

Caribbean Regional Network of
Persons Living with HIV/AIDS

5-Year Strategic Plan
2003 – 2007

FEBRUARY 2003

**CARIBBEAN REGIONAL NETWORK
OF PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS (CRN+)**

A Five-Year Strategic Plan
for the 'Scaled up' Response to the HIV/AIDS
Pandemic in the Caribbean
for the period 2003 – 2007

The Vision (final draft) of CRN+ is:

“CRN+ is the authentic voice of Caribbean people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). As a full and equal partner in the collaborative fight against HIV/AIDS CRN+ is driven by PLWHA making a meaningful difference to their lives”

The Mission (final draft) of CRN+ is:

“The Caribbean Regional Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (CRN+) is committed to empowering and supporting persons infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS through advocacy, research, partnership, capacity building and resource mobilization”.

CORE VALUES

The Core Values (proposed) of CRN+ are:

- ◆ *Advocacy*
- ◆ *Compassion*
- ◆ *Courage*
- ◆ *Commitment*
- ◆ *Communication*
- ◆ *Empowerment*
- ◆ *Hope*
- ◆ *Trust*

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Caribbean Regional Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (CRN+) is a relatively young organization, but which already has major responsibilities in the regional struggle against the disease. As the only regional organization in the Caribbean with representation for PLWHA, by PLWHA, CRN+ has been recognized as a key partner in reversing the spread of the disease.

In this regard and charting the way forward for the growth of the Network and its membership, CRN+ has embarked on a *participatory strategic planning process*. The 5 Year Strategic Plan 2003 – 2007 that has emerged is reflective of the deliberations of the membership of CRN+.

Ultimately, the 5 Year Strategic Plan 2003 – 2007 is aimed at ***improving the quality of service of CRN+ to its members and partners*** – a mandate which is reflective of the organization’s Vision:

“CRN+ is the authentic voice of Caribbean people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). As a full and equal partner in the collaborative fight against HIV/AIDS, CRN+ is driven by PLWHA making a meaningful difference to their lives”.

The Plan acknowledges the turbulent, yet opportunistic events that will characterize the regional and global environment for some time to come, particularly with reference to the response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Caribbean as revealed in the environmental analyses.

The Plan also acknowledges that CRN+ must act quickly and at several levels in order to respond to the needs of Caribbean PLWHA and the scaling up of the regional response to HIV/AIDS.

In this regard the Strategic Priorities of the Plan focus on improving service to PLWHA and partners, while at the same time, building the organization to further improve its service to stakeholders. Specifically, the Strategic Priorities are:

1. Continuous Advocacy and Representation for PLWHA, by PLWHA
2. Building Capacity among the membership

3. Organizational Development, in particular developing an appropriate structure and legal framework for the organization and improving operating systems
4. Providing superior programme management and implementation services to partners
5. Becoming a premier source for high quality information all issues related to HIV/AIDS, in particular, care and treatment and support for PLWHA
6. Identifying and accessing sustainable Funding
7. Accessing Technical Support for improving quality of services and services delivery
8. Developing and implementing technology for improving quality of services and services delivery

1.1 The Strategies

1.1.1 The Core Strategies

With regard to the Strategic Priorities, the Core strategies for meeting the goals and objectives of the Plan are as follows:

1. Advocacy Strategy
2. Programme Management Strategy
3. Human Resource Development Strategy
4. Organizational Development Strategy
5. Funding Mobilization & Financial Management Strategy
6. Information Management & Dissemination Strategy

1.1.2 The Enabling Strategies

The enabling strategies are recommended to, in collaboration with the core strategy of Organizational Development, prepare and equip CRN+ to render the highest quality service to stakeholders. These strategies are:

1. Change Management Strategy

2. Marketing, Communications & Public Relation Strategy
3. Legal Framework
4. Technological Development Strategy
5. Technical Support

1.2 Key Deliverables of the Strategic Plan

Efficient implementation of the Strategic Plan should produce some key deliverables for CRN+ including:

1. Continuous and effective advocacy for the elimination of stigma and discrimination against PLWHA through legislative reform; improved access to quality, affordable care and treatment and for the greater involvement of persons living with HIV/AIDS in all aspects of life in the Caribbean.
2. Representation of PLWHA by PLWHA at regional and international fora with an agenda for policy and programme development impacting persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS
3. Recognition of CRN+ and PLWHA, by Governments and citizens of the Caribbean, as key resources for ensuring a bright future for the Caribbean.
4. High quality Programme Management/Implementation by CRN+ as a key partner in the regional response aimed at reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS¹
5. Development of the human resource of CRN+ at all levels of the organization – members, Secretariat, Board and Working Groups – which:
 - Improves the value of CRN+ as a technical resource (of first choice) to partners and governments in the struggle against the pandemic at national, regional and international levels
 - Improves the quality and efficiency of organizational functions and services

¹ For example CRN+ is an implementing agency for the SIRHASC Programme, developing national networks in six countries. CRN+ is also identified as the Lead Agency for Priority Area #2 of the Regional Strategic Framework – Care, Treatment and Support for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS. CRN+ is identified as the implementing agency for other programme which are outlined in this Operational Plan

- Allows PLWHA (members) to build new skills to act in new dimensions in the development of Caribbean nations
 - Promotes the involvement of PLWHA in all spheres of human activity in the Caribbean, especially in the workplace.
6. Development of the organization, in particular, proper resourcing of the Regional Secretariat and the national networks (existing and potential),
 7. Sufficient and sustained resources to achieve the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.
 8. Dissemination of high quality information to improve the quality of life of Caribbean PLWHA and building awareness of the key issues and impact of the disease and prevention.

1.3 Preliminary Budget 2003 – 2004

A preliminary Budget has of USD \$253,690 and USD \$214,110 has been estimated for the short-term period of the Strategic Plan, for the years 2003 and 2004 respectively.

This budget is preliminary in that there are several critical activities which must be concluded in the 'roll-out' of the Strategic Plan (especially in 2003) which will give insight into the additional (real) costs of development for CRN+ over the planning period. These activities include:

- a) Development of the Marketing/Communications/PR and Media Programme;
- b) Development of the Training Plan for Board, Secretariat, Management Groups and membership of CRN+;
- c) Installation of the Human Resource Information System;
- d) Installation of the Financial Management System;
- e) Recommendations for the Expansion of the Secretariat Office;
- f) Development of Plans for advocacy and fund raising events and;
- g) Development of an IT Support Plan.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean²

Since the early 1980s when it was first diagnosed, HIV/AIDS has been undermining and absorbing the human, financial and capital resources of the world community. In the Caribbean, the official statistics on the epidemic are alarming, despite the under reporting by some 30% – 75 % of actual cases. The current situation is:

1. AIDS is most prevalent in the 15 – 44-year age group.
2. Just below 1,100 deaths were recorded in the first decade after the disease was identified; and by the end of the second decade another 7,000 deaths had occurred, an increase of more than 500 percent.
3. The presumed prevalence rate worldwide is 0.57 percent whereas for the Caribbean overall prevalence is estimated at 1.35 per cent, almost two and a half times the world level – this is using a world population estimate of 6 billion, all of whom are assumed to be at risk, and for the Caribbean, a population estimate of 34 million.

The far-reaching implications of a disease that has the potential to devastate the economic and social fabric of Caribbean societies especially with its high prevalence among the most productive sectors of the labour market have forced decision-makers and researchers to classify HIV/AIDS as a *development issue*, and not merely a *health issue*. This classification is important because strategies for reduction and prevention of the disease can have the widest possible public sector and civil society involvement, and therefore include a far larger stake-holding response than if it were to be treated with only within the health sector.

2.1.1 Caribbean Response

To date, the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic has been adequate but not sufficient to halt its rapid escalation and socio-economic reversals of development and quality of life. There is indeed a high level of awareness of the disease within the Caribbean, the result of the activities of individual national AIDS programmes. The true test of success of these awareness campaigns however will ultimately be determined by the change in behaviour by target groups and reflected in reduced prevalence rates. In this respect, success is far from assured and much work still needs to be done in the following areas:

² Theodore, Karl, *HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean: Economic Issues – Impact and Investment Response*, pp.2, The University of the West Indies Health Economics Unit, Trinidad, 2000

1. The political commitment necessary to place HIV/AIDS at the forefront of national planning and so allocate more of the much-needed resources.
2. The need to make available policy research and other kinds of data that are relevant, accurate and timely for decision-makers.
3. Legislation and policies governing issues of confidentiality, disclosure, and stigma and discrimination.
4. Access to treatment, care and support for those with the virus or the disease in a manner that is sustainable in the long term.

