human Rights educating the young people and the Grenadian populace on human rights-human rights are always a priority. December 10, 2011 was no exception. Although the activities were primarily spearheaded by Grenada National Organization of Women (GNOW), they were implemented in collaboration with the World AIDS Day Committee, and all other human rights



with messages of Human Rights and non-discrimination. The RSDU participated in the poster display.

The theme of the Campaign was "Love thy Neighbour" which was adopted from a recently concluded meeting in Barbados. The panel discussions provided a forum for promoting the human rights of all citizens, with a specific focus on men who have sex with men, sex workers and people living with HIV. The need to respect and love each other regardless of diversity, sexual preference, health status was the underlying theme. The panelists visited popular programmes including Voice of Grenada's mid-morning show hosted by Miss Jo Jo. In wrapping up, Miss Jo Jo implored the team the visit the show again saying "This can be a teaching and learning ground for a lot of people and can lend a lot strength to people who are suffering in silence because they are afraid of stigma and discrimination".

organizations. A highlight of the activity was the formation of a white ribbon along with a display of posters and clothing



Post Human Rights Day, an RSDU led in country human rights awareness initiative was implemented on radio and television in collaboration with the Grenada Human Rights Association (GHRA) The legal AID and Counseling Clinic (LACC), & GRENCHAP

Equipping and Re-energising Advocates – HIV, Human Rights, Media and Advocacy Workshops

Human Rights Advocates in Guyana, St. Lucia and Jamaica attended 4 day capacity building workshops supported by Royston Martin (formerly of the World AIDS Campaign) and country level master trainers in the respective territories. The sessions covered topics such as HIV, Human Rights and Marginalised Groups; Advocacy and Lobbying for High Level Change; Media Techniques for Advocates and Designing Effective Public Awareness Campaigns. Each workshop culminated

with an action planning session where trainees committed to conducting human rights sensitization sessions within their spheres of influence. The 40 participants from the 3 territories have reached as many as 500 persons on issues of discrimination, human rights, in country recourse mechanisms and social support systems. Many of the advocates have committed to continuing these community fora as part of their organizations' activities.



Developing BCC tools to address S&D and HR Violations in Guyana



The RSDU has engaged Guyanese filmmaker Kojo McPherson in the development of a human rights/S&D educational video under the theme "Deny Discrimination". The video is being produced with the support of Human Rights Media and Advocacy workshop participants who attended the country level workshop from May 29 to June 1, 2012. The video highlights and addresses key social and human rights issues revealed through assessments completed in Guyana. The support team includes members of the following organizations- FADS, SASOD, G+, Lifeline Counselling Services, Guyana Sex Work Coalition, Roman Catholic Church, A.I.D.S and the National AIDS Programme. To view the video stay tuned to www.youtube.com/rsdubarbados

Breaking down the Walls of Shame and Blame Human Rights Campaign in St. Lucia

Everyone has the right to health, education and employment ... These are the underlying themes in the audio PSAs that have been on air in St. Lucia since February 2012. The PSAs are the second step in the multimedia campaign of the RSDU that was initiated last year with posters mounted in high traffic areas across the island. This stage of the campaign engages the people of St. Lucia through community panel discussions and call in programmes on popular stations. The public received a sneak preview of the audio PSAs at National AIDS Programme's World AIDS Day 2011. Following this, the PSAs were run on 3 radio stations across the island. Additionally panel discussions and community fora were held to engage the public on the key issues raised.

On the right to healthcare PSA: It creates the awareness that an HIV positive person has the same rights as anyone else



Dr Sonia Alexander- speaking at a human rights community forum in St Lucia

On the right to education PSA: Every child, no matter their background or circumstance has the right to education.



On the right to work PSA: I liked the PSA, the dialogue seems realistic about what will happen in a real situation at work, the fact that it was a boss who stood up for the employee that sets a great standard for employees and for encouraging a supportive work environment.



The community forum underscored the need to continue community dialogue to ensure education and sustained behaviour change to address stigma and discrimination. Feedback from some participants included:

"I will help in whatever way I can and but still not supporting someone in the kitchen working with HIV"

"If the man has HIV he has no rights he is spoilt"

The RSDU campaign has contributed to national human rights discussions, where country partners have continued dialogue on a number of issues including issues of decriminalization of sex work and homosexuality.

Follow up with Communities in the Berbice Riverain Area Guyana

Part II: Rural girls action – Turning the tide for inclusion of rural girls

Through the “Rural girls action project”, the RSDU in partnership with the Guyana Sex Work Coalition has initiated work within the Berbice Riverain Area to educate, sensitize and mobilise communities to positive action on issues of social and HIV related stigma, discrimination and human rights.



