

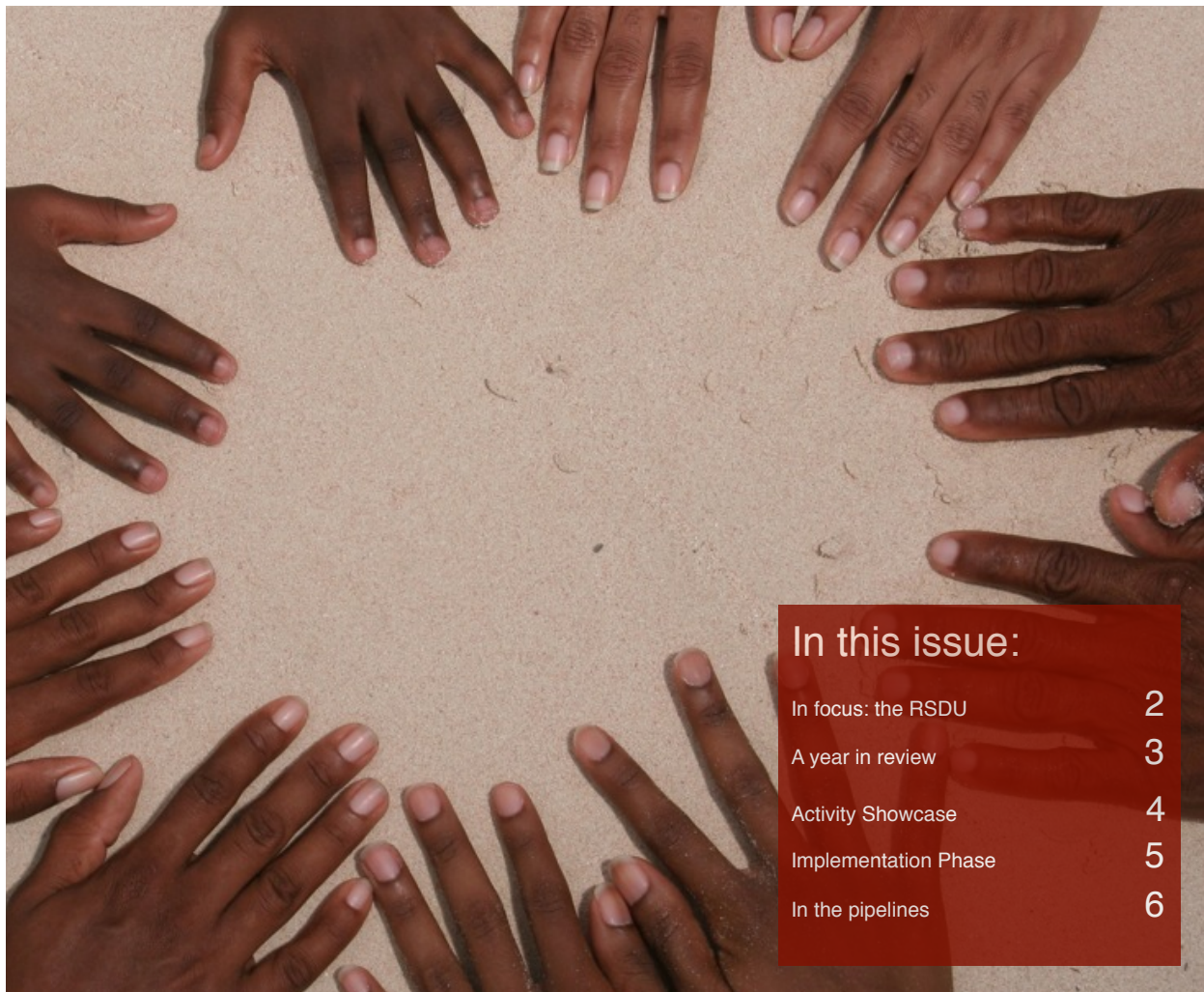
# PANCAP

SCALING UP THE CARIBBEAN'S RESPONSE TO HIV AND AIDS  
PAN CARIBBEAN PARTNERSHIP AGAINST HIV AND AIDS

## Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit

*Breaking down the walls of shame and blame*

### Regional Partners Unite to Combat Stigma and Discrimination



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The RSDU was established in 2009 through the DFID funded project *Reducing Stigma and Discrimination in Response to HIV and AIDS in the Caribbean* to assist Caribbean territories with the creation of an enabling environment that fosters universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support services in accordance with Priority area 1 of the Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework 2008 - 2012.

# In focus – THE RSDU

Since January 2009, the RSDU set out on its mission to tackle stigma and discrimination which has driven people living with HIV and affected by HIV in Caribbean region, underground.

The RSDU's approach is grounded on ensuring the preservation of human rights and dignity for all impacted by HIV. Through empowerment workshops, capacity building sessions and sensitization of key groups who have historically discriminated in society, we have been making headway in achieving our goal.

The RSDU has brought together partners from across the region including United Nations Joint programme on HIV and AIDS, Caribbean Regional Network of People Living with HIV to serve on the Stigma Unit Advisory Group for the project. These partners have united to provide strategic guidance and technical advice to ensure the successful work of the Unit.



## **GOAL:**

Stigma and discrimination against PLHIV, their families, and other vulnerable groups, steadily and measurably decreases in the Caribbean region.

## **PURPOSE:**

PANCAP enabled to ensure participating NAPs, civil society and private sector groups develop and implement high quality national programmes to tackle stigma and discrimination, working in partnership with PLHIV and other vulnerable groups

## **OUTPUTS:**

1. CARICOM/PANCAP Unit to tackle stigma and discrimination, related to HIV and AIDS, fully staffed, established and functioning
2. Effective stigma and discrimination programmes designed and implemented in the selected countries.
3. Baseline, Operational research and evaluation work, with strong gender focus, supports and informs the development of effective programmes at national level
4. Best practices and tested methodologies disseminated

# A year in review . . .



Activities during the first year of the project focused on initiating stigma reduction activities with the National AIDS Programmes throughout the region. These included research studies involving MSM and empowerment sessions for people living with HIV.

