



Caring for people living with HIV/AIDS

REACHING OUT

Final Report

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The information contained in this publication is intended for general use to assist public knowledge and discussion and to help address the issue of stigma and discrimination and the human right approach to HIV/AIDS in Seychelles.

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Table of Contents

Foreword	
Acknowledgments	
Abbreviations	
Summary of the project	
Objectives	
Goals	
Background Situation of HIV/AIDS in Seychelles	
Methodology	
Implementation	
Activities	
Results and Outcome	
Lesson Learnt	
Conclusion	

Foreword

FAHA contributes towards shaping the national response through its representation and active participation to national structures, such as the National Aids council, the National AIDS Trust Fund, the Ministry of health. We also work in close partnership with another local NGO's working in the field of HIV/AIDS HASO. Over the past years, FAHA developed collaboration and partnership with various UN Agencies and regional and local civil society and private organizations. FAHA is a member of RAVANE+ and NAP+. It was lunch in 2001 by a person today openly living with HIV in Seychelles. Its mission is to enhance the quality of lives of people with or affected with HIV/AIDS and to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Seychelles community.

Stigma and discrimination is one of the main reasons why people living with HIV/AIDS prefer to remain in isolation and behind the curtain. Since 2008, we have seen an increase in the number of reported cases of stigma and discrimination towards people living with HIV/AIDS. This stigma doesn't only come from the general public but also from media. Since HIV/AIDS is everyone's business the Faith And Hope Association as an association defending the rights of those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, felt that it is our duty to make our contribution in addressing the issue of stigma and discrimination, and also to educate our new generation on the new development in the field of HIV/AIDS and keep them up to date with information as a way to reduce the number of discrimination. We have prefer to take a

Acknowledgements

The Faith And Hope Association wish to express our heartfelt and sincere appreciation and thanks to the UNESCO for the financial support of this project. We also wish to thanks all our partners who have help us in a way or another to address the issue of stigma and discrimination, a special thank you goes to our local sponsors who have also help to adjust our budget so that we could complete our activities as per plan in this project. Lastly we wish to thanks the general public for their participation in this project and also all people living with HIV/AIDS and all member of our association, who have devoted your precious time free of charge to make sure that this project is a success.

Abbreviations

FAHA	Faith and Hope Association
HASO	HIV/AIDS Support Organisation
CDCU	Communicable Disease Control Unit
RAVANE+	Indian Ocean Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS
NAP+	Network for African People Living with HIV/AIDS
MSM	Men Having Sex With Men

Summary of the project

Stigma and discrimination is one of the main reasons why people living with HIV/AIDS prefer to remain in isolation and behind the curtain. Since 2008, we have seen an increase in the number of reported cases of stigma and discrimination towards people living with HIV/AIDS. . In 2009 we have seen an increase in the number of articles publish in the local newsletter which discriminate the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS in Seychelles. Since HIV/AIDS is everyone's business the Faith And Hope Association as an association defending the rights of those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, felt that it is our duty to make our contribution in addressing the issue of stigma and discrimination, and also to educate our new generation on the new development in the field of HIV/AIDS and keep them up to date with information as a way to reduce the number of discrimination.

We took a partnership approach to involve as much partners as we could in the implementation of this project.

General Objective

- The project aim to advocate the right of people living with HIV/AIDS and help to reduce stigma and discrimination towards those already infected their families and friends.

Goals

- To see a decrease in reported cases of stigma and Discrimination towards people living with HIV/AIDS by end of 2011.
- Increase Knowledge of the general population about HIV is spread.
- Increase the knowledge about the general population about the rights of a person living with HIV/AIDS
- Let HIV/AIDS patients know their human rights with regards to HIV/AIDS.

Background information of situation of HIV/AIDS in Seychelles.

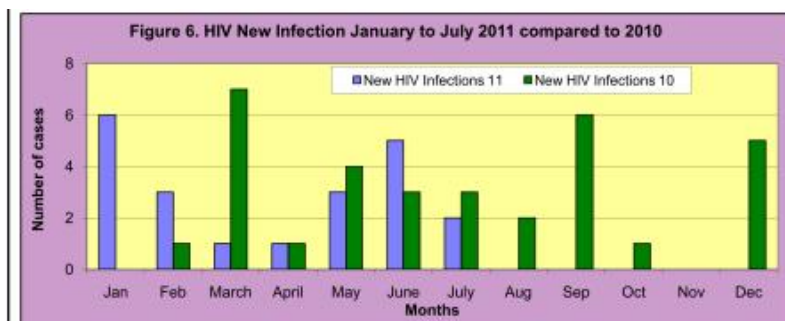
According to the communicable Diseases Control Unit, Seychelles has recorded an alarming increase in the number of new HIV cases during the last few years, leading to fear of a flaring HIV concentrated epidemic in that community. The country has an unusually HIV high prevalence within men, compared to female (57% of cumulative HIV cases). The prevalence of HIV in Seychelles in adult and in Most At Risk Populations (MARPS) is not known since no sero-prevalence study has been conducted

