



[Annual Report 2009]



AIDS Support Group Saba Foundation

The Eugenius Johnson Center
Windwardside
Saba, Netherlands Antilles

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I. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AMFO	Antilliaanse Mede-Financierings Organisatie
ARV	Antiretroviral
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
ASGS	AIDS Support Group Saba
ASNA	AIDS Society of the Netherlands Antilles
BCC	Behavioral Change Communication
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CCNAPC	Caribbean Coalition of National AIDS Programme Coordinators
CSW	Commercial Sex Worker
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
FBO	Faith Based Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HAART	Highly Active Anti Retroviral Therapy
HCP	Health Care Professionals (Workers)
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IEC	Information Education and Communication
MARP	Most-at-Risk population
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men
MTCT	Mother to Child Transmission
NA	Netherlands Antilles
NAP	National AIDS Programme
NAPC	National AIDS Programme Coordinator
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NSP	National Strategic Plans
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PLHIV	Person Living with HIV/AIDS
SARA	Situation and Response Analysis
SOFNA	Stichting Ontwikkelingsfonds Nederlandse Antillen
SSS	Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
SUSoM	Saba University School of Medicine
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WHO	World Health Organization

II. THE ORGANIZATION

The AIDS Support Group Saba (ASGS) was established in 1990 following the first report of HIV infection on Saba in late 1989. By the mid 90's the ASGS got involved in the education and well being of the general population with regards to HIV/AIDS and other STIs. The ASGS has promoted most of the AIDS awareness and education campaigns to date.

In 1992 the first members of ASGS received certification as AIDS/HIV Counselors, enabling them to effectively counsel members of the Saban community with regards to prevention, testing, treatment and the social aspects/stigmas associated with the HIV/AIDS virus.

In 2000 Mr. Rudolph Hassell was appointed the AIDS coordinator for the development of an expanded response plan to HIV/AIDS by the Executive Council of Saba.

In 2007 Carl Buncamper was selected as the government HIV/AIDS coordinator representing the island of Saba.

Subsequently the AIDS Support Group Saba Foundation became the prime agency charged with the development of Saba's Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control along with the Public Health Department.

The Mission

The objective of the organization is to continue the work begun in the HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan, Saba 2002-2006 (SP). The objectives of the SP were to prevent and control the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, a disease for which up until now no cure is available.

Through this project the ASGS' intent was to contribute to the poverty reduction through the sustainable prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS on the health, social and economic sectors of Saba and to establish a policy framework for Saba based on model preventative strategies.

The target campaigns were for the

 Population of Saba:

- A) Eliminate stigma and discrimination against PLHIV and AIDS;
- B) To build awareness of choices to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and STDs, by setting up information sites at strategic points throughout the island;

- ✂ Health Care providers by increasing their skill and attitudinal approach to treat and counsel PLHIV and to the vulnerable groups;
- ✂ Educators who will mainstream educational programs on HIV/AIDS and STD awareness in schools;
- ✂ PLHIV who will benefit from a greater support and awareness within their communities;
- ✂ Activists who will acquire information, techniques and Caribbean / global networks to lobby policy makers to improve social-economic conditions for PLHIV, the vulnerable groups such as MSM, CSW, the disabled and children and young adults (particularly girls and women) to stimulate widespread public campaigns to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and address stigma and discrimination across the population; and
- ✂ The public and private sector of our island in general.

[When it was realized, that the Caribbean is second only to Sub-Saharan Africa as per the rate of new HIV infections, the ASGS determined that it had a critical responsibility to develop a strategic plan and Island policy for the Island Territory of Saba]

Why do we on Saba need and want to be involved with this project?

When it was realized, that the Caribbean is second only to Sub-Saharan Africa as per the rate of new HIV infections, the ASGS determined that it had a critical responsibility to develop a strategic plan and promote for a adequate island policy for the Island Territory of Saba, in assisting to develop / avail methods of educating members of its community about HIV/AIDS and leading the fight against the disease on our island territory. This urgency is underscored by the fact that the ASGS members are made up of representatives of all the key target groups, inclusive of the vulnerable groups.

The ASGS joined the fight against HIV/AIDS (from only providing support to PLHIV back in 1990) to general education/well being of the community at large about a decade and a half ago. The need to continue with a structured approach to combating HIV/AIDS within our community is evident from the information gathered internationally, regionally and locally on the HIV/AIDS pandemic since the start of a more aggressive approach to the fight against HIV/AIDS based on the Millennium Development Goal- to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015.

The overall results anticipated and booked in the 2006 / 2007 project by means of the activities of the island's first national strategic HIV/AIDS plan for the Island Territory of Saba were:

1. Increased awareness.
2. Reduced high risk behavior related to the spread of STI/HIV infection.
3. Greater number of trained persons to address stigma of the STI/HIV infection.
4. Established policies and strategies, and

5. Improved institutional capacity and response to HIV/AIDS through the application of knowledge, research and learning opportunities.

Situation Analysis of HIV/AIDS on Saba

In 2008 the size of the population in Saba is estimated at approximately 1.524 inhabitants, approximately 0.7% of the total population of the Netherland Antilles (Statistical Yearbook 2008). Divided by age groups, about 49% of the population is in the age group 15-44, and about 21% in the age category 10-24 years.