The Caribbean Response to the disease, in particular in the last four years has been framed by a number of key events including the Barbados Conference on HIV/AIDS (2000), the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) in June 2001, the Caribbean Heads of Government Meeting in February 2001 and the Nassau Conference on Health (2001). Arising from these events, Governments of the region and national, regional and international partners have pledged to 'scale up' the response to HIV/AIDS in the region.

The policy framework for the 'scaled up' response is documented in the following documents:

2.1.1.1 The Pan Caribbean Partnership Commitment

The Commitment calls upon all Governments and partners to commit to:

- Work together in a Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS coordinated by CARICOM
- Support the work of the Partnership in bringing together the resources of all partners, including those of Governments, regional institutions and the international community with those of civil society, especially people living with HIV/AIDS and the private sector in order to achieve a more vigorous response to the epidemic at the national and regional level in the Caribbean.
- Ensure that good public policies are adopted across all sectors so as to create supportive environments for the prevention of HIV transmission and for mitigating the impact of the epidemic.

2.1.1.2 The Nassau Declaration on Health 2001

The Declaration emphasizes the “critical role of health in the economic development of the people of the Caribbean³” and the potential impact of “current health problems, especially HIV/AIDS, which may impede such development of our human capital⁴”

In this regard, the Declaration proposes several strategic activities in the fight against HIV/AIDS including:

- ◆ Strategic Planning
- ◆ Management, Implementation and Resource Mobilization
- ◆ Pan Caribbean Governance Issues
- ◆ Development Issues
- ◆ Institutional Strengthening and Sustainability

2.1.1.3 The United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS

The United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) in June 2001 produced the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS “*Global Crisis, Global Action*”. The Declaration outlines recommended national, regional, sub-regional and global interventions for eradicating the spread of the disease. It also delineates key priority areas such as:

- ◆ Prevention
- ◆ Access to care
- ◆ Protection of the rights of persons living with AIDS
- ◆ Reducing vulnerability of high risk groups
- ◆ Research and development
- ◆ Resource mobilization, and
- ◆ Alleviating the socio-economic impact of the disease.

2.1.1.4 The Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS

The *Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS 2002 – 2006* was developed to produce a coordinated regional response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The Framework evolved out of the Caribbean Regional Strategic Plan (RSP), which was developed by the Caribbean Task Force on HIV/AIDS in 2000. The RSP was revised in 2002 to allow

³ Nassau Declaration on Health 2001 “the Health of the Region is the Wealth of the Region”, July 2001

⁴ Ibid

more recent (post 2000) policy and strategic initiatives such as UNGASS, the Pan Caribbean Commitment and the Nassau Declaration to impact the regional response to HIV/AIDS.

This Framework, and the strategies that arise from it, has as its main objective “the support of national efforts to prevent and control the HIV epidemic and mitigate its consequences at national and regional levels”⁵. It was developed on behalf of the member states of CARICOM, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti as well as the Dutch territories and the Netherlands Antilles and in conjunction with all the major regional and international interest groups⁶ in the areas of Health, HIV/AIDS and development. The Framework contains seven (7) areas requiring priority action by interest groups. These are:

1. Advocacy, policy development and legislation.
2. Care, treatment and support of people living with HIV/AIDS.
3. Prevention of HIV transmission, with a focus on young people.
4. Prevention of HIV transmission among especially vulnerable groups – men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers, prisoners, uniformed populations (military and police), people in the workplace.
5. Prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV.
6. Strengthening national and regional response capability.
7. Mobilizing resources.

2.1.2 Caribbean Regional Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (CRN+)

The Caribbean Regional Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (CRN+) was established on September 28th 1996, with its Secretariat in Trinidad and Tobago. The Network is part of the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+), headquartered in The Netherlands, whose overall aim is to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS⁷. CRN+ was therefore formed to address all issues relative to people living with HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean region because by 1996 HIV/AIDS had become the type of disease that many people “lived with”, not “died from”, as was the case in the initial phases of the progression of the disease.

⁵ The Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS, pp 1

⁶ Including CARICOM, CAREC, PAHO, CRN+, UNAIDS and its Cosponsors.

⁷ The other regional networks are the Network of African People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAP+), Asia/Pacific Network of People Living HIV/AIDS (APN+), European Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS(ENP+), Latin American Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS(REDLA+) and GNP+ North America(GNPNA).

The goal of CRN+ is to facilitate access to information exchange, advocacy, lobbying and capacity building of PLWHA [People Living with HIV/AIDS] in the wider Caribbean

The **core objectives** of CRN+ are to:

1. Develop strategies for lobbying and advocacy in the wider Caribbean for the rights of PLWHA and eliminate the stigma and discrimination
2. Provide policy advice and technical support on matters related to HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean
3. Provide accurate, reliable information about HIV/AIDS and PLWHA.
4. Strengthen partnerships with agencies which share similar aims and objectives.
5. Extend the network throughout the wider Caribbean.

The above five main objectives are all geared to ensuring CRN+ main purpose of **Advocacy** is fulfilled. CRN+ has therefore, pursued a strategy of expansion through the establishment of national networks in order to achieve its mandate. The long-term goal envisages empowered regional/national networks of PLWHA who will:

- ◆ Create/influence public policy and legislative decisions as they affect the issue of HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Establish links and maintain these through spirited cooperation and coordination with key national and international stakeholders in both the public and private sectors.
- ◆ Improve their access to treatment, care and support.
- ◆ Reduce/eliminate stigma and discrimination.
- ◆ Encourage research and development in respect of HIV/AIDS.

2.1.2.1 The Regional Secretariat

The Regional Secretariat is vested with the responsibility for implementing decisions taken by the Board of CRN+ and developing and coordinating relations among members so that it can fulfill its purpose of saving and changing the lives of PLWHA. The role of the Secretariat is to:

1. Function as the administrative body which, whilst representing the national networks and membership states, coordinates activities beneficial to PLWHA.
2. Disseminate information pertinent to all matters dealing with HIV/AIDS and all sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
3. Promote awareness of the situation of PLWHA throughout the region and internationally.

4. Collate information and statistics on PLWHA.
5. Advocates/lobby/influence health and social policy in respect of PLWHA.
6. Establish an effective communication strategy to ensure the flow of information to all stake-holding groups, especially PLWHA.
7. Create a database of expertise within the network to maximize available capacity and utilization of skills.

Since its formation in 1996, CRN+ has successfully established representatives and/or membership in approximately 27⁸ countries in the Caribbean region and manages a functioning secretariat in Port of Spain.

2.1.2.2 CRN+ and the Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS

Today CRN+ is a key player in the formulation and implementation of the Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS. As the only regional organization of its kind, it has been charged with the responsibility of performing the leadership role in **Strategic Priority Area 2 of the Framework: Care, Treatment and Support for People Living with HIV/AIDS** within the Caribbean region. CRN+ is an implementing agency for the European Union-funded and CARICOM-administered project “Strengthening the Institutional Response to HIV/AIDS/STI in the Caribbean (SIRHASC). Many more projects of this nature are expected to be administered by CRN+ in relation to the English-, Spanish-, French-, and Dutch-speaking countries and overseas territories in the Caribbean.

2.1.3 The Future

In order to prepare itself for the major thrust forward the organization must ensure that it possess the capacity to fulfill its obligations to its community. To this end, the CARICOM Secretariat is assisting the organization through the funding of a management consultancy aimed at charting the future course of the organization in the up-scaled response to the disease. The key issues CRN+ seeks to address are: i) the review of its Constitution; ii) the services that it will provide in the short-, medium- and long-terms; iii) the most appropriate organizational structure that would assure operational effectiveness (given its current and anticipated portfolio of services and projects); iv) the nature of the relationship between the Board and Secretariat, and its key stakeholders and iv) the acquisition of sustainable sources of funding.

⁸ List of Countries in Table 1 Section 4

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

3.1 Macro Environment

Even while HIV/AIDS is no longer necessarily a death sentence, and people clearly are living longer with the illness, a major problem that still exists is that many PLWHA around the world are still being denied treatment, largely due to discrimination and/or the fear of the stigma attached to having the disease. Simply, many still view those with HIV/AIDS as immoral and deserving of their illness. As a result, many HIV/AIDS cases are being diagnosed either just before or just after their death, when earlier disclosure would likely have meant the prolonging of a life.

