

# The Caribbean Regional Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (CRN+)

## Caribbean Sub Regional Meeting (ICPD)

Vulnerable Groups in the Caribbean-Persons Living with HIV/AIDS  
(PLHIV)

**Presented Ms. Yolanda Simon - CRN+**

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**Antigua and Barbuda**

## *Vision*

CRN+ is the authentic voice of Caribbean people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). As a full and equal partner in the collaborative fight against HIV/AIDS, CRN+ is driven by PLWHA making a meaningful difference to their lives.

## *Mission*

The Caribbean Regional network of people Living with HIV/AIDS (CRN+) is committed to empowering and supporting persons infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS through advocacy, research, partnership, capacity-building and resource mobilization.

# BACKGROUND-CRN+

- Established 28 September, 1996 with the Secretariat based in Trinidad and Tobago
- Member, the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS-GNP+
- Member, International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS - ICW

# Successes:

CRN+ established in 1996 - Still today the only regional network of scope, which seeks to

- empower, enhance and improve the quality of life of persons living with and affected by the disease.
- Facilitated the establishment of many PLWHA support groups/networks at the Country Level.
- Some of which are: Grenada, Jamaica, Antigua, Haiti, DR just to name a few.

Continued...

- One of the original six signatures in formation of PANCAP- Feb 2001
- The first PLWHA organization in the world to be awarded a GFATM grant -2004
- Recipient of several financial grants, including CDC, World Bank, Ford Foundation and IHAA.
- Reorganization as the authentic voice of PLWHA
- Technical and financial support for two five year strategic plans 2003-2007 and 2008-2012

# Programme of work

CRN+ conducts its work on several platforms.

These are:

- Advocacy
- Leadership
- Coordination
- Resource Mobilization

Areas of Focus

- Human Rights
- Positive Prevention
- Criminalization
- SR HR

# Challenges:

- Access to Care Treatment and Support
- Stigma and Discrimination
- Greater involvement of PLWHA
- Criminalization of HIV
- Limited access to resources i.e. human, technical and financial support

# Challenges cont'd...

## ■ Legislation

- Absence of laws to protect PLWHA whose human rights have been violated
- PLWHA denied employment either through pre-screening or through disclosure of their status

## ■ Confidentiality

- Few (if any) PLWHA have had redress in cases where health care workers have breached confidentiality
- PLWHA not accessing care, treatment and support services for fear of disclosure of status with HIV



# Interventions and Gaps

- Vulnerable groups such as CSW, MSM and migrants are under- served by existing services
- How can we explore other non-traditional income-producing avenues ; address issues of literacy, poverty and economic empowerment for vulnerable groups?
- How can we address the resistance of certain sectors to align themselves with PLWHA networks and other vulnerable groups?
- We need to ensure the sustainability of our efforts.

# The Way Forward

- Recognition of HIV/AIDS as a workplace issue
- Emphasizing the feminization of HIV/AIDS - increased impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls in the Caribbean
- Greater involvement in the national response  
PLWHA need to be given the opportunity to contribute to the process on matters relating to their lives

# Continued...

- Quality representation of Caribbean PLHIV- advocacy
- Improving and expanding the delivery of services to PLHIV in the region – partnerships
- Capacity building at all levels of the organisation