The population is diverse and consists of native-born Sabans who are descendents of English, Scottish, Africans and Dutch ancestors as well as other Antilleans, Europeans, North Americans, South Americans and those from neighboring Caribbean islands.

Because of its relative isolation in the past, the island has more or less functioned as a large extended family. Most Sabans are descended from a handful of families, such as Hassell, Simmons, and Johnson are common surnames. Early settlers relied on farming, fishing, sailing, Saba Lace work and shipbuilding for their living.

With the establishment of the Saba University School of Medicine, came an increase in (temporary) residents (approximately 350 persons), who stay for periods of up to 2 years. These are predominantly American and Canadian medical students (a large percentage is of Indian decent). Another migrant group consists mainly of foreign workers employed in construction. These workers come from other Caribbean islands, usually former British colonies and Haiti. This has caused some important demographic changes, with a higher ratio of males to females in the age groups 24-44. Also a lot of foreign workers are from Western Europe. Overall 47 nations are represented on Saba.

The average level of education among adults is lower than the other islands of the Netherlands Antilles. Before 1985 there was no secondary school on Saba. 82% of the population is functionally literate (> 3 years of education) with a great disparity between young and old; 30% among the elderly versus 98% in young adults.

Other demographic information pertinent to the HIV/AIDS issue is that the majority of Sabans are Roman Catholic (64%); the rest are Anglican (15%) or other (21%).



Prevalence of HIV/AIDS on Saba

The first HIV case was reported on Saba in 1989. In the year 2007, there were seven known persons (4 male, 3 female) living with HIV/AIDS on Saba, however this prevalence of 0.6% is likely to be an underestimation. Few people are tested outside the current targeted groups (pregnant women and men who have sex with men (MSM)). Three of the documented cases are in men who have sex with men (MSM); four cases are heterosexual. *

[The prevalence of 0.6% on Saba is likely to be an underestimation.]

Cumulative registered known HIV-positives Netherlands Antilles 1985-2007 per island by gender

	Bonaire	Curacao	Saba	St.Eustatius	St. Maarten	Neth. Ant.
Male	19	683	4	7	322	1035
Female	13	501	3	3	257	777
Total	32	1184	7	10	579	1812

Source: Epidemiology & Research Unit. Medical and Public Health Service of Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, 2008

* Note: At the time of the finalization of this document the new data from the Epidemiology & Research Unit in Curacao was not available. There is a new epidemiology situation in the new report, which reflects data until 2009. As soon as the report is released it will be added as an Annex to this document.

According to information of the Medical Center of Saba there are 8 PLHIV living on Saba, of which 7 persons are receiving Anti retroviral therapy (ART) and 1 is not adherent. All ART is provided by HIV specialists abroad, in particular St. Maarten, and in some cases PLHIV went for treatment to Curacao.

There have been no reported cases of vertical or MTC (Mother to Child) transmission on Saba and there has been no cases among health care workers or otherwise as a result of needle prick injuries or blood product transfusions.

Contrary to previous belief, there have been isolated cases of intravenous drug abuse (IVDA) on the island reported on our school-based survey. However, there have been no reported cases of HIV due to IVDA on Saba. There is need to collect more reliable data on this issue.

III. BOARD AND STAFF

The Board

Suzanna van den Elshout - Chairperson



Suzanna van den Elshout was born October 28, 1962 in Newmarket, Ontario, Canada, from newly immigrated Dutch parents. Pursuing a career as a medical professional, she graduated from Humber College for Applied and Technological Science in 1989, and carries a Registered Nurse license through the College of Nurses in Ontario.

While practicing in an active medical / surgical department in South Florida, Suzanna studied and received the CCRN (Clinical Care Certificate) and spent an additional 2 years in the surgical intensive care area. Suzanna returned to Ontario to practice nursing in Toronto, during that time, she became active in volunteering for several nature based NGOs including an ad hoc group that traveled to Saba in early 2000 to reopen several interior trails damaged by Hurricane Lenny (November, 1999).

Suzanna returned to Saba independently in the spring of 2000 and voluntarily presented nursing in-services to the medical staff of A. M. Edwards Medical Center. Hired on as full time staff in September 2000, she actively volunteered at several NGOs and is a member of AIDS Support Group Saba Foundation since January 2007. Suzanna advocates against stigma and discrimination for all PLHIV and AIDS and promotes educational programs to encourage awareness and activism in our fight against HIV/AIDS.

Christen Cormier – Secretary



Christen Cormier is a student at the Saba University School of Medicine. She is from Nova Scotia, Canada, 25 years old and married to Shawn for two years.

Christen worked and volunteered in the health care sector in the past. Christen has a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Acadia University, Nova Scotia and a Master of Science, Anatomy and Neurobiology from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. She loves to work-out and cook.

Rudolph A. T. D. Hassell - Treasurer



Rudolph A. T. D. Hassell is one of the primary-founding members of AIDS Support Group Saba, and until recently was the face for the organization with regards to PLHIV. Rudolph Hassell is an active member with the ASGS and presently holds the post of Treasurer within the organization.

