

Representative: Joan Burke

THE BEST BULLETIN

The Principal Recipient's Update

Greetings From BEST!!

ON February 5th, 2007, BEST in its capacity as the Principal Recipient of "Belize's Multi-Sectoral Response to HIV and AIDS" received formal notification of the approval of Phase 2 of the grant agreement. This notice came in the form of an official copy of the Phase 2 Amended Agreement for signature by the Chairperson of BEST Ms. Jane Longworth.

Over the period from April to December 2006, BEST and the NAC has been involved in presenting the request for and clarifications of the Phase 2 application for continued funding.

During Phase 2, which is already in the second quarter, a number of changes will have to be made to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation. Firstly, there are a number of additions in project personnel which will improve implementation. Specifically, monitoring and evaluation of the project should improve with these additions both at the level of the PR and the Sub-Recipients particularly the Ministry of Health.

Another area that will see fine tuning will be the area of reporting. The PR has made a commitment to the GF Secretariat to ensure that Quarterly and Annual reports are accurate and that they are submitted on time. In fact, the aim is to ensure that all reports are delivered to the LFA well within the forty five day deadlines granted.

Also, BEST and the NAC will continue to work with other agencies to improve the technical capacities of SRs. Critically important to this endeavour, is the ongoing technical assistance that is being provided by the Capacity Project which has previously provided support to bolster the monitoring and evaluation capacities of agencies involved in this project. This support will continue in this Year 3 of the project.

Year 3 of this project promises to be exciting. The overall score for Phase 1 was a B1 which is a reasonable score; however, the aim for Phase 2 is for excellence. That then means that those indicators that were not achieved in Phase 1 will have to be speeded up and those impacts that we planned for will have to be achieved on time. In a nutshell, we will have to work harder and smarter in 2007.



Edition No. 3

March, 2007

- BFLA worked along with QADS, PAHO, NAC, the IEC Committee and BEST in the coordination of the Behavior Communication Change (BCC) Strategy training held during the month of October 10th-12th 2006. There were thirty-five participants in attendance and Dr. Pauline Russel Brown of Jamaica was the facilitator.

- BFLA also collaborated with QADS, BEST, the Belize and the Regional Red Cross to coordinate the Peer Education Management Training held on October 30th – November 3rd, 2006.

- BFLA-Youth Advocacy Movement(YAM) and the staff along with Edward P Yorke's Peer Educators participated in the WIN- Belize Annual Gender Based Violence- HIV Prevention Torch Run in November 25th. This was done in solidarity with the National Response to both Public Health Issues.

- BFLA- Stann Creek-The activities highlighted below were executed in collaboration with POWA:

The airing of TV and Radio spots addressing the link between HIV/ Condom use. (Nov. and Dec.) There was participation in the Torch Run Rally in Dangriga. In addition to condom distribution, this served as a forum for discussions and an exercise in the completion of questionnaires that centred around HIV/ AIDS and condom use. (World Aids Day-Wad- Dec 1)

- BFLA- Punt Gorda- The following are two Condom Promotion activities that were implemented:

Approximately fifty(50) persons participated in HIV/AIDS discussions and condom use demonstrations. (Nov25) movie entitled "Risking It All" was shown at the Toledo Community College to an audience of twenty three students. (Oct. 30)

- BFLA- San Ignacio teamed up with the Women's Department, the San Ignacio AIDS Committee, MOH and Corner Stone Foundation. (Dec1) in staging a Condom Awareness Health Fair as a part of WAD activities. (Dec 1)

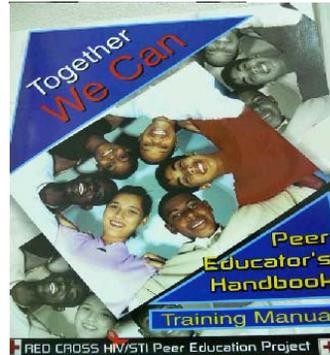
- BFLA-Belmopan worked in alliance with HECOPAB and MOH at the BFLA-Orange Walk in association with Youth For The Future conducted the following activities during Youth Week. Approximately fifty young persons were in attendance at the La Immaculada Conference Room to view the local movie " Risking It All". A discussion addressing HIV issues ensued. This was facilitated by Dr Carlos of BFLA Centre.