The figure below shows the situation of HIV/AIDS in Seychelles for the year 2010 up to July 2011

TABLE 3.5 HIV / AIDS NOTIFICATION 2010 TO JULY 2011

MONTH	New Cases (HIV +) 2010	New Cases (HIV +) 2011	HIV + Cumulative 2011	HIV + Cumulative to date	New Cases AIDS 2010	New Cases AIDS 2011	AIDS Cumulative 2011	AIDS Cumulative to date
JANUARY	0	6	6	466	2	3	3	213
FEBRUARY	1	3	9	469	0	4	7	217
MARCH	7	1	10	470	1	0	7	217
APRIL	1	1	11	471	2	0	7	217
MAY	4	3	14	474	4	1	8	218
JUNE	3	5	19	479	2	0	8	218
JULY	3	2	21	481	1	0	8	218
AUGUST	2				0			
SEPTEMBER	6				2			
OCTOBER	1				0			
NOVEMBER	0				0			
DECEMBER	5				2			

The Aids pandemic in Seychelles shows no sign of abating. This year, up to September, the Communicable Diseases Control Unit (CDCU) has reported 27 new cases of HIV infection and 14 new cases of people who have developed Aids. There are now 455 people living with HIV in our country. The figure below shows a slight decrease in the number of new HIV cases from January to July 2011 compared to same period in 2010 but this doesn't necessarily means that we have win the battle against HIV/AIDS.



In July 2011, there were two new cases of HIV infection reported by the Communicable Disease Control Unit compared to 3 in 2010. The 2 cases were males and their ages were 32 and 55 years. The total number of HIV infections since 1987 when the first infection was diagnosed is 481 (279 males, 202 females).

No AIDS case was reported but there was 1 male AIDS related death a 50 year old, reported during this month.

In general we can say that the project has really played a big contribution towards addressing stigma and discrimination. Compare to last year whereby our association recorded 10 cases of discrimination associated with the health status of people living with HIV/AIDS, this year up to now we have not receive any complaint of such cases. The figure below shows the situation of HIV/AIDS in Seychelles for the year 2010 up to July 2011

Methodology

We have tried our best to use the means of media to the maximum to help our messages pass through. Our target was the general population especially young people who are our future generations. To decentralise our activities we have also targeted the outer Islands mainly Praslin And La Digue. Since a lot of young people prefer to attend activities at night, we have also take note of that through the organisation of our activities. To educate the population, we have tried to develop new IEC material mainly concentrating on stigma and discrimination and also addressing the rights of a person living with HIV. Testimonies of people openly living with HIV were also use as a way to prove to the general public that HIV/ADS are real.

Implementation

Since our association is quite young and currently doesn't have an office and fulltime employee, a project coordinator, who is also a person openly living with HIV was recruited to make sure that all activities are organised in line with the project. A partnership approached was adopted to make sure that we have the maximum participation of all sectors in the country in the project. Since most of the time when we do activities related to HIV/AIDS we tend to concentrate on the main Island which is Mahe, decentralising our activities was a way to ensure that other Islands are also taken into consideration.

Activities

Activity 1: Organised sensitization session in schools and workplaces as well as the community on inner and outer Islands.

Sensitization in schools

Primary Schools

- 1 HIV/AIDS Session was organised with a group of 25 primary students on Friday 11th February the Island of La Digue which is the third largest Island of Seychelles.

- Power point presentation on how HIV is transmitted and Local HIV/AIDS statistic Presented By AIDS Program Manager MOH
- Power point presentation on myths and misconception and Moral and spiritual Values was Presented by. Christine Benoit from Catholic Church
- Mr. Reginald Hoareau who is a person openly living with HIV gave a testimony and made a presentation on Coping Mechanism and living positively. To enable the student to better understand how a person live with HIV.
- 25 brochures on the work that FAHA is doing were distributed so that the students can know more what FAHA does as a HIV/AIDS organization.
- 25 brochures on How HIV were transmitted.