Rudolph Hassell has spoken openly, both locally and abroad, about his infection with HIV. In particular the stigma and discrimination that the first few persons diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in 1989 on Saba experienced and endured, is one of his interests when one follows the evolvement of tolerance and support to PLHIV on the island, not only within the family circle and the greater social community, but also within the workplace.

Much of his efforts today are also focused on the fundraising component of ASGS as he is determined to see the organization flourish and continue to reach out to all on our island and beyond when possible.

Carl Buncamper - Advisor to the Board



Carl Buncamper joined the AIDS Support Group Saba Foundation (ASGS) in its formative years. This organization was originally dedicated to outreach and support of PLWHAs. It was under Carl's initiative to transform this local grass roots organization into a legally established foundation that is recognized locally, regionally, and internationally for its work with HIV and AIDS.

He is a past board member of CCNAPC and member of CRN+. He assisted in the establishment of HIV/AIDS and STD prevention programs in the schools on Saba and was instrumental in writing the first National Strategic Plan for Saba. He is co-author of 2 abstracts submitted to the XVIth AIDS Conference and was a co-facilitator of the workshop "Unemployment, Poverty and AIDS; Strategies to empower youth towards economic independence". Carl is currently the advisor for the ASGS and also heads the fundraising activities for the ASGS. Carl is presently the HIV/AIDS coordinator for the island territory of Saba.

Program Coordinator

Martina Lebinger



Since December 2008 a new program coordinator supports the ASGS. Ms. Martina Lebinger, originally from Austria (Oostenrijk, that's a small country between Germany and Italy), came to Saba in February 2008.

After graduating from Federal Commercial Collage, Martina went for 6 month to Derby, England to work as a volunteer at a Community Center to assist the inhabited NGOs and their clients.

Returning to Austria she worked in several companies in different departments. Her experience includes accounting, sales department, contract managements, OTC/logistics and office management. After going back to school in 2006 Martina received in 2007 the Certificate of General Educational Development.

Members and Volunteers

Alexander Goytisolo - Vice Secretary



My name is Alex. I am a 26-year-old medical student here on Saba. I heard about the AIDS Support Group with my girlfriend Melanie and we thought it would be interesting to join. I was immediately made to feel useful and welcome by the volunteers and officers of the ASGS! I think this is such a great cause, and I have really felt satisfaction from giving my time to this organization. My other interest is piano. I have been a classical pianist for many years; although unfortunately I have had to put that aside for the past few years since I began medical school (unfortunately, piano is a difficult hobby to have, because I can't carry it around with me!). Some of my favorite things to do here on the island include scuba diving and watching the occasional movie (when I find the time). I was born in Lima, Peru, and have lived the majority of my life just outside Toronto, Ontario. For the next few years I will be studying medicine in hospitals throughout the United States. All the best for the future to the ASGS!

Melanie Maurus– Vice Secretary



My name is Melanie. I am a 5th semester medical student at Saba University. I arrived here last year from Quebec, Canada. Before coming here, I was a dietitian working in a health unit helping people eat better. Working along physicians made me realize what I really wanted to be. A friend of mine was a student here and suggested I apply. I wanted to get involved with an organization that helped the public with health issues and discovered AIDS Support Group Saba. I joined them last year as co-secretary and volunteer. The experience has been amazing and I have really enjoyed working with the knowledgeable team.

Dr. Catherine Price– Volunteer



Catherine is a medical student at Saba University. She received her Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine from Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine, Master of Acupuncture from Phoenix Institute of Herbal Medicine and Acupuncture and Bachelor of Science in Molecular Environmental Biology with an emphasis in Microbiology from the University of California, Berkeley. Before coming to Saba, was a family physician that focused on pain management at two busy clinics in Portland (OR), and a physician consultant for GlaxoSmithKline. In her spare time, she likes to dance, surf, and make jewelry.

Naomi Wilson – Honorary Member



'Nurse Omi' as she is affectionately known by most of the population has been active with the AIDS Support Group Saba Foundation since its inception in early 1990. As the head nurse at the A. M. Edwards Medical Center since 1986, Nurse Naomi Wilson has been a pillar in our community always extending her caring hands and mind to those in need.

Those living with or affected by the HIV pandemic have experienced this 'caring' first hand. With her demand and schedules becoming more hectic with time Nurse Omi has managed to stay abreast with the programs of the ASGS and remains an important source of information and communication between the hospital and the ASGS. She is always willing to contribute where she can in whatever manner is needed and possible. She continues to upgrade her skills while managing the daily operation at the hospital under guidance of the doctors.

IV. PROGRAM PRIORITY AREAS

Prevention of HIV Transmission

Huge efforts have been made in 2008/2009 in the area of prevention. How fruitful these efforts were can be clearly indicated by comparing the community surveys which were conducted in 2007 and 2008.

Besides school activities and programs the ASGS also realized its goal to provide the public with condom vending machines and therefore make condom use accessible for the community in restrooms of popular restaurants and bars.

Knowledge and Behavior

In the community survey of 2007 over 30% of the participants believed that kissing an HIV infected person could transmit HIV. The survey in 2008 showed that only 2.7 % were still of that misconception.

The awareness that there is confidential HIV testing and counseling available went from 45% in 2007 to 60% in 2008.

