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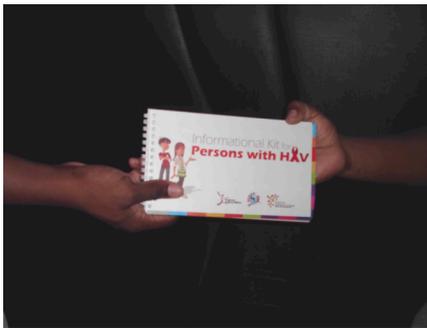
Combination
Prevention for HIV
Central America and Mexico



Success Story

Building strategic partnerships to reach people living with HIV in Belize

In Belize, the home visit strategy has allowed the Combination Prevention Program to increase the number of people living with HIV reached in community based settings by 300%.



“Miriam stopped taking her medication. Can you go see her?”, says Ms. Georgia White¹, a thirty year old woman from Belize City who is participating in a home visit program for people living with HIV (PLHA). On this occasion, Georgia was receiving a visit from Laverne Gentle, a peer outreach worker from the Collaborative Network of Persons Living with HIV (C-Net+), a local NGO in Belize working with the Pan American Social Marketing Organization (PASMO) under the USAID Combination Prevention Program for HIV.

Under this Program, reaching people living with HIV in Belize in community-based settings had been traditionally a challenge. However, in late 2012, PASMO and CNet+, partnered to develop a new strategy to increase the coverage of combination prevention interventions for people living with HIV through a peer home visit initiative.

Laverne is one of many peer outreach workers now conducting home visits with PLHA in Belize, a strategy which allowed the Program to increase the number of PLHA reached in community based settings by 300% from fiscal year (FY) 2012 to FY2013. To support this effort, at a regional level, PASMO also signed a letter of understanding with the Central American Network of People Living with HIV (REDCA, in Spanish). As a product of this alliance, the Combination Prevention Program reproduced and disseminated a REDCA information kit for PLHA.

In Belize, CNet+ is the local representative for REDCA and is working under the Program to disseminate this kit under a combination prevention approach. Some of the behavioral and biomedical interventions include interpersonal communication (IPC) activities designed to change or maintain healthy behaviors, and referrals to services such as adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) and nutrition.

In the 2012 quantitative surveys known as Tracking Results Continuously (TRaC), people living with HIV were 2.27 times more likely to be users of ART when exposed to any Combination Prevention Program activity.

“When we first started the home visits, we had few people, but when they noticed that their friends stopped their medication or stopped going to the clinic, they would ask us to go see them”, says Laverne. “Those of us who live with HIV know each other and build a sort of informal network. In the end, it was like a snowball effect with one person referring another”.

In the coming months, the Program will continue to work to coordinate and expand combination prevention services for people living with HIV, including collaboration of to provide individual and group therapy for most at-risk populations and PLHA, and collaborating to expand the scope of the And What Now? website (www.andwhatnow.info) specifically designed by the Program for PLHA, their family members and friends.

¹ All names in this story have been modified to protect the identity of the persons involved.