The Caribbean Task Force - now the Pan Caribbean Partnership, PANCAP - estimates that the number of people living with HIV in the Caribbean is about 500,000, making it the second most infected region in the world after sub-Saharan Africa.⁹ While under-reporting makes accuracy a problem, an uncontested truth in all reporting countries in the region is that the trend over the last decade has been an upward one. The highest numbers of new AIDS cases were reported in 1998 from Haiti, Bahamas, the Turks and Caicos, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Bermuda, Guyana, Suriname and Jamaica.

The problems associated with this social stigma are evident in the theme for the World HIV/AIDS Campaign 2002-2003. "Let's Put an End To Stigma and Discrimination". Religious leaders and community members in the Bahamas, for example, met with the AIDS Secretariat in that country during September 2002, with a view to getting the church active in the work-education/prevention, care and support in the HIV/AIDS battle. This plan for the regular and consistent interaction of religious-based institutions with persons living with HIV/AIDS, their families and communities comes after a successful workshop held in May. The greatest progress will have been made when those with the disease are able to freely request, and be provided with, the care and medication required, without fear of discrimination. CRN+ as the only organization representing PLWHA in the region is therefore charged with the responsibility of ensuring that this is done.

3.1.1 Political Situation

3.1.1.1 Global Issues

One threat posed by the political environment globally is the inability or refusal of many leaders to acknowledge the enormity of the problem. For example, U.S.

⁹ Source: CAREC 2001

Ambassador in the Bahamas, J. Richard Blankenship, charges that while millions of dollars have been sent by the U.S. to Haiti with the purpose of slowing down the spread of AIDS, the real problem is the lack of government (Haiti's) accountability.

Meanwhile, Red LA+ ¹⁰ solicited the unity of all, including networks, national and regional organizations, in support of their protest against the lack of access to ARV drugs for HIV+ individuals requiring them. In attempts to put pressure on the Brazilian government to first sell required medicine, and then to do so at accessible prices, representatives were asked, on 27 May 2002, to position themselves in front of the Brazilian Embassy in each country, carrying letters requesting the Brazilian government to sell ARV drugs to Latin America. The action was prompted by the 18 April, 2002, death of Ibel Martinez, a Honduran activist who, though urgently in need, was denied the purchase of ARV drugs at a cost price.

At a global level, leaders appear not to be sufficiently interested in the cause as required. Perhaps with their attentions diverted by what is deemed to be more pressing matters, at the World Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa in August 2002, infectious disease, along with other issues like cleaner energy and species extinction, were pushed to the back burner, while big business was given top priority. It was of note that U.S. leader George W. Bush was not in attendance, and UK leader Blair opted to leave early.

However, at the Summit, scientists/academics and governments met to discuss state policy on the subject of HIV/AIDS. This meeting, soon to be followed by another to discuss universal access to antiretroviral drugs, was a bit of a breakthrough in the standoff between the two parties, even as AIDS lobby groups remain skeptical. Disagreement between the two sides on issues fundamental to the fight against the disease have been frequent, with government questioning the existence of a link between HIV and AIDS and even referring to the drugs as toxic. Clearly, only through the persistence of the lobbyists was the subject even addressed. However, possibly as a result of the Summit and persistent lobbying, President Bush in his recent State of the Union address at the end of January 2003 pledged financial assistance to the cause for the Caribbean states of Haiti and Guyana.

3.1.1.2 Regional Issues

Within the Caribbean region, a number of issues related to political organizations and culture provide both positive and negative outlooks.

Political Organization

The countries represented within CRN+ come from different forms of political organization. They include:

¹⁰ Red LA+ is the Latin American equivalent of CRN+.

- Independent countries with foreign Heads of State, for example, the Queen of England as the head of State of Barbados and Antigua.
- Republics, for example, Trinidad and Tobago, the Dominican Republic, Guyana and Cuba.
- Overseas territories including Martinique and Guadeloupe which are Departments of France and Anguilla of the United Kingdom.
- Democratic and communist political systems, with Cuba as the best known communist state.

For example the overseas territories and a number of Independent States such as Dominican Republic tend to fare better than their counterparts because of better resource mobilization on the part of their respective governments. Also, it is easier to build consensus among some independent states and republics because of their ability to negotiate international agreements without reference to an overseas central government. The communist state of Cuba presents its own challenges by virtue of the inability of individuals to associate in groups without the approval of the central government. These differing forms of political organization have both positive and negative implications for CRN+ in terms of building consensus, resource capabilities and policy decision-making

Politics

Regional politics, particularly in the English-speaking Caribbean, can yield both favourable and unfavourable outcomes for CRN+. The changing of governments across the region can set back the charting of policy direction and commitment of governments before and after a general election. An incoming government may change priorities as was the case in Trinidad and Tobago in which an allocation of TT\$10 million was reassigned to other priorities after a change in government in 2001¹¹. It can act positively too as shown again in Trinidad and Tobago where \$500 million has been allocated to the fight against HIV AIDS after the 2002 general elections. This allocation is now stipulated in the national budget that followed the elections.

Regional governments have demonstrated differing levels of commitment to PLWHA issues. By September 2000, public commitment was given by some leaders, for example, Prime Ministers of The Bahamas¹², St. Kitts/Nevis, Barbados, while others are yet to pledge their full support. Although political awareness appears to be at its all time high what is still required is the political will to translate these commitments into action and resources. CAREC has pursued a strategy of engaging its strategic partners (CRN+ and

¹¹ Interview with Regional Coordinator, Yolanda Simon, Port of Spain, August, 2002

¹² With respect to treatment, for example, the Bahamian government has made a commitment to begin treating HIV-infected persons, but the only treatment presently forthcoming is that for the prevention of transmission from mother to unborn child. Overall, \$500,000 is the amount allocated in the 2001/2002 budget for the testing and treatment of AIDS and HIV, more than three times the amount allocated in 2000/2001, and while similar increases are seen in the rest of the region, their adequacy remains questionable.

UWI) to target Cabinet Ministers throughout the region. This has been relatively successful but still more needs to be done.

Legal/Ethical Framework

At the present time a comprehensive legal/ethical framework to deal with the many issues of discrimination against PLWHA remains elusive. As far as these authors are aware the only country with such laws is the Dominican Republic. The Dominican Republic's Network, REDOVIIH, has been pursuing this matter and is yielding some results. However, the rest of the Caribbean is still without a legal framework. There is evidence though of movement towards that direction – A Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS has been completed in 2002 by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, but it does not contain the level of input of the CRN+ membership as would have been expected. In Antigua work is also being done under the direction of the country's Cabinet.

CARICOM, in conjunction with CIDA, began a project in March 2002 to review the legal/ethical framework with respect to HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean region with a view to developing a model framework which may be adopted by member states of CARICOM and others. An assessment mission was conducted in April 2002, followed by a 3-day workshop held in June 2002. To date, a draft Action Plan¹³ has been developed to address issues at both the regional and national levels. Cross-cutting themes of the Action Plan include:

- Capacity building of national institutions and organizations
- A multi-sectoral approach
- The greater involvement of persons living with HIV/AIDS
- Project and programme monitoring and evaluation

CRN+ will be required to play a lead role in advocating for the legal/ethical framework to be developed in the region.

3.1.2 Socio-Cultural Situation

3.1.2.1 Global

Globalization

The phenomenon that today we call globalization, although initially related to issues of economics and business has transformed itself into a worldwide social occurrence. It is now commonplace to speak of a “global village”. The social manifestation of this situation is that individuals can operate across national boundaries and seek affiliations

¹³ Presented at the 2nd Annual Meeting of PANCAP in October 2002

with other individuals and groups who share common interests and values, without reference to their national governments. It is thus possible to speak of a worldwide/global social consciousness. The Internet has fuelled this phenomenon. This has worked to the advantage of CRN+, which has been able to fast track the mobilization of its members and keep it informed of the measures being taken to develop the organization, as well as build a wide net of stakeholder support.

The Development of “Civil Society”

The growth of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is a natural outcome of the development of Civil Society. Non-governmental organizations, the driving powers of civil society, “deliver more official development assistance than the entire UN system. In many countries they are delivering the services in urban and rural community development, education and health care – that faltering governments can no longer manage... increasingly, the NGOs are able to push around even the largest governments”¹⁴

Health Care Availability

One serious threat is that created by the general shortage of medical personnel worldwide. International recruiting agencies, particularly those in the U.S. and the U.K., have been steadily and increasingly luring Caribbean health care professionals away with the promise of better salaries and educational benefits. This poses a challenge for less developed states to provide the health care required for all health problems and even more so for PLWHA. CRN+ will be required to advocate for its share of the very small pie.