Years of research and numerous studies have linked the following behaviors to increased risk of HIV transmission: Early initiation of sexual activity, multiple sex partners for both men and women, inconsistent condom use, social taboos preventing teaching or discussion of sex with young people, commercial sex work and drug use, both intravenous drug use (direct) and other substance abuse.

Social structure and culture have a significant impact on these health behaviors. The unique structure and size of the Saban population might reflect into some of the

noticed behavior, especially among youth. Many girls and boys reported that they avoid going to hospital for testing and for suspected STDs or STIs due to anonymity issues.

This might be the cause for high rates of unprotected sex. Although the number of unprotected encounters decreased, it were only 25% of the participants of the community survey in 2007 who would use condoms regularly, in 2008 the community survey reported that 52% of the participants would use condoms always.

The culture in Saba, like in whole of the Caribbean promotes increased risk of alcohol consumption among youth as well as early initiation of sex.

Treatment, Care and Quality of Life for PLHIV

The goals are to provide full coverage of anti retroviral therapy for all PLHIV, free supported counseling services, make services and tools available for appropriate diagnosis and treatment of STDs and to create an environment on Saba that allows PLHIV to discuss their condition openly and without any inhibition.

The Emergency HIV Medicine Bank is fully stocked and rotated. All PLHIV who choose to start HAART are receiving their needed medication.

Confidential counseling services for PLHIV and/or their families are still an issue and were not readily available on Saba in 2009.

The ASGS made it possible for health care takers who are already involved with the organization's efforts to update their knowledge through an online training organized and held by the Health [e] Foundation, to improve medical care for PLHIV.

Stigma and Discrimination against HIV

There have been no reported cases of discrimination against PLHIV or other HIV related activities. However in 2007 the conducted community survey reported that 43% feel bothered by working closely with a person infected with HIV/AIDS. That percentage decreased in 2008 down to 12%!

There has been also a visible increase in interest for such activities, which is reflected in increased participation by the general population.

V. PROGRAMS, PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

The **R**ESPONSIBLE **S**TUDENTS **P**EER **E**DUICATION **C**URRICULUM & **T**RAINING PROGRAM (RESPECT) developed by a former local student and former member of ASGS (Coleen Hassell) was brought once again to the local high school in March and November 2009.

The RESPECT Program was created to reduce young people's risk for HIV/STD infection by increasing their knowledge and building generic, life skills, and sexual and reproductive health skills.

This program involves and engages youth to encourage their peers to make changes and be responsible in their sexual health attitudes and norms in order to prevent infection with HIV and other STDs by providing peer-led prevention education to the Forms 2, 3, 4 & 5 at the Saba Comprehensive School.

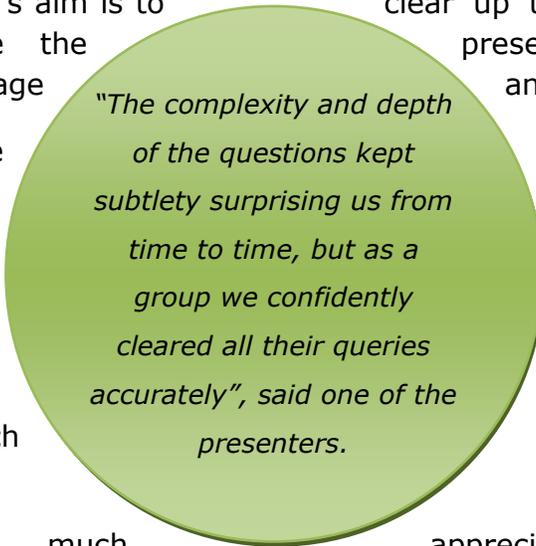
The RESPECT program is guided and lead by the students of the Epidemiological Department. The program is seen as an extracurricular activity and is monitored by Dr. Ambarti, the head of said department.

The presentations and interactions at the high school are held by medical students to ensure confidentiality and free speech. The students are divided in one male and one female group and so are the presenters of the workshop. A number of the modules speak about sexual education, basic health and hygiene, the second module about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

To evaluate this program surveys are given out before and after the presentations and interactions. Mostly the surveys show a significant increase in sexual health knowledge.

The RESPECT Program's aim is to clear up the myths about sexuality and tries to relate the presentations and interactions in our youth's language and the time we live in.

After workshops are held at the Saba Comprehensive School, the medical students mostly students were very reported to the organization (ASGS) that the high school students were very open and not shy to ask any questions which may be on their minds. This shows the ASGS very clearly that such a program is much needed and must continue.



"The complexity and depth of the questions kept subtly surprising us from time to time, but as a group we confidently cleared all their queries accurately", said one of the presenters.

The ASGS very much appreciates the engagement and

seriousness the medical students bring to this program. Also the report with the suggestions to improve this program is well received by the organization.

A constant evaluation and effort to increase the quality of the presentations and interactions are key aspects for the Responsible Students Peer Education Curriculum & Training Program.

Girl Power Saba

The Girl Power Train the Trainer Program was conducted under the auspices of the AIDS Support Program Saba Foundation (ASGS) and funded by SNAYDP.

The purpose of the program was to train Saba women to take the Girl Power Program into the Saba Comprehensive School to present to all high school girls.

