

Poster presentation

Open Access

Educating, Engaging and Structuring Rural Women in the fight Against HIV/AIDS in Liberia

Nyode Wesley*‡

Address: Hills, Advocate for Treatment & Care, Monrovia, Liberia

Email: Nyode Wesley* - estelnyode@yahoo.com

* Corresponding author ‡Presenting author

from 2005 International Meeting of The Institute of Human Virology
Baltimore, USA, 29 August – 2 September 2005

Published: 8 December 2005

Retrovirology 2005, **2**(Suppl 1):P105 doi:10.1186/1742-4690-2-S1-P105

Background

In the 1990's and before then, nearly every women that carry out HIV/AIDS awareness came from urban areas, and were educated as rural women took little interest on HIV/AIDS issues. A multisectoral consensus meeting took place in 2002 to mobilize policy makers, to express solidarity with people that are more vulnerable to the pandemic and to train people from rurals areas in raising awareness among people in the country. This could be realized by maintaining permanent contact with public and private institutions engaged in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Methods

Under the leadership of a multisectoral task force, various women met every week, and created the Rural Women Aids Network (RWAN). With technical assistance from donor agencies, RWAN formulated a series of standard operating procedures and guidelines, developed audiovisual materials for capacity building and organized nationwide workshops to train women on ethics, stigma discrimination and human rights.

Results

In spite of limited fundings, 500 women have been trained on STI/HIV/AIDS, stigma discrimination and human rights. About 20 PLHA have received capacity on communication skills, self esteem and knowledge of the media environment, and three load chapters have been created. RWAN has matured into a respected independent and sustainable instutions, participates in various national and international conferences, and organizes national prevention campaign through radio advertisement and street banners.

Conclusion

Educating, engaging and structuring rural women is an invaluable asset in combating stigma and discrimination, promoting human rights; engaging women to prooduce quantities of quality articles and raising self-esteem among PLHA's from victims to a profile of courage.