Secondary Schools

- 1 HIV/AIDS sensitization session was organised with a group of 50 Secondary Students, on Saturday 12th February 2011 at the Pension Fund conference room on Praslin which is the second largest Island of Seychelles. Since the activity took place on a Saturday lunch and soft drinks was provide for the participants and facilitators.
- 1 HIV/AIDS sensitization session was organised with a group of 50 Secondary Students, on Wednesday 16th February 2011. The session was organised to educate the students on HIV/AIDS is spread, keep them up to date with information and help them to understand the needs of a person living with HIV/AIDS.
- Power point presentation was made on how HIV is transmitted and Local HIV/AIDS statistic Presented By AIDS Program Manager MOH
- Power point presentation on myths and misconception and Moral and spiritual Values was Presented by. Christine Benoit from Catholic Church.
- Mr. Reginald Hoareau who is a person openly living with HIV gave a testimony and made a presentation on Coping Mechanism and living positively. The testimony helped the students who are already sexuality active to think about their sexual behaviour and know more of how to live with the HIV virus.
- Power point Presentation on Risk of Anal Sex was Presented By Rosie Bistoquet (MOH)
- 75 Questionnaire was distributed to evaluate the session.
- 100 brochures on the work that FAHA is doing were distributed so that the students can know more what FAHA does as a HIV/AIDS organization.
- 100 brochures about how HIV is transmitted were distributed.
- Distribution of brochure on Reaching out to Men who have sex with men (French and English Version).

All 3 sessions was organised by the FAHA in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, to educate the students on HIV/AIDS is spread, keep them up to date with information and help them to understand the needs of a person living with HIV/AIDS. The session was also to reduce stigma and discrimination towards those already infected and help to build a sense of responsibility in our youth with regards to their sexual behaviour and risky activities in which they were engage. Our partners were the Ministry of health and the Catholic Church.

Sensitization in workplace

- 1 HIV sensitization session was organised by FAHA in collaboration with the Ministry of health on Friday 6th May 2011 at the Seychelles Breweries Hall with the 40 staff of this company to educate its staff on the danger of HIV/AIDS, keep them up to date with information and help them to understand the needs and the rights of a person living with HIV/AIDS as a way to reduce stigma and discrimination related to those infected and affected by the virus.
- Power point presentation was made on how HIV is transmitted and Local HIV/AIDS statistic Presented By AIDS Program Manager MOH
- Power point presentation on myths and misconception and Moral and spiritual Values was Presented by. Christine Benoit from Catholic Church.
- Mr. Reginald Hoareau who is a person openly living with HIV gave a testimony and made a presentation on Coping Mechanism and living positively. Mr Hoareau who is also a father of 2 daughters explains to the participants how to reduce the risk of infected a partner in cases of whereby one of the partners is infected and the other one not. Since all the participants were adult through the presentation they got to know more of how to adopt a positive life style and all the responsibilities that comes to the success of living positively with the HIV Virus.
- Power point Presentation on Risk of Anal Sex.
- Condom demonstration and Risk of Anal sex. By Rosie Bistoquet.
- 50 brochures on the work that FAHA is doing were distributed so that the participants can know more what FAHA does as a HIV/AIDS organization.
- Distribution of brochure about how HIV is transmitted.
- 10 Posters on Rights of a person Living with HIV/AIDs was distributed
- 50 brochures on stigma and discrimination were.
- 100 of brochure on Reaching out to Men who have sex with men (French and English Version).

All sessions both in schools and workplaces went well with great participations from the students and staff of the Seychelles Breweries.

Activity 2.1: Advocates on the rights of a person living with HIV/AIDS through media

- 1 Variety show was organized by FAHA on Saturday 7th May 2011 at the International conference center to replace the TV spots and round table since. The show was organized to replace the TV spot due to drop out from actors who was supposed to participate in the TV spots who didn't want people to thin that they are HIV positive and also because of the difficulties to obtain Air time because of Political Broadcast for the Presidential election. Since our activity was aim to target media which of course the audience is the general population, the variety show was the perfect activity to replace the TV spots since it was also and activity which target the audience. A total of 550 people came to watch the variety show. A total of 500 ticket containing message on HIV/AIDS was sold out.



- A total of Rs25'000 was raised and all money was allocated to provide nutritional support to those infected with HIV/AIDS. 25 most popular local artist participated in performing free of charge in the show. A drama group was set up and perform a play on how HIV and drug. The variety show was recorded and re-broadcast by the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation.

Activity 2.2: Develop of IEC materials

1000 brochures on stigma and Discrimination was printed and distributed on Mahe and Outer Island, in schools and workplaces. The brochures explain the impact of stigma and discrimination in the fight against HIV/AIDS, the factors that contribute to HIV/AIDS related stigma and the impact of these factors in the life of people living with HIV/AIDS. It also gives some example of stigma and discrimination and provides contact information about FAHA.