- The HIV/AIDS and Parenting Rally held in Progresso Village witnessed over one hundred participants. (Dec2)

Representative: Dr. Marvin Manzanero & Dr. Moguel

BFLA in cooperation with MOE, Belize Red Cross and the IEC Committee completed a five-day Peer Education Training utilizing the adapted "Together we Can" module at the Banana Bank in the Cayo District. The sessions were facilitated by consultants Lois Hue (author of the Kit), Mobafa Baker and Fabian Thomas, who catered to twenty-three educators and secondary school counselors who participated. (Oct 29- Nov 3).

-3-



-4-

BFLA, MOE, Belize Red Cross and IEC Committee completed a five-day Peer education Training utilizing the Adapted "Together We Can" module.

BFLA completed two S&RH documentaries to be shown in the clinics: - Breast Cancer, narrated by Sherlene Tablada, Chair Person of the IEC Committee- Contraceptives, narrated by William Neal, member of BFLAs Board of Directors.

BFLA – Headquarters (HQ) developed two Sexual and Reproductive Health Brochures (Oct – Nov) addressing the issues pertaining to Prostate Cancer and contraceptive (injection)

Dr. Isabel Tun completed a baseline study of twenty-five Commercial Sex Workers in the Stann Creek District. The goal of the study was to analyze their knowledge, attitudes, practices and behaviour (KAPB) increase their risk for HIV infection.

It is anticipated that practical recommendations will be made with respect to behaviour modification and prevention interventions.

During the month of February '07, BFLA received a total of 300,000 condoms. So far the VCT in Belize City has been given 62,208 condoms. The YWCA has received 6,912 condoms for redistribution to the Barber Shops in the City.

The Belize National Communication Strategy for HIV/AIDS was utilized as a reference at the BCC Training for stakeholders at the Radisson Fort George Hotel



Sexual & Reproductive Brochure addressing Contraceptive Injection

Sexual & Reproductive Brochure addressing Prostate Cancer



The Completion of the National Condom Distribution Plan

The Pan American Health Organization with collaboration from the Belize Family Life Association and, the Ministry of Health developed a National Condom Distribution Plan. It is anticipated that the Plan will ensure that condoms are distributed country wide in order to meet the commitment outlined in the Global Fund Project. The National Condom Distribution Plan is being distributed through out the country.

Training for Pharmacists

In order to provide effective and efficient services to people with HIV infection, and in preparing for the Integration of HIV/AIDS services into the Primary Health Care System, the Ministry of Health in Collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization organized and conducted training for approximately 22 senior pharmacists on the rational use of antiretroviral, as well as on the use of medications for opportunistic infections. During the one week training, emphasis was placed on inventory and pharmaceutical management, quantification, dispensing, counseling for use of antiretroviral therapy and adherence, pediatric antiretroviral, the side effects and adverse reactions, as well as nutrition as pertains to HIV and AIDS.

REVISED PROTOCOL FOR VERTICAL TRANSMISSION

The Maternal and Child Health Unit of the Ministry of Health has completed the revised protocol for the vertical transmission of HIV. The protocols which are currently being printed will be available for training and dissemination in early 2007. However, aspects of the policy such as the improved treatment are being implemented. The revised protocol, PMTCT Plus extends care beyond the intervention that prevents babies from contracting HIV. With PMTCT Plus, services are extended to the entire family, and are linked to the formal health services to ensure that a comprehensive model of care is delivered through a single, national, co-ordinated health system. In addition, it ensures that the package of services is extended beyond treatment with anti-retroviral drugs to those in need, but ensures that family planning and reproductive health services, nutritional support, counseling and support care are addressed. The PMTCT Plus manual establishes the updated criteria for optimal management of PMTCT Clients. An electronic copy of the PMTCT Plus was also forwarded to the PR for perusal.

Training on the Syndromic Management of STI

The Ministry of Health has completed six training sessions for health care providers on the Syndromic management of STI. All the clinics received training on the management of STI as well as the newly developed reporting forms. In addition, work has commenced on the development of the contact tracing manuals for STIs and TB, as well as the partner notification for HIV. It is anticipated that the manuals will be available in 2007. Work has also commenced in the area of Partner Notification whereby individuals are encouraged to inform their partners of HIV and STIs.

-6- A total of fifteen condom vending machines have arrived in country. Discussions have taken place with the Ministry of Health, PASMO and various establishments (bars & clubs) in order to finalize where these machines will be strategically placed.

The prices per condom will range between \$1.25-\$2.25 which is lower than the market prices.



The two vehicles handed over to the Ministry of Health will be used specifically for Contact Tracing at the VCT Sites and STI Clinics in Dangriga and Orange Walk.