3.1.2.2 Regional

Closer Relationships

The “globalization” phenomenon, when applied to the Caribbean region has also resulted in a closer relationship among Caribbean people, quite apart from what is taking place at the official governmental levels, within CARICOM and business communities. Caribbean people are seeking new ways to establish their identity to the rest of the world in areas of culture, sport, education and business. Slowly but surely, there is emerging among Caribbean people an awareness of and pride in their own identity and an acknowledgement of the contribution they make to the world.

Social Ills

Notwithstanding the positive attributes that the Caribbean as a region is developing, the countries of the region all share the debilitating effects on its social fabrics of a host of social problems including drug trafficking, money laundering, illegal sales of arms and ammunitions, and increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters. The

¹⁴ Jessica T Mathews, “The Power Shift,” *Foreign Affairs*, Jan/Feb 1997

links between the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and substance abuse are well established and the fight against the disease must address these wider social ills, if there is to be any significant reversal of its growing and dire impact.

HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean Region

◆ **Epidemiology**

Since the early 1980s when it was first diagnosed HIV/AIDS has occupied the human, financial and capital resources of the world community. Within the Caribbean, even the official statistics (which some estimate to be 30% – 75 % of actual cases) of the epidemiology of the disease are alarming:

1. AIDS is already one of the leading causes of death in the 15 – 44-year age group.
2. Just under 1,100 deaths were recorded in the first decade after the disease was identified, by the end of the second decade another 7,000 deaths had occurred – an increase of more than 500 percent¹⁵.

The presumed prevalence rate worldwide is 0.57 percent whereas for the Caribbean overall prevalence is estimated at 1.35 per cent, almost two and a half times the world level. This is using a world population estimate of 6 billion, all of whom are assumed to be at risk, and for the Caribbean, a population estimate of 34 million¹⁶

In Kingstown General Hospital in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, an estimated 38% of individuals admitted to the hospital were HIV/AIDS related cases. In the Bahamas, those between ages 25 and 44 years who were infected increased from 6, in 1985-1990, to 105 in the period from 1991-1995. According to pathologist Dr. Alfred Brathwaite, Bahamians diagnosed with HIV/AIDS are now living an average of 22 months compared to an average of 9 months in 1985 when the disease was first diagnosed in Grand Bahamas. Furthermore, the first case diagnosed in the Bahamas in late 1985 was that of a 34-year-old man, a blood donor, who is still alive and doing well today. While persons with HIV/AIDS are indeed living longer, the cost of medical care will continue to grow in the region, and the economic implications are alarming.

◆ **Socio-Cultural Impacts**

The socio-cultural dimensions of countries in the region have both political and economic implications. A case in point is the proximity of Haiti to the Bahamas. The repatriation of illegal Haitian immigrants from the Bahamas has been a huge burden for the Bahamian government for many years. While the migration problem at this level is unique to the Bahamian-Haitian society, the movement of tourists throughout the

¹⁵ Theodore, Karl, *HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean: Economic Issues – Impact and Investment Response*, pp.2, The University of the West Indies Health Economics Unit, Trinidad, 2000

¹⁶ Ibid

Caribbean region also brings with it health concerns as do poverty-driven prostitution, addiction-driven prostitution and sex tourism.

It bears noting that the majority of females infected were less than 44 years old while the majority of males infected were older than 44 years old. The implication here of a trend in much of the entire Caribbean region – one of older, infected men having sex with, and likely infecting, younger women.

◆ **Impact on the Individual**

The social consequences of the disease are incalculable and present acute challenges to both individuals and organizations alike. From an individual point of view:

1. The stigma and discrimination suffered by those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS at the hands of the wider society, quite apart from the trauma of having a terminal illness and its consequences such as inability to work in some cases.
2. Fewer working days, limited opportunity for better paid work and a shorter working life.
3. Resources, especially financial and human, are diverted to pay for treatment and care.
4. Sometimes, difficult access and the high cost of drugs that ameliorate the symptoms and effects of the disease in order to provide a better quality of life.

◆ **Impact on Organizations**

For organizations, in particular health systems, there are increased burdens in the form of:

1. Direct medical costs and indirect costs of lost productivity.
2. The loss of skilled workers who cannot be easily replaced.
3. Increased absenteeism, higher human resource costs (including retraining and attracting individuals with scarce skills), early retirement, premature payments from pension funds as a result of early death and increased cost of insurance coverage.
4. More people becoming sick over longer periods of time and needing more and more health care, thereby placing high demand on health services.

Many organizations are oblivious to these effects upon them and CRN+'s role would be to draw these circumstances to their attention through education.

Other Chronic Diseases

Despite the importance of HIV/AIDS other diseases still plague the region. These include chronic conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. Increasingly the threat posed by all types of cancers is becoming a reality for most countries in the Caribbean.

Health Care Availability

At the same time that the Caribbean is grappling with HIV/AIDS and other social diseases the shortage of health care professionals is at an all time high. The global shortage of nurses, for example, (it is the cause of the closure of several hospitals in Canada), is most greatly impacted in this region. The exodus itself creates great obstacles, as the shortages come at a time when nursing services are needed most, yet those who remain in the region have problems with morale, problems which invariably affect the quality of care given. At the same time more people are requiring medical care and counselling services on a regular basis and for longer periods of time. In Jamaica, an estimated \$50 million Jamaican dollars were spent in 1996 by the National AIDS Programme on AIDS patients.

3.1.3 Economic Situation

3.1.3.1 Global

The global economic situation can be described as “uncertain”. The World Bank analysts have reported:

Though global GDP is expected to rise by 2.5 percent in 2003 as a result of improved business health and policy stimulus in the U.S. and Europe, the chances of the world economy sliding toward recession are real¹⁷

The global economy is in the beginning of a recovery phase that has so far been very weak. The terrorist threats and the violence in the Middle East obviously have given businesses and consumers and some governments a reason to be conservative in their spending habits. There is a real danger that the peaceful conduct of commerce and trade could be disrupted by the major terrorist networks still operating, the threat of war in Iraq, the instability in North Korea and the seemingly endless cycle of killings in Palestine and Israel¹⁸.

¹⁷ Global Economic Prospects and Developing Countries, The World Bank, www.worldbank.org/prospects

¹⁸ *Global Economy Hampered by Uncertainty in 2002*, Cornell's Global Economic Trends, www.getrends.com

NORTH AMERICA

United States¹⁹

In the United States unemployment rose to 6% in November 2002 after posting a 5.7% rate in October. The rate was the highest since April 2002 and August 1994. Good news for the economy came in the form of increased worker productivity. Productivity by the average worker increased 5.1% in the third quarter and its growth over the past 12 months is the fastest since 1966. A GDP report showed 4% growth in the third quarter of 2002. The growth was the second highest recorded in two years and followed a 1.3% rate of growth in the second quarter of the year. Despite the stronger growth, there is a perception that the economy has already lost some of its zip in the fourth quarter. Consumer confidence rose slightly (84.2 from 80.6 in October 2002) in November as the stock market rebounded from its third quarter decline. The industrial sector stayed weak lowering expectations for stronger economic growth. The Institute for Supply Management said its index of manufacturing activity rose to 49.2 in November, the third straight month below 50 indicating contraction in the manufacturing sector.

Canada

Canada's economy grew at an annualized rate of 3.1% in the third quarter as consumer spending and business investment slowed. The third quarter numbers slowed from the annualized rate of 5% posted in the first half of the year. Consumer spending rose .1% while business investment fell sharply. Investment in non-residential construction fell 6%.

Mexico

Mexico's GDP grew by 1.8% in the third quarter, the second straight quarter of growth. At the same time, Mexico's trade deficit was higher than expected in October due to a fall in the value of oil exports and a rise in imports.

EUROPE

Europe posted low growth figures in the third quarter of 2002. Led by a stagnant German economy, the 12 countries in the euro-zone grew by an annual rate of 1.2% in the third quarter. The euro-zone growth figure compares to almost 6% in Asia (less Japan) and 4% in the US. The economy expanded just .3% from the previous quarter.