Activity 3.1

Production of poster to advocate on the rights of people infected with HIV

- 500 posters on the rights of a person living with HIV were printed to educate the general population about the right of a person living with HIV/AIDS and also so that HIV/AIDS patients themselves can know their rights with regards to HIV/AIDS. Most of the posters have already been distributed in the country including schools, workplaces as well as at the Ministry of health.

All activities were organized under the coordination of the project coordinator who ensures that activities organized were in line with the objectives of the project. The result obtain from these activities can be describe as a great success as per shown below.

Results and outcomes of the project

- The active participation of the students and the staff of the Seychelles Breweries prove that the participants had a lack of information or update information about HIV/AIDS.
- Though HIV/AIDS is included in the PSE (personal social education) which is a subject itself in the curriculum of the primary and secondary students, their questions raised proves that

their teacher were note up to date with regards to information they were giving the students on HIV/AIDS.

- The total numbers of people who fill up the International conference centre whereby 80% was the youth proves that are interested to know more about HIV/AIDS. But to get their participation it is important to organised activity that will attract them.
- The certificate that was printed free of charge by Printec to issue our participants and performers in the variety show and also additional sponsors from our local sponsor to make sure that our activity was a success, proves the good partnership of partners who are willing to make a contribution and give a helping hand in the fight against HIV/AIDS.
- The number of posters and brochures distribute proves that there were a lack of IEC materials addressing stigma and discrimination and also the right of a person living with HIV/AIDS.
- Though this project was aim to concentrate on stigma and discrimination we have prefer concentrate the questionnaire for the schools sensitization, as per the information collected below because we felt that there was a need to know a bit about the sexual behaviour of our youth, the age that they have started to have sex, if they are using condom or abusing substances such as drugs or alcohol and of course to see if they the session was useful. The information collected guides us to plan future project for our youth. A total of 100 participants from the secondary schools attended the session of which 75 accepted to fill in our questionnaires and the data collected are as per the chart below

Data Collected from Questionnaire in Schools

	Age 10		Age 11		Age 12		Age 13		Age 14		Age 15		Age 16		Total	Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
No Participants											2	12	37	24	39	36
Ok To Have a friend with HIV															34	35
Not ok to have a friend with HIV															5	1
Have Had sex	0	9	0	1	2	8	4	8	9	5	9	2	4	2	29	36
Never Have Sex															10	0
Use Condom					1		1		5	4	6	1	3		16	5
Did Not use Condom		9		1	1	8	4	8	4	5	3	2	1	2	13	31
HIV Session was useful															39	36
Testimony help to think about Behaviors															39	36
Have sex under substance abuse							3		4		2	1	2		11	1

The data collected have clearly shows us that our youth are sexually active; girls are sexually active since age of 10 years old and boys from the age of 12 years old. It also clearly shows us that most of our young people are not using condom and are also having sex under the influence of substance



abuse such as drugs and alcohol. It is important to note that all 75 participants who filled our questionnaire said that the session was useful to them and have helped them to think about their sexual behaviour. The sessions have also helped them to understand how the HIV virus is transmitted. It has given them a better understanding about the myths and misconception; help them to adopt positive attitudes towards those living with the virus. We believe that with the information that the students have received about stigma and discrimination and the rights of a person living with HIV/AIDS it will surely help to build up their sense of responsibility and help them to think about their behaviour as per result shown in the

chart above.

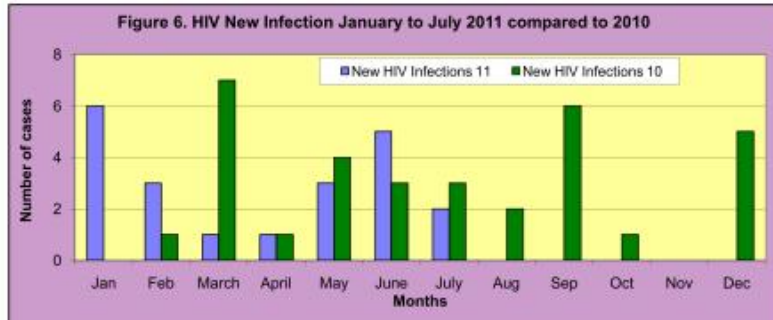
Lesson Learnt.

Through the implementation of this project we have come to realise that there's a great need to address other form of stigma that affect our work in the fight against HIV/AIDS for example the need to address stigma and discrimination related to men who have sex with men who according to the CDCU represent s about 17% of the known HIV/AIDS cases.