Girl Power is a program that was created to show young woman the power that they possess in their lives. The program creators believe that having GIRL POWER means to have the power to be real to engage in activities that enhance one's life goals.

The Girl Power program is an educational program designed to enhance the self-esteem, self-worth and gender pride of girls ages 13-18. This educational program also aims to enhance skills focused on proper communication and negotiation, encourage abstinence or condom use as well as a general knowledge of STDs and HIV.

“Train the Trainers”

In December 2009 Girl Power St. Maarten came to Saba to facilitate the second Girl Power “Train the Trainers” workshop.

Due to the exam time at the high school mostly peer educators signed up. This was the last “Train the Trainers” workshop facilitated by St. Maarten. In the future the Program Coordinator of the AIDS Support Group Saba will train peer or health educators locally.

Community Survey 2008 - Results

82 surveys were received. 14 of these were not useable, because age or sex information was not filled in or most parts of the survey were not completed. The following results are based on 68 surveys.

We had 42 females, 26 males.

Age range:

- 15 – 18: 39 pax
- 19 – 25: 6 pax
- 26 – 35: 9 pax
- 36 – 45: 2 pax
- >45: 12 pax

HIV is a Virus, Bacteria or Fungus.

3 people thought it is a bacteria, 65 knew that it is a virus.

Are HIV and AIDS caused by the same thing?

Yes: 51, No: 12, I don't know: 5

How can you tell if somebody has HIV or AIDS?

10 thought they look tired and ill, the rest knew that you cannot tell.

Is there a cure for AIDS?

1 did not know, 5 people thought there is, 62 knew there isn't.

Do you know how to prevent yourself from becoming infected with the HIV/Aids virus?

66 people said yes, 1 needs more information, 1 did not answer at all.

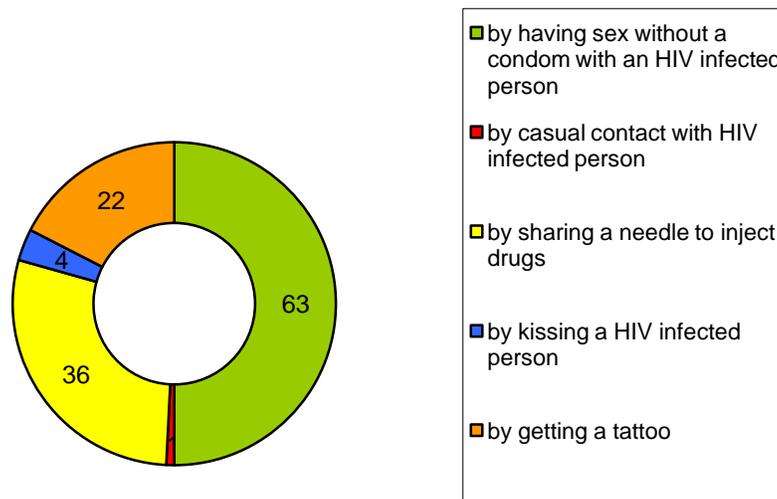
Which protects you most against HIV infection?

1 answered Contraceptive pills, 64 knew the right answer, 3 didn't answer at all.

Married people don't become infected with HIV.

2 actually answered it is true. The rest said it is false.

It is possible to get HIV/AIDS virus from the following



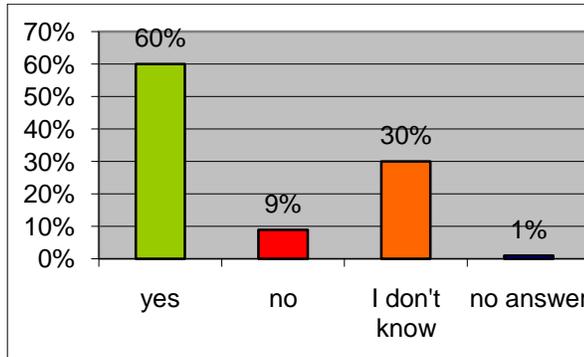
An HIV/AIDS infected mother can give her infant the disease through breastfeeding.

55 knew that it is possible, 3 said it is not, 10 did not know.

HIV testing is the only sure way to know if I or my to-be partner has the HIV virus.

63 believe it is the only sure way, 2 don't think so, 3 didn't know.

There is a free and confidential HIV test available on Saba



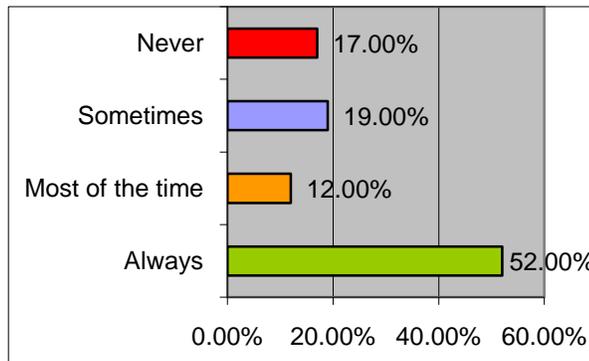
It would NOT bother me to work closely with a person I know is infected with HIV/Aids virus.

51 said it won't bother them, 8 mind and 9 are not sure.

Are you sexually active?