MINISTRY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (MHD)

Representative : Icilda Humes

-7- The Women's Department continues to accelerate its public awareness campaign on the link between Domestic Violence and HIV/AIDS. One of the reasons some women choose to remain in abusive relationships is because of economic dependency. As a step towards economic empowerment, the Women's Department held a two-day Women's Craft Expo and Entrepreneurial Skills Training in Belize City on November 25th and 26th, 2006. Over the two there was a total of one hundred and sixty one (161) participants.

The morning sessions were devoted to small business management training sessions and included topics such as: *Marketing, Quality & Standards, Costing and Pricing.* Sessions were facilitated by BELTRAIDE and Marilyn Young. During the afternoon sessions, women from throughout the country received hands-on instruction on various craft disciplines including basket weaving, jewelry-making, canvas art and embroidery.

In an effort to strengthen the capacity of individuals to efficiently and effectively prepare and deliver presentations, especially those focusing on HIV/AIDS, the Women's Department held a two-day HIV/AIDS Capacity Building in Workshop Facilitation on the 27th & 28th, September, 2006.

The workshop catered to twenty seven (27) participants from Women's Department, BFLA, WIN Belize, YWCA, COMPAR and women's groups from throughout the country.

The sessions included: Profile of the effective Facilitator, Role and Responsibilities of the Facilitator and Planning an Effective HIV/AIDS Session "From *Preparation of Agenda to Evaluation.*" On the second day, participants worked in groups and prepared and presented actual powerpoint presentations on HIV/AIDS and Gender-based violence issues.

Through the Global Fund, British High Commission and collaborative efforts with Belize Family Life Association the Women's Department held a two-day workshop, (November 8th and 9th, 2006) on Sexual and Reproductive Health at the Kolbe Foundation. This workshop included information sessions on cervical cancers, pap smears, breast exams, breast cancer and other issues pertaining to female health. The workshop provided the thirty one (31) participants who were female inmates with the opportunity to take breast exams and pap smears, on-site, free of cost.

Highlighting the Link between Domestic Violence & HIV/AIDS and Taking a Step towards Economic Empowerment For Women.



Women's Craft Expo. & Entrepreneurial Skills Training in Belize City.- Marilyn Young.



NATIONAL AIDS COMMISSION
(NAC)

-9-

Representatives: Ambassador Dolores Balderamos Garcia & Ruth Jaramillo

The NAC worked along with BFLA, PAHO, the IEC committee and BEST IN THE coordination of the BCC Strategy Training held during the month of October, 10th-12th, 2006.

The Policy & Legislation Sub- committee has been formed. One of the objectives of the Committee was to strengthen the membership of the committee and this is reflected in the representation from the following sectors:

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Alliance Against Aids, National Committee for families and Children, ILO/USDOL Workplace Education Project, PWHA, National Trade Union Congress, Belize defense Force, Office of the Ombudsman, Legal Representative, Policy Advocate and Belize Centre for Human Rights Studies Representative.

This committee is expected to ensure the development of the legal framework and advocate for enactment of legislation in support to the National policy and the Work Place Policy.

Efforts are also to be geared towards the harmonization of relevant Policies on HIV/AIDS with the overall National Policy.

It is also crucial that this committee ensures the implementation of the Policy and related programmes are in alignment with the National strategic Plan.

On the 29th August 2006, the National HIV/AIDS Policy and National Strategic Plan 2006-2011 was launched. There was also a press briefing on the current status of HIV/AIDS epidemic in Belize. This will provide the framework for the full range of the national response across Sectoral and thematic areas of work.

The NAC continues to play an integral part in the coordination of the Commissioners Meetings held through out the year.

BEHIND THE SCENES!!!!!!
BEST'S STAFF ANALYZING & PLANNING.

-10-



Global Fund Project Staff:
R-L, Dennis Jones (Mg. Director), Michelle Lindo-Longworth (Deputy Mg. Dir.), Norman Garcia (Project Coordinator), first three from the right

M-L, Sandra Bradshaw (Project Officer), Indira Vivas (Accountant), Sheila Tun (Accounts Clerk), second three from the middle

The Complete Staff of BEST, Zeros in on Belize's Multi-Sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS



Contact: BEST
Mile 54 Hummingbird Highway.
Belmopan, Belize
Phone: 822-3150 or 822-3043

4 Coffin Street
Belize City, Belize
Belize City, Belize
Tel/ Fax 227-0946
E-mail best@btl.net