A rapid assessment conducted by UNAIDS in 2008 has identified two main categories of MSM: the MSM with a homosexual identity (or gay) and the MSM being bisexual (having sex with men, and still having a female partner). MSM who are bisexual are more difficult to identify and to reach with appropriate interventions due to stigmatization associated with their practices, yet the assessment showed that they possibly represent the majority of MSM community in Seychelles. Therefore in a way there is a combination of stigma related to people infected with HIV who may also be either gay or bisexual. So when addressing stigma and discrimination it is very important to take note of the vulnerable groups that can also contribute to the rapid increase in the number of HIV/AIDS cases.

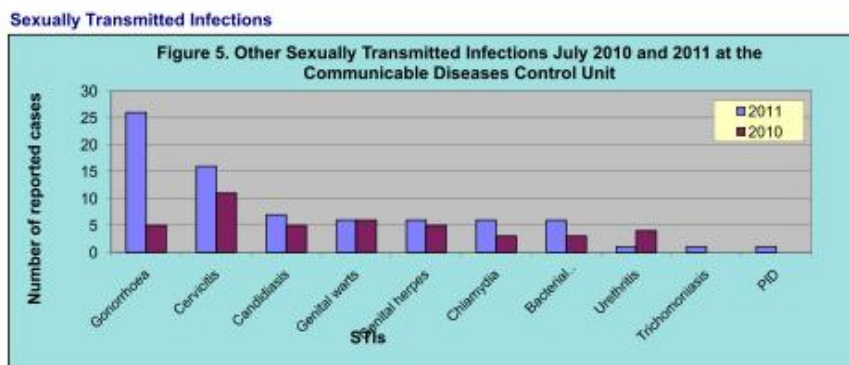
Conclusions

The Aids pandemic in Seychelles shows no sign of abating. This year, up to September, the Communicable Diseases Control Unit (CDCU) has reported 27 new cases of HIV infection and 14 new cases of people who have developed Aids. There are now 455 people living with HIV in our country. The figure below shows a slight decrease in the number of new HIV cases from January to July 2011 compared to same period in 2010 but this doesn't necessarily means that we have win the battle against HIV/AIDS.



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 No AIDS case was reported but there was 1 male AIDS related death a 50 year old, reported during this month.

Though the numbers of HIV cases have decrease on the other hands there have been a significant number in the increase of other STI's the chart below for example show an alarming increase in the number of gonorrhoea.



During July 2011, the Communicable Diseases Control Unit reported a total of 79 new cases of other sexually transmitted infections compared to 42 in 2010. The leading STI was gonorrhoea, followed by cervicitis. Compared to the same period in 2010, gonorrhoeal cases have increased by 420 percent that is from 5 cases in July 2010 to 26 cases in July 2011.

This proves that we still have a lot of challenge that lies ahead that if we do not look into various ways and means to address them it can contribute to reverse the figures and rapidly increase the number of HIV/AIDS cases in 2012.

This project also help us to realise that there's an urgent need to revise the PSE school curriculum about HIV/AIDS, it should be revised every year to make sure that the students are up to date with regards to informations that they receive in relation to the HIV/AIDS. It is important that an urgent work is done by the Ministry concern to address this issue of substance abuse among our youth and also find ways to identify what's leading our youth to early sexual activities.

Its also an urgency to start and educate our youth and genral population about moral values and also start to teach sexual education to our youth at an early age.

To eliminate stigma and discrimination towards those already infected is and will still be a challenge to us in the fight against HIV/AIDS but through this project it has proves that most of the time these stigma or discrimination is often due to lack information or wrong information passed to our public. Education is therefore the key to success.

As the cordinator of this project and also as a person openly living with HIV/AIDS I feel that this project especially through the production of posters on the rights of a person living with HIV/AIDS will surely reduce stigma related to our rights but there's a lot to do in educating our population including the Government on respecting the human rights and sexual orientation of people. If we do not learn to respect that we will always be divided in the fight against HIV/AIDS. We must not forget that AIDS has no boundary and AIDS do not choose it's victims and that it concerns all of us. Therefore we all need to work together and give a helping hand and work in the benefit of every citizen in our country cause when it comes to HIV/AIDS, we are all at risk. we are surely proud of the work we have done and our achievement through this project.

As an association working in the interest of people infected and affected with HIV/AIDS, we remain committed to continue to seek for greater involvement of people living with HIV/AIDS in Seychelles for AIDS is real and its far from over.

Working with this project was also a learning process for me and once again on behalf of our association we would like to thanks the UNESCO for its financial support.

Thank You

By: Reginald Hoareau
Reaching Out Project
October 2011