39 said they are, 29 said they are not.

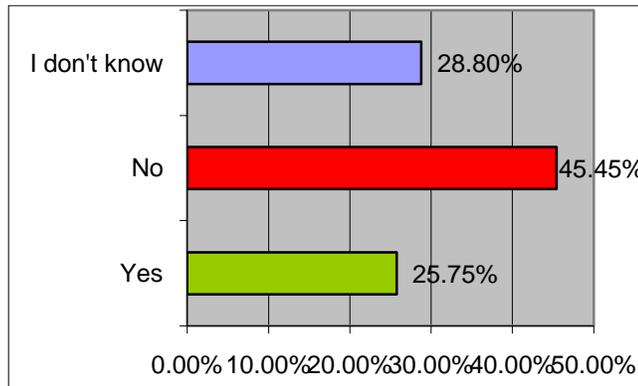
If YES how often do you use a condom while having sex?



If condoms were available in restrooms of public facilities, would you be more likely to use them while having sex?

42 people would, 16 would not, 9 are not sure and 1 didn't answer.

Do you believe that you are at risk of contracting the HIV virus?



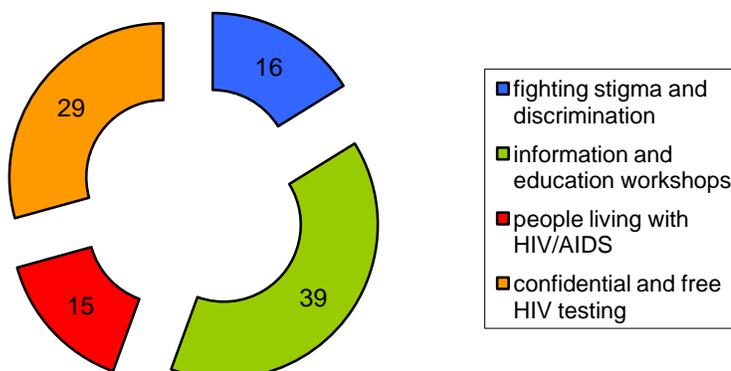
Do you feel that information concerning HIV/AIDS is available for you?

58 do feel so, 4 don't, 6 didn't know.

Do you feel that information concerning HIV/AIDS is available to the public?

52 said yes, 14 no, 2 don't know.

In what areas you think the Aids Support Group Saba should be more active?



Open House

The ASGS held its first OPEN HOUSE in June 2009. Information tables about the activities and programs of the ASGS were set up, movies were shown and a very delicious buffet wrapped up this event!

The organization had anticipated a greater participation in the event, however, passed on an internal evaluation and responses from the community it became obvious that the selected day and time were large contributing factors to the lower than anticipated participation.

For future events such as an Open House, the ASGS will encourage, through a more vigorous promotion campaign and a better guided time and day, a greater participation of the community in general and our target groups in specific.

The organization's mission is not limited to reduce stigma, discrimination and improve the life quality of PLHIV, but it creates awareness in order to prevent new infections. ASGS also focuses on the Saban youth with projects like Girl Power, RESPECT and a Help Line. These programs are created to help the Saban society gain confidence and step up to their responsibility towards themselves and the community in general.



From left to right: Tom Judson, Rudolph Hassell (Treasurer), Edna Evans, Chulani Levenstone, Martina Lebinger (Program Coordinator);

Saba Summer Festival Awareness and Prevention Campaign Know your Status – Get Tested!



Dietrich Bowar (Secretary 2007-2009) & Suzanna van den Elshout (President)

promote this year's campaign "Know your Status – Get Tested.

The Campaign was specially organized and designed for the Saba Summer Festival to promote HIV testing. Additionally the campaign encouraged the community with specific emphasis on youth, to practice safer sex within the aim to reduce STDs inclusive of HIV and additionally to prevent unwanted pregnancies. The aim is to use the Saba Summer Festival as a platform to reach as many people of the Saban community as possible and to

Throughout the Saba Summer Festival over 2,000 condoms were handed out, over 1,000 alone in the Village at several event evenings.

Banners with the slogan were ordered and placed over the road and in the Summer Festival Venue for the week. The ASGS truck which lead the parades on Saturday and Sunday was also provided with banners. A banner stand was ordered for a booth and also several informational materials to be displayed and handed out during the week's activities.

Pouches were printed with the ASGS logo and this year's testing slogan and filled with informational material about AIDS and STD's, testing information and condoms. Candy and water were also given out from the truck.



Maureen Kingsdale, Akilah Levenstone and Christal Hassell

Throughout the Saba Summer Festival over 2,000 condoms were handed out, over 1,000 alone in the Village at several event evenings. Especially on Monday 600 condoms were gone in less than an hour! The Candy especially the lollipops were a big hit. Also the pouches were taken very well by most people in the crowd. The ASGS estimates that approximately 400 + individuals benefited

from the event and about an equal amount accepted or took condoms.

The experience of a booth in the village in 'clear view' of all present was a good tool to sense that there still exists a level of 'uncomfortable reaction' towards the acceptance of condoms under the public eye. The above described activity's results are a clear indicator as to the need for further sensitization to 'normalize' the stigmatization associated with condoms and HIV/AIDS in general.