The European Central Bank (ECB) responded to the weaker economy by lowering its key interest rate .5% to 2.75% earlier in December. The Bank of England decided to leave its rates unchanged. Unemployment in the euro-zone rose to 8.4% in October from

¹⁹ Ibid

8.3% in September. German unemployment reached 10% in November. The jobless rates vary widely in the euro-zone from 11.7% in Spain to 2.6% in Luxembourg. Germany's labor market is the biggest problem though with more than four million people out of work. Industrial production in the euro-zone fell .2% in September and was down .6% from the year ago period. The Reuter's Euro-zone Purchasing Managers Index stayed below the 50 mark in November indicating a sluggish manufacturing sector. The index stood at 49.5, rising from 49.1 in October.

ASIA

Japan

Economic growth in Japan rose .8% in the third quarter from the previous quarter and 3.2% on an annual basis. Before the release of the third quarter figures, the Japanese government downgraded its assessment of the economy. The government report reduced its expectations for exports and industrial production. It also said deflation was accelerating with domestic retail prices "weakening." The index of leading Japanese economic indicators for September 2002 stood at 60 – above the threshold of 50 that indicates economic growth. Consumer spending rose 5.4% in September year-on-year, the largest increase since March 1997. The unemployment rate in Japan rose again to its highest level in the postwar era. The unemployment rate hit 5.5% in October, up from 5.4% posted in September.

China

China's GDP growth for 2002 is expected to total 8%. The combination of double-digit growth in exports and strong domestic demand – powered by falling prices – should allow the country to continue posting strong GDP growth. Strong export growth boosted the country's trade surplus to \$4.75 billion in October, more the double the previous month. Exports rose 31.5% to \$29.95 billion while imports increased 33% to \$25.2 billion.

The economies of the developed world have a significant impact upon the less developed and underdeveloped countries, as funding is required from the larger ones. When economies contract funding is generally substantially reduce causing greater hardships to small states. The money supply for HIV/AIDS would be very adversely affected as a consequence.

3.1.3.2 Regional²⁰

Economic activity in the Caribbean and Latin America as a region fell by 0.5 per cent in 2002 leading to a fall in per capita gross domestic product below 1997 levels. South American economies, particularly Argentina, Uruguay and Venezuela, weighed heavily on the regional aggregate but the lack of dynamism was widespread throughout the region. In analysing the economic performance of the region as a whole and of individual Latin American and Caribbean countries in 2002, the report suggested that an adverse external environment was key in explaining the poor performance. Last year, the region transferred net financial resources abroad for the first time since the end of the 1980s, the terms of trade continued to worsen and inflation rose to 12 per cent, double that of 2001, after eight years in decline. As a result, the living conditions of many Caribbean and Latin American peoples worsened and poverty was estimated to have risen by seven million people. The unemployment rate rose from 8.4 per cent of the workforce in 2001 to 9.1 per cent, while real wages fell on average by 1.5 per cent. Among other signs of the weak labour market, unemployment and informal employment were said to be on the rise.

Starting in the second quarter, the region showed signs of an incipient recovery. A significant part of the change in GDP in 2002 was due to the slowdown in growth during 2001. The fourth quarter of 2002 was expected to post a 1.6 per cent rise over the last quarter of 2001. In almost every country the downward slide was stopped. Even in Argentina, the decline halted during the second quarter. In emphasizing the recovery ECLAC estimated that GDP in Latin America and the Caribbean could rise 2.1 per cent in 2003.

HIV/AIDS requires large sums of money to control and eliminate the disease and small underdeveloped states cannot on their own afford what is required. They will continue to depend on the generosity of the developed states for assistance.

PROSPECTS FOR SELECTED INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES²¹

Barbados

The better-than expected GDP growth recorded in the third quarter of 2002 in the Barbadian tourism and manufacturing sectors suggests that the economy may be edging out of recession. Further growth is anticipated and it is expected that the

²⁰ "Downturn in the Latin American and Caribbean Economies in 2002", *Internet Express*, January 3, 2003, based on a report of regional economic performance The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Port of Spain, 2002.

²¹ Latin American Monitor (Caribbean), Vol 20, No.1, January 2003, Business Monitor International, UK

economy will contract in 2003 by only 1.0%, less than was originally anticipated, and return to positive territory in 2004, when an expansion of approximately 2.0%.

Belize

The real economy of Belize grew about 5.1% in 2001, according to the latest International Monetary Fund (IMF) report, which was in fact a slowdown from the massive 11.0% recorded in 2000. This slowdown was attributed to the several hurricanes, the terrorist attacks and a shrimp-virus epidemic. The government resorted to expansionist economic policies which sought to fuel growth through tax cuts, a lax monetary policy, government investment and subsidized credit to the private sector through the Development Finance Corporation (DFC). The result is the widening central government deficit to 12.0% of GDP in fiscal year 2001/2002. The main implications of this are that government may have to shelve its ambitious plan for the National Health Service, which the IMF warns against because it is not self-financing, as well as its promise of providing affordable housing to more than 10,000 families.

Dominica

After having grown by about 2.5% a year, the Dominican economy stagnated in 2001 and was expected to decline by 4.5% in 2002. This is the result of the contraction of the banana industry and recession in the tourist sector. Banana production, one of the island's key exports, contracted by 26.9% year-on-year during the first quarter of 2002. Manufacturing also fared badly, with soap and toothpaste production, together with beverage output, declining by 12.5% and 13.0% respectively. The only sector posting positive growth, albeit modest, was the construction industry. Public finances have also deteriorated sharply, with the consolidated public deficit quadrupling to 12.5% of GDP between 1997 and 2001. Although the IMF report appears to be supportive of the government's efforts to stabilize the economy and its commitment to stick to these stringent fiscal measures unveiled in the 2002/2003 budget, it nevertheless confirms that the fiscal and external accounts have reached unsustainable levels. It is anticipated that austerity measures²² will constrain growth in 2003.

Dominican Republic

The official figure of the third quarter of 2002 GDP growth was 1.5%, suggesting that the economy is slowing more quickly than was anticipated. Yet most projections remain optimistic: Standard & Poor's (S&P) confirmed the country risk rating in November at BB- (up from B+) with a stable outlook. This rating is justified by the prospect of economic growth of 4 % – 5% in the medium term, with low inflation.

²² Under the new US\$4.3mn 12-month standby-by agreement, the government must implement a set of radical measures, including widening the tax base, refraining from further external borrowing on commercial terms, reducing the size of the public service, restructuring the banana industry, and privatizing and strengthening the supervision of the banking sector.

OECS

Bananas and tourism remain the anchors of the Eastern Caribbean economies. The countries can expect some extraordinary funding from the World Bank. World Bank President, James Wolfensohn pledged to help the OECS countries and Barbados to improve their competitiveness²³. Wolfensohn has commissioned a feasibility study so that the group can meet again in 2003, when the OECS will outline how the World Bank can help the region compete in the international global environment.

Guyana

The Bank of Guyana reported that the Guyanese economy grew 2.9 y-o-y in H1 2002. This was more than twice the rate for H1 2001 (1.3%). If agricultural production, particularly sugar, remains strong, the GDP result for the whole year could be slightly more than 2.0%. Inflation, however, could also be higher, on the basis of the sharp increase in the first nine months, to 4.9%. The increase was fuelled mainly by higher electricity, water and telecommunications costs, all of which are expected to remain high in the foreseeable future.

Jamaica

Despite the slump in tourism and agriculture the Central Bank of Jamaica reported positive growth. It is projected that there will be positive growth of about 2.0% - 4.0% in 2003.

Trinidad and Tobago

The outlook for growth in Trinidad and Tobago appears to be positive following the resolution of the political stalemate and the approval of an expansionary 2002/2003 budget. Inflation is headed for a surge following the payment of arrears to public servants but stability in the exchange rate markets, loose monetary policy and strong performance in the energy sector will also be supportive of growth.

THE IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS ON CARIBBEAN ECONOMIES

In a study undertaken by the University of the West Indies, the total cost of the epidemic in the Caribbean was forecast as US\$20 million for 1995 and US\$80 million for 2020. Whereas the shrinking workforce due to the aging of the population has been a concern of managers, the AIDS/HIV-related obstacles are of a completely different nature – some studies suggest that both direct and indirect costs of lost productivity associated with this epidemic could account for over 6% of the total GDP in this region

²³ This pledge was made when Mr. Wolfensohn participated in discussions on “challenges and opportunities facing the region, including competitiveness, interconnectivity among the island nations and social protection” in Basseterre, St. Kitts in November, 2002.

by the year 2000. These costs include increased absenteeism, increases in costs of training and escalating insurance costs.