During a 5 day visit commencing on June 2nd 2012, the GSWC/RSDU team led by Miriam Edwards (GSWC) and Martine Chase (RSDU), reached a total of 204 persons from the communities of Kwakwani, Aroaima, Hururu and Calcuni (Berbice Riverain) and Berbice. These sessions followed community consultations conducted in March 2012 by the RSDU.



Supported by youth trained through the RSDU workshops in Guyana, tailored sessions were developed to address the educational and sensitization needs of the communities. Using Edudrama and trigger videos, the facilitators created a platform to discuss issues of confidentiality/ non disclosure of HIV status, discrimination within the community, recourse for human rights violation, safety and protection for persons facing discrimination and the role of pivotal community actors (teachers, faith leaders and police officers) in reducing S & D and ensuring preservation of human rights of all citizens.

The discussions also brought to bear the needs of the communities including issues of access to health, social and educational services. The feedback from the sessions was positive, where participants made repeated requests for additional sessions and support with the development of programmes within the community.



PROFILES The RSDU in Country Team Members



Rachel Charles- RSDU Country Liaison Officer (Grenada)

Rachel Sharon Charles is a Passionate Human Rights Activist/Advocate who has been involved on the front line of the HIV Response since 1997. Her hobbies include singing, dancing, reading, socializing, travelling and helping others. She has volunteered as a HIV Educator with the Ministry of Health & the National AIDS programme, in Grenada 1997- 2000, is a member of the Grenada AIDS Foundation, 1996-2000 and a member of CRN+ since 1997.

With a vision to end Discrimination & Stigma against People living with HIV, and her love for humanity and her intolerance for social, injustice, she formed a support group for people living with HIV with assistance from the National AIDS programme, which she has managed for the past eleven years in the Capacity of President, Programme Coordinator Office Coordinator, & Network Administrator. Programme Development and Management, Proposal writing, Office Administration, Human Rights are some of her training, experiences and qualifications.

Rachel has worked as a Human Rights Advocate through PANCAP initiatives CRN+ and CCNAPC, in Collaboration with the National AIDS Directorate, 2005- 2008, under the Global Fund. She is presently the Liaison Officer for the PANCAP Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit Grenada.

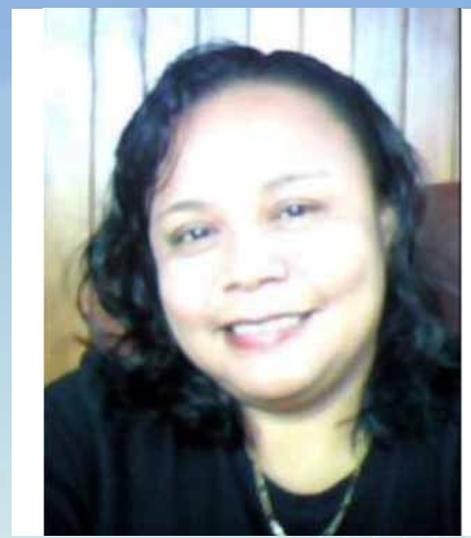


Sonia Alexander - RSDU Senior Technical Associate (OECS)

Sonia Alexander is a Public Health Consultant, who was Director of the National AIDS Programme (NAP) of Saint Lucia from 2005-2010. Dr. Alexander served as a Dental Nurse lecturer at the Dental Auxiliary Schools in Trinidad and Jamaica and as a Research Fellow of UWI, Mona Campus. She served as a CARICOM/PANCAP consultant on a MARP mapping exercise focusing on stigma and discrimination in 5 Caribbean countries. Dr. Alexander is an adjunct Professor of Public Health at Monroe College Saint Lucia Campus.

She gained immense knowledge in HIV and AIDS programming through working on two major projects; HIV/AIDS World Bank and the OECS Global Fund projects implemented during her tenure at the NAP. Another major project she participated in was the Maternal Mortality Study, Jamaica 2005.

Dr. Alexander is a graduate of the University of the West Indies with a Ph.D in Public Health and is accredited as a Master Certified Health Education Specialist (MCHES) by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC) of the USA. She has worked on two DFID funded HIV projects with the Associates for International Development Inc. (AIDInc) since 2010. She is currently Senior Technical Associate of the Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit.



