

Greater involvement of persons living with HIV/AIDS through sensitization, training and networking in Trinidad and Tobago



UN Trust Fund for Human Security



Fast Facts

Country: Trinidad and Tobago

Duration: June 2001 to May 2004

Implementing UN Agencies: UNDP

Other Implementing Partners: Trinidad and Tobago HIV/AIDS Alliance

Budget: \$303,000

Key Words: HIV/AIDS; capacity building

BACKGROUND

By 2001, despite progress in improving the health status of the population in Trinidad and Tobago, HIV/AIDS remained one of the leading causes of death in the country. Similar to other countries in the region, efforts to combat the virus and to treat those infected were obstructed by social stigmas and discrimination. Subsequently, people living with the virus tended to deny or hide their condition and

sometimes even withdrew entirely from society. This resulted in loss of human resources and decreased economic productivity, as well as obstructed HIV prevention and treatment efforts. Additionally, due to the negative impact of stigma and discrimination, people living with HIV/AIDS were less likely to participate in society and unable to contribute to policies that could change their situation.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Responding to the spread of HIV/AIDS in Trinidad and Tobago, the project's goal was to place HIV vulnerable persons at the forefront of the response to the HIV epidemic. Consequently, the project aimed to (i) support the participation of HIV infected persons in the development and implementation of national

development policies and strategies; (ii) work in partnership with key stakeholders towards mitigating the impact of stigma and discrimination; and (iii) strengthen national capacities to limit the spread of HIV/AIDS.

BENEFICIARIES

People living with HIV/AIDS benefited from workshops and capacity building activities that helped them advocate for and participate in programmes and activities that directly impacted their lives. By establishing and operationalizing a national network of persons living with HIV/AIDS, the project was instrumental in improving participation and

strengthening advocacy on HIV/AIDS at the community level and resulted in the formation of a lobby group against discrimination and stigma. Moreover, service providers and community-based support groups were sensitized and their capacities strengthened in order to address the needs of HIV infected individuals.