Along with the loss of savings and income of both people living with AIDS and their relatives and care-givers, the economic effect, both at a micro and a macro level could prove devastating to companies and economies, and while it has already been seen in African countries - in an August, 2000 study, the World Bank determined that South Africa's GDP would be 17% lower in 2010 than it would have been without AIDS - it could well repeat itself in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, if not arrested in a timely fashion. An example from South Africa is perhaps an indicator of the way forward.

In late April, 2002, the announcement was made that a grant from the Global Fund was being awarded to South Africa's HIV/AIDS programme in the amount of US\$165.2m, with \$93 million to the South African National AIDS Council and \$72 million to finance a proposal for care-oriented services for those living with HIV/AIDS. The awarding of this grant resulted primarily from the concerted efforts of strategic alliances involving public and private entities (the university, the Chamber of Commerce, religious organizations, etc.). The proposal very clearly outlined the strategy regarding how care was to be provided for people living with AIDS, but the awarding of the grant itself shows the importance of forming partnerships and networking to achieve the goals of the organization.

CRN+ must ensure it acquires the capacity to lobby the governments of the region, agencies and private enterprises to provide the funding and technical assistance required in its fight against HIV/AIDS.

3.2 Micro Environment

3.2.1 Analysis of Stakeholders

3.2.1.1 Internal Stakeholders

Persons Living With HIV/IDS (PLWHA)

PLWHA constitute the major stakeholders of CRN+ primarily because the majority of initiatives are done either with them or on their behalf. They will be the primary beneficiaries of the successes of the activities of the CRN+. Consequently, their needs, opinions, expectations and support (whether or not they belong to a national network) are critical to the work of a range of organizations involved in the HIV/AIDS sector.

The CRN+ Board

The Board of CRN+ constitutes the next tier of internal stakeholders. They are important because they are entrusted with the long-term direction and sustainability of the organization. It is an onerous responsibility because the lives of many individuals and their loved ones depend on their success in enhancing the care, treatment and support of PLWHA. External organizations engaged in the HIV/AIDS sector in capacities such as research, policy development, legislative development, social/economic development look towards CRN+ for information, guidance and project/programme management capability. .

The Board thus needs to develop as a matter of priority, a policy outlining the technical competencies on HIV/AIDS matters as well as managerial competencies and cross-cultural/interpersonal skills required by candidates for selection to the Board.

The Secretariat

The Secretariat, as the administrative arm, is also a key stakeholder. The administrative and technical work of individual members and national networks are informed by this unit and consequently, its personnel, systems, procedures and strategic direction are of critical importance to CRN+ as a whole. The Secretariat therefore must have the necessary competencies and increased drive to fulfill its mandate.

National Networks

The national networks will be encouraged in each Caribbean territory to act as the critical link between the Board, its Secretariat and their most important stakeholder, the PLWHA. The national networks must therefore obtain the facilities, equipment, training and support required to discharge its most important of obligations to PLWHA. Because they are the ones whose responsibility it is to implement the policies of the Board there is a direct positive correlation between the capacity of the national networks and the success and/or failure of CRN+.

3.2.1.2 External Stakeholders

The external stakeholders consist of individuals and groups with an actual or potential interest in the success of CRN+ especially as it relates to the fulfillment of their own objectives. CRN+ calls this group its **Strategic Partners** as follows²⁴:

²⁴ This listing is in alphabetical order and therefore does not indicate of the importance of one stakeholder over another.

The Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and Secretariat

The Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) is charged with the responsibility of integrating the Caribbean region through the establishment of a community and common/single market. Its mission is:

"To provide dynamic leadership and service, in partnership with Community institutions and Groups, toward the attainment of a viable, internationally competitive and sustainable Community, with improved quality of life for all."

The mandate places CARICOM at the forefront of the regional response to HIV/AIDS. Recognizing the potentially disastrous affect of the pandemic on the development of the region, the Heads of Government of CARICOM charged the Secretariat to lead efforts to develop a regional plan of action against HIV/AIDS as part of the Regional Task Force on HIV/AIDS established in 1998. This plan of action, now the Regional Strategic Framework against HIV/AIDS 2002 – 2006, identifies the CARICOM Secretariat as one of the agencies for implementation together with CRN+. Further to this, the CARICOM Secretariat had been mandated to support the development of the Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP). CRN+ has been a key founding partner of PANCAP.

In addition to these areas of partnership, CARICOM is the executing agency of the Project to Strengthen the Institutional Response to HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean (SIRHASC) being funded by the EU, of which CRN+ is an Implementing Agency. Consequently, CRN+'s performance on this project has a direct impact on CARICOM's accountability to the funders of the project.

The Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC)

The Caribbean Epidemiology Center is an institution that is administered on behalf of 21 Member Countries by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the World Health Organization's Regional Office for the Americas. Its mission is:

To improve the health status of Caribbean people by advancing the capabilities of member countries in epidemiology, laboratory technology and related public health disciplines through technical cooperation, service, training, research and a well trained motivated staff.

In fact CAREC enjoys an international reputation for its work in support of Public Health in the Caribbean. Under a Multilateral Agreement, CAREC provides laboratory and epidemiology services to twenty-one (21) member countries.

CAREC is a key stakeholder because CRN+ depends upon them for technical expertise on PLWHA epidemiological issues and laboratory services. CAREC's interest in CRN+

is for the network to partner with CAREC for their active support in its various research activities and as an interest group in the fight against the spread of the disease. It is also a partner in some project management activities of CRN+.

In addition, through CAREC, CRN+ has also been able to partner with other key organizations involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS, such as:

- ◆ Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO)
- ◆ British Department For International Development (DFID)
- ◆ Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- ◆ French Technical Cooperation (FTC)
- ◆ German Technical Cooperation (GTZ)
- ◆ United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Other Key Partners

Other key partners of CRN+ include:

- ◆ Global Network of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+)
- ◆ United States Centre for Disease Control (CDC)/United States Health Resources and Services Administration
- ◆ National Association of Persons Living With HIV/AIDS (NAPWA)
- ◆ Caribbean Coalition of National AIDS Programme Coordinators (CCNAPC)
- ◆ Medical Research Foundation (MRF)
- ◆ United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- ◆ The University of the West Indies (UWI)
- ◆ Caribbean Health Research Council (CHRC)

3.3 Conclusion to the External Analysis

The far-reaching implications of a disease that has the potential to devastate the economic and social fabric of Caribbean societies especially with its high prevalence among the most productive human capital have forced decision-makers and researchers to classify HIV/AIDS as a *developmental* and not merely a *health* issue. This classification is important because strategies for amelioration and prevention of the disease can have the widest possible target sectors and therefore include a far larger stake-holding population than if it were to be housed within the health sector.

4.0 INTERNAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Organization

CRN+ has a network-type arrangement as its method of organization. Typically, members exchange information, establish new contacts and links and share experiences. This type of organization is beneficial for groups that require a high degree of autonomy, yet would like to retain important links to a super-structure which serves as a pool for increasing internal capacity and as critical mass when confronting external (sometimes opposing) parties.

The shortcoming of this type of affiliation however is that coordinating activities can be difficult and individual members can pursue their own interests without necessarily considering the potential impact(s) on the wider group. Under these circumstances close collaboration among individual members/groups and strong communication systems and procedures are critical to the success of this form of organization. Nevertheless, CRN+ is committed to this form of organization because from its point of view it represents the best arrangement, given the prevailing circumstances.

4.1.1 Vision

In CRN+ long-term view of itself a Vision Statement, which is linked to the Global Mission²⁵, has emerged from the strategic process:

“CRN+ is the authentic voice of Caribbean people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). As a full and equal partner in the collaborative fight against HIV/AIDS CRN+ is driven by PLWHA making a meaningful difference to their lives.

4.1.2 Mission

In developing its mission CRN+ examined its purpose and what it would like to achieve in the wider environment. The draft mission also emerged from the strategic process as follows:

²⁵ The aim of the Global Network of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+) is to “improve the quality of life of PLWHA through lobbying, linking and sharing” (GNP+ website)

“The Caribbean Regional Network of people living with HIV/IDS (CRN+) is committed to empowering and supporting persons affected and infected with HIV/AIDS through advocacy, research, partnership, capacity building and resource mobilization.”

4.1.3 Constitution

At inception, CRN+ adopted with few amendments, the Constitution of GNP+ based upon the fundamental principles under which it wished to be governed.