Condom Vending Machines

In August 2009 the AIDS Support Group Saba started installing of condom vending machines at local businesses; Saba has been waiting for funding for almost a year. PAHO (Pan American Health Organization) funded this project and made it possible. The first two vending machines were put up at "Saba Groove" in The Bottom and are a great success. Guido's and Scout's Place followed in September 2009 with two units each.



Steve Hughes (Saba Groove), Marebel (Guido's) and Wolfgang Tooten (Scout's Place)

World AIDS Day 2009

The World AIDS Day activities kicked off on Friday November 27, with the traditional movie night at Tropic's Café. The movie "One Week" was well received and had very positive feedback. The World AIDS Day (WAD) schedule continued on Saturday morning at 8.30 am with the annual walkathon from Windwardside to The Bottom, followed by a ceremony at Saba Groove with speeches, snacks and refreshments.



Bruce Zagers,
Commissioner of
Health.

The AIDS Support Group Saba was very pleased to welcome Mr. Bruce Zagers, Commissioner of Health, at the ceremony supporting the Prevention and Awareness Campaign "Know your Status - Get Tested!".

The Saba Drum Band supported our walk from St. John's to The Bottom.



Buddy-Support-System for PLHIV

"Buddies". The "buddy" system is a method of providing one-on-one support over a long-term period, and is especially effective for people who have recently learnt their HIV-positive status or have commenced ART. PLHIV support groups are often a hub for "buddies"; members both serve as buddies and identify buddies who can support them. Buddies' key role is to offer personal and frequent support to their peer PLHIV by, for example, reminding them to take their ARV drugs on time and accompanying them to the clinic for check-ups.

The ASGS has implemented the buddy-support-system from the very start and is practicing that system for almost 20 years.

CRN+

The Caribbean Regional Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (CRN+) was established on September 28th 1996, with its Secretariat based in Trinidad and Tobago. It is part of the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+), which is headquartered in the Netherlands, whose overall aim is to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS.

For over a decade PLHIV on Saba have been part of CRN+ and since 2009 the AIDS Support Group Saba Foundation is a recognized member of the CRN+ network.

VI. MEDIA TOOLS

Quarterly Newsletter

Since January 2009 the organization's program coordinator creates a quarterly newsletter which keeps the Saban community up to date about ongoing activities, events and the latest news in the field of HIV/AIDS. Every other volume dedicated a space, "Positive Voices", which reflects and interviews with a PLHIV on a relevant topic to PLHIV either locally or from our region. As the newsletter is inserted in the Daily Harold and available at the local groceries about 300 households are recipients and profit of this new medium.

The newsletters are also available for download on the organizations' webpage.



Community Awareness through Local TV Channel



Using all kinds of media resources the ASGS also works closely with the local TV channel to educate and spread awareness. Several films, documentations and broadcasts all around HIV/AIDS are provided to the local TV Channel on a regular basis.



In the World Wide Web

On the organization's webpage a variety of information can be found. From important factual information and all forms of educational information on and about HIV/AIDS can be found on our site. Updates on activities and projects, useful links, the downloadable version of our quarterly newsletter and other general information on the ASGS can be found on



the site as well. Since 2009 the organization is on facebook and already counts a great number of members consisting of people from within the Saban community, other NGOs, various stakeholders and even those that are not involved in HIV/AIDS but are now becoming interested.

VII. CAPACITY BUILDING

HIV[e]ducation Training

Twenty-two health caretakers including general practitioners, labor personal, social workers and nurses from St. Maarten, Saba and Statia participated in the HIV [e]ducation training program held in August 2009 in St. Maarten by the Health [e] Foundation, a non-profit organization based in the Netherlands.

Saba was represented by Dr. Joka Blaauboer (physician), Suzanna van den Elshout (reg. nurse) and Martina Lebinger (Program Coordinator).

Caribbean region Project Manager Ester Erwtelman and Curacao based Project Manager Gonneke Hermanides gave detailed information about the 3 month online training at this kick off meeting.

Every participant received a memory stick where all modules, written by specialists, were saved on. Every time a memory stick owner logs in online the stick updates itself with the latest information. This opens the possibility for every program attendee to have access to updated information at any time.

At the end of the three month course the possibility is there to offer a train the trainer's course, where three to five persons can follow the mentorship program and pass on the knowledge.

This entire training is extremely important as a means of promoting the development of improved social service programs, care and treatment for persons living with HIV/AIDS, and to develop a care and treatment plan.

The aim of HIV[e]ducation is to provide health care workers with complete and updated information on all aspects of treatment and care of patients with HIV/AIDS.



Comprehensive Condom Programming Workshop

St. Maarten September 10-11, 2009. A two day workshop on Health Commodity Security and Comprehensive Condom Programming was conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) presented by Leah-Mari Richards and Mario Aguilar.

During the two days, lots of interesting information was exchanged between the facilitators and the participants of the workshop. The main focus was to introduce the new female condom and discuss its benefits, with the aim of empowering women, and increasing their opportunities to make wiser decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

Dr. Aguilar held a presentation on the connections between sexual reproductive health and HIV. To increase awareness and information, an overview of the male condom was also given containing information about proper use and its history.