## **SNAPSHOT OF INCEPTION PHASE SUCCESSES**

- Establishment of the RSDU office in Barbados
- Selection and convening of the Stigma Unit Advisory Group
- Completion of S&D needs assessments and country visits to Dominica, St. Lucia, Guyana, Belize, Jamaica and Grenada
- Partnership building with National AIDS Programmes and the Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV/AIDS.
- Capacity building in Empowerment for Leadership, Peer Education training with emphasis on Stigma Reduction, Influential Speaking and Operational Research Approaches.
- Implementation of 4 national pilot programmes in St. Lucia, Guyana, Dominica and Jamaica.
- Training of FBOs in Guyana and St. Lucia in anti-stigma and discrimination approaches
- Supporting the regional human rights response by convening outcomes of the human rights desk and developing a partnership strategy and action plans.

# Activity Showcase

## Church leaders reflect on their attitude towards people living with HIV

**October, 2009**

Sensitization workshops in Guyana and St. Lucia brought together over 20 members of Catholic, Pentecostal and Seventh Day Adventist churches to learn about the impact of stigma and discrimination on the lives of people living with HIV. By the end of the interactive 2 day sessions which covered the myths of HIV transmission and gave real experiences of discrimination and the consequences it had on the lives of



those involved, some persons confessed that they had HIV positive family members that they did not embrace. One participant confessed “..this is a bittersweet moment for me. This workshop caused me to reflect on some of the hurtful things I said to my sister who was living with AIDS. I said those things out of frustration. Now I know better.” This session was the beginning of change for some who pledged to bring Christ’s message of hope, love and compassion to people living with HIV.

### People living with HIV in St. Lucia overcome stigma

Some people living with HIV carry emotional burdens because of their HIV status and the discrimination they face from their families and within the wider community. As a result, some are driven underground, have difficulty finding employment and overcoming self stigma. A workshop with 12 PLHIV in St. Lucia conducted during the inception phase of the RSDU confirmed this anecdote. During this 2 day empowerment session, PLHIV participated in self-esteem building session and gained insight into overcoming stigma, supporting each other and tips for positive prevention. Leaders of the group lauded the efforts of the RSDU which saw more PLHIV stepping up to be involved in programmes saying “this is an urgent issue in most small islands pervaded by stigma and discrimination, they (PLHIV) are neither enabled nor empowered ..they are unable.. and underground”.

# Implementation Phase

## Package of Interventions

The target countries of the RSDU (OECS, Belize, Jamaica, and Guyana) will benefit from the technical assistance and anti-stigma programmes during the 2 year implementation period. These activities are summarized below.

### **P0: Information for Action**

The RSDU will undertake assessments to determine the baseline levels of stigmatising attitudes, discriminatory behaviours and human rights knowledge in the target countries. This evidence gathered using the Stigma Community Response Baseline (**SCOR-B**) tool, will be used to inform and monitor the programmes over the 2 year programme.

### **P1: Preparing For Action**

Master training sessions will be delivered to build country capacity in addressing S &D. The areas of focus include S&D Leadership and Empowerment and Advocacy/ Influential Speaking training for key groups.

### **P2: Building on Champion for Change**

The RSDU will initiate training for Champions to further empower them to mitigate S &D in their spheres of influence. Furthermore, the RSDU will empower 'grass roots' champions from youth and women's groups.

### **P3: Training programmes in Anti-stigma approaches**

These sessions will include training in the use of the CARICOM anti-stigma toolkits and best practice approaches that have been shown to be effective in reducing stigma and discrimination. Trained persons will conduct anti-stigma sessions in their communities and organisations.

### **P4: Production of Pilot BCC Anti stigma materials**

Anti -stigma materials (toolkits, public service announcements) will be developed based on the operational research findings, global or regional best practices and lessons learnt.

# Implementation Phase



**The 2 year programme of the RSDU has built on the good practices and lessons learnt of the inception phase. A summary of the achievements during the first 6 months is summarized below.**

- **Recruitment of Technical Associates in Jamaica, St. Lucia and Guyana.**
- **Selection of Community Advisory Board members in selected countries**

- **Development and pilot of the baseline assessment tool Stigma Community Response Baseline (SCOR-B)**
- **Pilot of baseline tool (SCOR- B) in St. Kitts and Nevis with people living with HIV, men who have sex men and health care workers.**
- **Ongoing development of manuals for Edudrama, Human Rights and Anti-stigma educational sessions**
- **Desk based assessments for Anguilla, Antigua, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Vincent & the Grenadines**

- **Development of dissemination materials to highlight the successes of the inception phase and to document emerging best practices from the inception phase of the project.**



# in the pipelines

October 2010 – March 2011

## Output 1

- Establishment of liaison offices in St. Lucia, Jamaica and Guyana
- Selection and convening of the Community Advisory Boards in Jamaica, and Grenada

## Output 2

- \* Master Training Sessions in Empowerment for Leadership, Human Rights and Advocacy, Peer Education with emphasis on Stigma Reduction, Edudrama & Puppetry.
- \* Development of audiovisual aids to accompany CARICOM anti-stigma toolkits

## Output 3

- Community level human rights educational sessions using CARICOM and RSDU toolkits
- Anti-stigma poster and PSA campaigns

## Output 4

- Dissemination of baseline assessment findings
- Development of website and online training
- Ongoing support to partners via the RSDU online help



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The target countries of the unit are Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Contact us for more information on our anti-stigma programmes.

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