TV Spot: **Behavioural Survey Study**
by Elmer Cornejo, GOJoven Fellow (Belize 2009)
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The National HIV Programme of the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Central America (CDC) conducted a Behavioural Survey Study earlier this year among three identified vulnerable groups, Men who have Sex with Men, Female Sex Workers and Persons with HIV. The objectives of the survey were to document the behaviour risks associated to HIV in the three target groups, to determine the behaviour risks associated to HIV in the Men who have Sex with Men and Female Sex Workers groups and to determine the prevalence of Sexually Transmitted Infections in the three studied groups.

The significant findings include the following: Overall consistent condom use was suboptimal and ranged from less than 70% in the Men who have Sex with Men and Persons with HIV to 81% in Female Sex Workers, Knowledge of HIV transmission was also found to be suboptimal with 33% of Female Sex Workers and 57% of the Men who have Sex with Men, The majority of Persons with HIV were from lower income levels, Prevalence of HIV among the Men who have Sex with Men tested was 13.8% and 0.9% of the FSW tested compared with an estimated 2.3% in the general population.

The Survey also showed that Genital Herpes and Chlamydia were the most common STIs diagnosed across the groups. The prevalence of Syphilis and Gonorrhea were lower when compared with other Central American countries. Stigma and discrimination was highest in the community and workplace and estimated at 10% in the health sector.

The findings of this study have provided tangible evidence that can be used to improve the National Response to HIV in Belize. The final report is scheduled for release in February 2013.