There is an urgent need to revisit the Constitution with a view to retaining what is viable and making the requisite additions so that it better supports the achievement of the vision, mission, objectives, strategies and operations of CRN+ as articulated in its Strategic Plan.

4.1.4 Organizational Structure

4.1.4.1 Considerations in Developing CRN+'s Structure²⁶

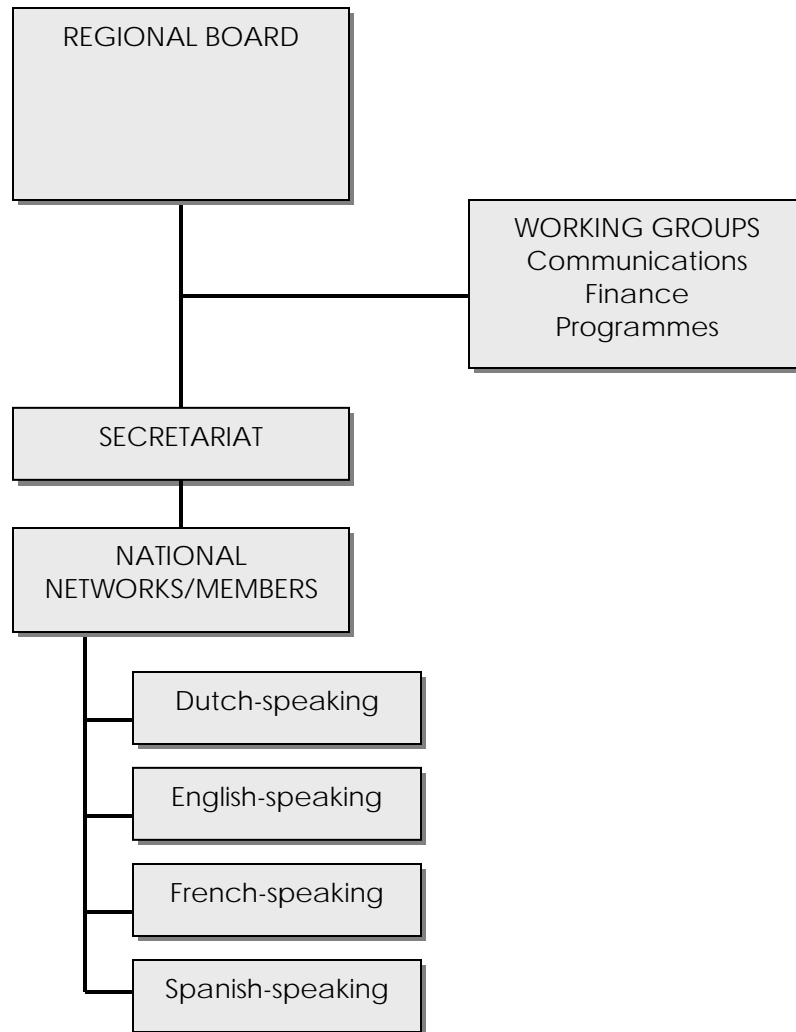
In developing its current structure CRN+ considered the following issues:

1. The geography of the Caribbean and the extent to which it helps or hinders the structure.
2. The need for a Board/Executive Committee with a Secretariat managing the affairs of the Network.
3. How best to divide the islands and countries in terms of a structure that will promote efficiency – should it be based on territories, geography, politics and/or language?
4. The status of the various territories being Republic, Independent, or British/French/Dutch Overseas territories

The current structure of CRN+ that emerged (**Figure 1**) is consistent with its status as a network of organizations.

²⁶ Report of CRN+ Core Group Meeting, April 14-17, 1997, p.8

Figure 1: The Structure of CRN+



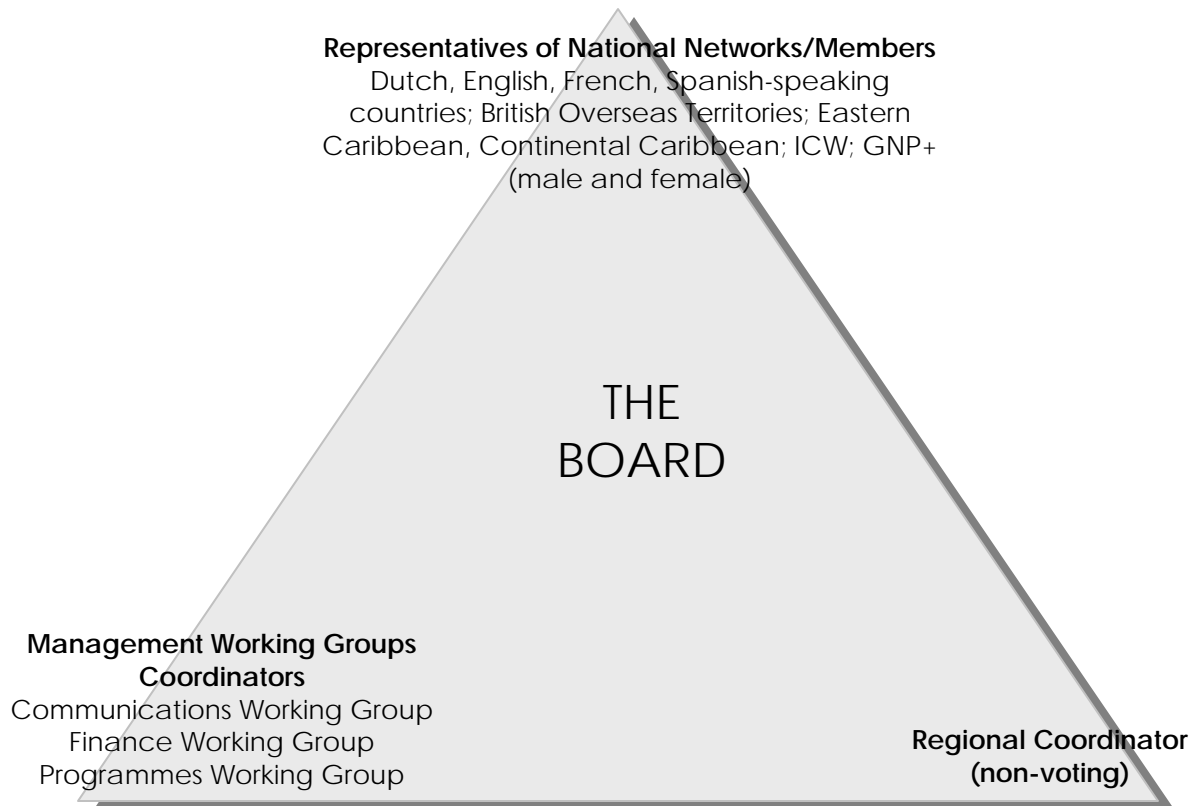
The Board²⁷

The Board is the principal decision-making body of the Network. It is headed by a Chairman and includes Representatives²⁸ of the Dutch-, English-, French- and Spanish-speaking countries, both island and continental Caribbean; Coordinators of the Communications, Finance, Programmes and Working Groups as outlined in **Figure 2**:

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Board members are selected by the regional members of the groupings based on language

Figure 2: Composition of Board, CRN+



The Secretariat

The Secretariat is the administrative arm of CRN+. It is headed by the Regional Coordinator and includes an Administrative Assistant and a Programmes Officer. These individuals manage the day-to-day operations of the organization including managing financial affairs, responding to queries, preparing for meetings/workshops and implementing its programme activities with financial support from SIRHASC project.

Membership/National Networks

The membership of CRN+ is comprised of national networks as well as individual members in countries across the Caribbean as shown in **Table 1**.

CRN+ began with individual members. Moreover, stigma and discrimination continues to hinder the development of national networks but individual membership still allows the wider representation of PLWHA in the Caribbean.

To date there are national networks in six (6) countries – Barbados, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. The SIRHASC project has

helped CRN+ to support the development of national networks in other countries such as Grenada and St. Lucia. Similarly, UNDP through Project Accelerated Fund (PAF) will also assist in the development of national networks in the Dutch territories of St. Maarten, Curacao, Aruba and Bonaire.

In some instances the National Networks are comprised of smaller sub-groups such as in Jamaica, where there are networks in each parish under the umbrella of JN+. The National Networks range from those that are well-patronized, organized and funded to small support groups with limited organizational capability.

