

# PANCAP–K4Health Partnership

## SUCCESS STORY



### **Lessons from Jamaica: Creating a Culture of Learning and Sharing Among HIV-Focused Civil Society Organisations in the Caribbean**

Kandasi Levermore, executive director of Jamaica AIDS Support for Life (JASL), is profoundly appreciative of the sharing and learning efforts being introduced into the Caribbean HIV response. *“The dynamic that has been injected into the region has been way more than we’re accustomed to, in terms of this level of attention with the write-ups and the videos,”* she shares.

JASL is one of many civil society organizations (CSOs) working with the Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP) and the Knowledge for Health (K4Health) Project to document and share best practices in support of “Treat All,” the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines for antiretroviral therapy (ART) among people living with HIV.

With support from the U.S. Agency for International Development/Eastern and Southern Caribbean (USAID/ESC) Mission, the PANCAP–K4Health partnership is working with Caribbean stakeholders to help countries achieve the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) 90-90-90 targets and meet WHO’s Treat All recommendations. Through in-person knowledge exchange events, webinars, documentation of regional best practices, enhanced communications, and summaries of relevant HIV data, the PANCAP–K4Health partnership is creating a systematic culture of learning and sharing among HIV programs in the region.

*“One of the biggest challenges for organizations like ours in the region is that we don’t have a history of documenting our efforts,”* says Xavier Biggs, JASL’s monitoring and evaluation program officer.

*“There are things that we do very, very well and we do them well almost routinely, but if we were to lift them and put them into another space, there is no documenting of that specific effort or activity,”* he adds. *“And so the first thing I was excited about when K4Health came about was its mission or intent to document those things that are done well across the region.”*

The PANCAP–K4Health partnership is especially focused on bringing together national AIDS program (NAP) managers and CSO representatives, whose shared insights benefit both efforts within their respective countries and across the region. Globally, those in the HIV response are increasingly regarding CSOs as essential in reaching key populations and in overall country ownership and sustainability of the regional HIV response. Providing time and space for NAP managers and CSOs to continually interact, share, and agree on strategies to reach those common goals is therefore critical.

JASL is Jamaica’s largest HIV- and AIDS-focused human rights nongovernmental organization, working to ensure the preservation of the rights and dignity of those most vulnerable to the disease. It is the only CSO currently providing ART service delivery in the English-speaking Caribbean, with a suite of treatment, care, and support services available through its three sites. JASL staff members have participated in a variety of the sharing and learning activities organized by the PANCAP–K4Health partnership from November 2016 through March 2018.

In August 2017, the PANCAP–K4Health partnership organized a South-to-South Learning Exchange for three participating teams of NAP managers and CSO representatives (from The Bahamas, Barbados, and Guyana) to learn from JASL and observe its important role.

Levermore, JASL's executive director, shares,

***“Having hosted the teams, it was very good for us too, because other than the fact that we were sharing all of our work, we were able to see how the work was perceived, [and] some of the questions that were asked raised questions for us. We had to reflect and to see what it is that we can improve upon and where gaps might have been and learn even from things they may have shared. So the learning went both ways.”***

The learning also continued beyond the trip, as the PANCAP–K4Health partnership developed a series of case studies and a photo essay on the JASL service delivery model. Levermore has expressed gratitude that, through the PANCAP–K4Health partnership, the work and model of JASL is being shared beyond the walls of Jamaica as a best practice within the broader HIV response.

***“We’ve been able to use this experience to share with our partners, and it does add a level of not just visibility, but credibility, validity to the actual work that the organization is doing,”*** she shares.

Biggs, a member of the newly-formed PANCAP knowledge management (KM) working group, feels that the partnership's emphasis on KM skills is critical:

***“It’s rebranding the things that you’ve always done, but adding twists to it that make people appreciate them a little bit more.”***



Kandasi Levermore speaks to the participating country teams during the South-to-South Learning Exchange to JASL in August 2017. Courtesy of Kathi Fox



Xavier Biggs shares his experience learning a new program during a skills-building session at a Share Fair hosted by the PANCAP–K4Health partnership in March 2018. Courtesy of Zwade Studio

Reflecting on the KM approaches used in the Collaborating and Learning Towards Treat All Share Fair, hosted by the PANCAP–K4Health partnership in March 2018, he notes,

***“Even the activities we did today [human spectrum exercise, panel conversation, fish bowl exercise, storytelling talks]—I don’t know that they were particularly new but they infused different elements that allow for better interaction to the communities that we serve.”***

Levermore adds that the skills transfer should be continually emphasized in this partnership,

***“so people can really start to capture their own stories, make their own videos, do their own write-ups, their own Piktocharts to represent the issues, and use these modes and mechanisms that get the information out.”***

For additional information, visit the PANCAP website: [www.pancap.org](http://www.pancap.org)  
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