Participants were also introduced to comprehensive condom programming. A condom action plan for specific target groups was developed and presented at the end of the workshop.

UNFPA will not only supply the ASGS with condoms and especially with the female condom, UNFPA will also assist in future condom awareness campaigns.



United States Conference on AIDS 2009

For the first time in its history the ASGS was given a scholarship from the Caribbean Equal Access Program to participate in the United States Conference on AIDS 2009 in San Francisco. The program coordinator (Martina Lebinger) in attendance. The conference was held October 29-31 at the Hilton San Francisco. The conference was huge and the program endless. Sometimes it was hard to decide which workshop to attend because there were so many. Throughout the whole conference the spirit of the new administration was present and the US responds to HIV/AIDS is remarkable.



A lot of contacts were made, information collected and new ideas developed. For the AIDS Support Group Saba it was significant to see the approach of other countries where almost everything is possible. The experience in itself was a lesson learned and the ASGS' program benefitted from the experiences shared at the conference. For more information visit www.2009USCA.org.

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT

10:26 AM
04/27/10
Accrual Basis

AIDS Support Group Saba Foundation Profit & Loss January through December 2009

	Jan - Dec 09
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
43300 · Direct Public Grants	
43320 · AMFO	80,074.00
43330 · USONA	16,645.95
43340 · PAHO	41,768.92
43350 · SNAYDP	10,100.00
Total 43300 · Direct Public Grants	148,588.87
44500 · Government Grants	36,000.00
44800 · Indirect Public Support	
44820 · Fundraisings	1,248.53
44800 · Indirect Public Support - Other	14,762.31
Total 44800 · Indirect Public Support	16,010.84
46400 · Other Types of Income	
Electricity Office Share	2,810.28
Fax & Internet Office Share	3,380.66
Rent Office Share	6,300.00
46400 · Other Types of Income - Other	50.00
Total 46400 · Other Types of Income	12,540.94
Total Income	213,140.65
Expense	
62000 · Media & PR	
62010 · Ads	306.00
62020 · Newsletter	6,284.65
62090 · Other Media Expenses	952.20
Total 62000 · Media & PR	7,542.85
63000 · Shipping	
63010 · Shipping 3rd party	1,079.64
63020 · Local transportation of goods	220.00
Total 63000 · Shipping	1,299.64
64000 · Programs, Projects & Activities	
64010 · World AIDS Day 2008	1,849.18
64011 · WAD 2009	3,317.49
64020 · Girl Power Workshop Dec 10-12,	7,649.16
64030 · GP Capacity&Bondb. Work. Mar 27	-9.46
64040 · PAHO LOA activities	39,955.69
64050 · Open House June 2009	1,016.88
64060 · Girl Power Activities	
64061 · GP Workshop Jul 03	899.98
64060 · Girl Power Activities - Other	154.80
Total 64060 · Girl Power Activities	1,054.78
64070 · HIV testing and counseling	191.78
64080 · RESPECT	635.96
64090 · Condoms	1,411.56
Total 64000 · Programs, Projects & Activities	57,073.02
65000 · Operations	
65010 · A/C service	80.00
65030 · Printing and Copying	1,200.60
65040 · Office Supplies	1,877.38
65050 · Telephone, Fax, Internet	9,639.97
65060 · Electricity	4,154.02
65070 · Rent	8,625.00
65080 · Cleaning Office	488.15
65090 · Water Supply for Office	254.00
Total 65000 · Operations	26,319.12
65100 · Other Types of Expenses	
Membership Fees	447.50
65110 · Board Meetings	1,245.15
65160 · Other Costs	3,424.83
65100 · Other Types of Expenses - Other	992.00
Total 65100 · Other Types of Expenses	6,109.48

10:26 AM
04/27/10
Accrual Basis

AIDS Support Group Saba Foundation
Profit & Loss
January through December 2009

	Jan - Dec 09
66000 - Payroll Expenses	
66010 - AOV/AWW	7,892.64
66020 - AVBZ	1,347.60
66030 - LB	3,969.07
66040 - ZV/OV	4,251.00
66050 - Salary PC	31,746.76
Total 66000 - Payroll Expenses	49,207.07
68300 - Travel and Meetings	
68310 - Registration Fees	300.00
68320 - Per Diems	2,682.69
68330 - Car Rental and Transportation	283.25
68340 - Business Trip Insurance	380.18
68350 - Air Fares	1,113.00
Total 68300 - Travel and Meetings	4,759.12
Total Expense	152,310.30
Net Ordinary Income	60,830.35
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
Interest	327.03
Total Other Income	327.03
Other Expense	
78000 - Bank Fees	
78010 - Transfer / Check Fees	156.67
78000 - Bank Fees - Other	500.70
Total 78000 - Bank Fees	657.37
Total Other Expense	657.37
Net Other Income	-330.34
Net Income	60,500.01

NOTE: Parts of the funding received in 2009 is to cover ongoing programs and activities which role over into 2010.

IX. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The ASGS would like to thank all donors, stakeholders and volunteers for their contributions towards our programs, projects and activities. Without your financial support, contributions in time and kind, the ASGS would not be able to achieve the goals set forth within the island's national HIV/AIDS strategic plan.