Martha Carrillo- RSDU Senior Technical Associate (Belize)

Martha Carrillo is a graduate of the University of the West Indies where she completed a Master of Science Degree in Counseling with a Special Focus on HIV/AIDS in 2005. Prior to this she completed a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology at the University of Louisville in Kentucky in 1994. In 1996 she served as Support Services Coordinator for the Alliance Against AIDS and from 2001 – 2004 served as Executive Director of the National AIDS Commission of Belize. Since completing her tenure at the NAC she has been working as a Consultant. In the area of HIV she has worked in strategic planning, policy development, research, training and curriculum development. In the area of Gender she has gained vast knowledge and experience in her years of involvement with key agencies in the country. One of her key accomplishments has been the provision of support to the Women's Department in the elaboration of the Gender-based Violence Plan 2006-2011 as well as the development of training manuals. Most recently she served as part of the team that developed 6 Training Manuals on Stigma and Discrimination for CARICOM/PANCAP. She presently serves as Senior Technical Associate for the PANCAP Stigma and Discrimination Unit.

PROFILES The RSDU in Country Team Members



Shana Marius- RSDU Country Liaison Officer (St. Lucia)

Shana Marius is vibrant young individual, from the beautiful island of Saint Lucia. She is presently pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Social Work at the University of the Southern Caribbean. She loves interacting with people and doing new things. Through the years she has worked in the field of HIV/AIDS. She began learning about HIV with St. Lucia Red Cross in their "Together we can Program" and is still an active volunteer member in the organization. She also worked with the AIDS Action Foundation as a Peer Counsellor where she had involvement in educating her peers and young people about HIV/AIDS. She has also been trained in different fields both regionally and internationally. She is also the LIVE UP hero for her country St. Lucia. Shana has grasped every experience she has gotten in working in the HIV sector and loves what she does with a passion. Shana serves as an advocate for her peers and loves talking to young persons. She is also a Voluntary Counseling and Testing Provider. When she's not busy with work and school she enjoys playing netball and riding bicycle. She enjoys partying, hanging out with family and friends.



Stacy-Ann Jarrett -RSDU Country Liaison Officer (Jamaica)

Characterised as passionate, outspoken and dynamic, I commenced my official involvement in HIV and AIDS as Finance Officer of the Global Fund Grant at the Ministry of Health Jamaica, with one role being that of aiding sub-recipients in developing administrative and financial management capacity that would ensure the successful implementation of projects. My support went beyond call as I invested in understanding the programmes being implemented and sought ways to ensure the programmatic and financial obligations were adequately satisfied as believed this would result in more effective programmes. After reconstructing financial management systems at Jamaica AIDS Support for Life, I was offered the post as their Finance Manager. I believed my passion and skill would be best put to use in this environment. Within a year, I was offered the position of Executive Director, forging strong relationships with private sector evidenced by Digicel's 'Help a child, recycle your old phone' project which was subsequently awarded for its innovation, as well as strong

relationships with leaders and influencers of the most at risk population of MSMs and LGBT people in Jamaica.

I have served on the board of Jamaica Network of Sero-positives, Vice-chaired the Jamaica Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), was involved in the development of the Civil Society Coalition, hold unique first hand and considerable exposure to the underground issues and systems impacting the vulnerability of MSMs in Jamaica. Subsequently started my own community movement, called The Underlined Response which aims at getting LGBT Youth more actively involved in their own development by identifying issues, as well as practical and sustainable ways to address them by forging relationships with entities or groups that are able to facilitate the process. One major achievement was the hosting a first ever PRIDE Festival in September 2011, showcasing LGBT owned business and talent, patrons found it inspiring, motivating and empowering

dance4life start up in Belize & Heart Connection Tour (HCT) training.



With support from the PANCAP RSDU, the dance4life Barbados team recently travelled to Cayo District in Belize, where they supported the start up of dance4life Belize.

With help from the local implementing partner, the Cornerstone Foundation in San Ignacio, a group of ten youth were recruited to participate in the intensive four-day training to form the local Heart Connection Tour (HCT) team.

During the HCT, the dance4life tour team travels to schools bringing fun and interactive sessions with music, dance (the dance4life drill), peer education, edu-drama, real-life stories and audiovisuals. Students are inspired by the fun and emotive way other young people bring the message and information. Basic misconceptions and preconceived ideas are corrected, and taboos are broken about the virus and how it is spread.

The training, which concluded with an HCT pilot at a community summer camp with youth ages 5-18, was a great success! The team was passionate, committed and eager to participate in every aspect of the training. RSDU edu-drama master trainer, Kimberly Vasquez, played an integral role in engaging and empowering the group who, initially unsure about their competence as 'actors', learnt to use this medium as a fun, youth friendly, and interactive tool to educate others.

One aspect of the heart connection tour includes a positive speaker. In Belize, we were fortunate to have an exceptional individual, Herman Bain, fill this role (in addition to many others!). The positive voice component of the HCT is one of the most important parts of the workshop. It plays a key part in reducing stigmatizing attitudes and behaviours by giving a human face to the virus that students can relate to. Herman's willingness to share his story with such positivity is incredibly inspiring, and helps to create a true heart connection, which makes the HCT so powerful.