Table 1: Countries Represented within CRN+

| Dutch-speaking | English-speaking | French-speaking | Spanish-speaking |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Aruba | 1. Antigua | 1. Fr. Guyana | 1. Cuba |
| 2. Bonaire | 2. Barbados | 2. Fr. St Martin | 2. Dominican Republic |
| 3. Curacao | 3. Bermuda | 3. Guadeloupe | |
| 4. Netherlands Antilles | 4. Cayman Islands | 4. Haiti | |
| 5. Suriname | 5. Dominica | 5. Martinique | |
| 6. St. Maarten | 6. Grenada | | |
| | 7. Guyana | | |
| | 8. Jamaica | | |
| | 9. St. Kitts/Nevis | | |
| | 10. St. Lucia | | |
| | 11. St. Vincent & The Grenadines | | |
| | 12. The Bahamas | | |
| | 13. Trinidad & Tobago | | |
| | 14. Turks & Caicos | | |

4.1.5 Decision-Making

The Board remains the primary decision-making organ within CRN+. However, because of the specific nature of the organization²⁹, the Secretariat, and in particular, the Regional Coordinator undertakes much of the operational decision-making.

4.1.6 Culture

What today is referred to as *organizational culture* is really the deeply rooted and unconscious beliefs, values and norms shared by the members of the organization. Culture drives the organization and its actions (it has been called the “operating system” of the organization) by guiding how members of the organization think, act and feel. It is dynamic and fluid and never static. With respect to CRN+ there appears to be an abiding spirit of excitement, optimism, participation and empowerment pervading the organization. At the same time there is the understanding that realities of HIV/AIDS are never far away.

The structure of the organization, and, the fact that members are geographically dispersed with different languages and cultures can sometimes lead to a sense of fragmentation. Nevertheless, there is a sense that “we are *of* Caribbean, working *for* the Caribbean”.

4.2 Human Resources

4.2.1 The Board

The Board comprises individuals with a broad mix of talents, educational backgrounds and work/life experiences. This has the potential to produce both benefits and disadvantages to the organization. However, many adverse impacts of this state of affairs have been mitigated to some extent by the capacity-building workshops that have been undertaken over the last six (6) years. Despite these positive steps forward, there remain some opportunities to further enhance the skills of the Board through increasing managerial capability (especially managing across cultures), foreign language skills development and leadership enhancement. CRN+ must work toward developing the capacity of its members if it is to prudently manage the funding and technical assistance expected to adequately achieve its mandate. The composition of the Board is weighted towards the feminine gender. Remuneration for Board members³⁰ remains an issue that needs to be addressed.

²⁹ The Board and its Management Groups meet twice per year. Members are dispersed throughout the Caribbean region. The Management Groups are not yet fully functional.

³⁰ At present, membership of the Board is voluntary.

4.2.2 The Secretariat

Three members of staff (Regional Coordinator, Administrative Assistant and Programmes Officer) manage the affairs of the Secretariat. These staff members, holding the only salaried positions within the network, are both qualified and experienced in their areas of specialty. The position of Communications Specialist is currently vacant and needs to be filled as soon as possible if the organization's main objective of advocacy is to be achieved.

4.2.3 The Membership

The membership consists of individuals with a wide range of skills, experience and capabilities. At the present time the data on these individuals (although planned) have not yet been harnessed into a comprehensive database. The development of such a database will prove to be invaluable for the Network as it will be looking toward its membership to fill vacancies as they are needed to carry on the work of the organization. By recognizing the potential skills available, the required training can be acquired to enhance the skills to the benefit of its members who may look to CRN+ as a source of gaining meaningful employment.

4.2.4 Technical Expertise

The human resources of CRN+ must not be thought of within the narrow confines of those who are members of the network. The organization also has *access* to a number of professionals in different disciplines who are potentially invaluable to the work of CRN+. Already, the organization has accessed the services of knowledgeable individuals such as Ms. Claudette Francis and Dr. Dorothy Blake who have played a pivotal role in the development of CRN+ since its inception. Dr. Blake is the current Technical Advisor to the organization.

CRN+ has embraced a number of strategic partners who are the repositories of a wide range of information and expertise, potentially beneficial to PLWHA.

4.2.5 Interested Observers

The wider communities of the countries in which host CRN+ networks are individuals with talents and skills who are potentially beneficial but have not yet been approached by CRN+ for assistance. The human resource capability of the organization would be greatly enhanced should approaches be made to the most appropriate of these interested observers.

4.3 Operations

More than any other, the operations function within organizations is concerned with the actual processes involved in producing the goods or services that the organization offers to its customers. Within the context of CRN+ the operations function revolves around physical facilities, equipment, processes and procedures. **Figure 3.0** outlines the typical production system for CRN+.

4.3.1 Physical Facilities/Equipment

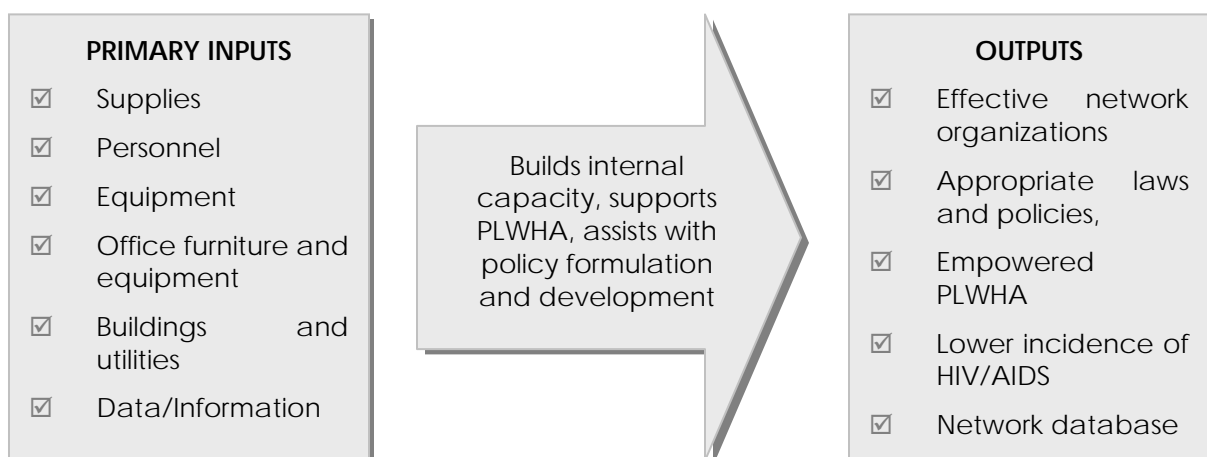
The procurement of appropriate physical facilities in which to house its Secretariat and national networks poses a serious challenge to CRN+. Its Secretariat offices in Port of Spain, though adequate, does not provide the levels of privacy and confidentiality that are required by PLWHA. At the level of the national networks there is little consistency. Some networks are well housed while others meet informally in private homes and offices. These conditions have a direct impact on the ability of the network's ability to undertake the activities required to achieve its objectives.

With respect to equipment, CRN+'s Secretariat office in Port of Spain has modern computer equipment and telephone and Internet access. This provides easy access to networks with similar facilities but is a constraint for those without such equipment.

4.3.2 Processes and Procedures

As a young and growing organization the processing and procedures of CRN+ are still in the process of development. The geographical spread and language barriers constitute potential barriers to their establishment and universal adoption.

Figure 3: Typical Production System for CRN+



These inputs are all required if CRN+ is to properly channel its efforts towards its main goal of advocacy.

4.4 Marketing

CRN+ is concerned with satisfying customer requirements, profitably in a cost effective manner. Its first priority is therefore the anticipation and identification of the needs and wants of internal and external stakeholders. It involves producing a product/service that is desired by its customers, at a price that is affordable, in a place that is convenient and using the most appropriate communication techniques. This area is key to CRN+ if it is to perform its main function of advocacy in a meaningful way.

4.4.1 The Services of CRN+

The core services of CRN+ are:

- Advocacy/Representation
- Programme Management
- Event Management – conferences, workshops
- Information Exchange
- Capacity Building

4.4.1.1 Advocacy

Advocacy is the core service of CRN+ on behalf of its members, ensuring that their views, needs and concerns are articulated in the highest HIV/AIDS-related fora worldwide.

Moreover, CRN+ offers representation of PLWHA, by PLWHA, a unique and highly desirable attribute that has propelled the organization to the forefront on all matters affecting PLWHA in the Caribbean. The voice of PLWHA is made tangible in the effort to advocate for protection of their rights and provisions of their needs and to build awareness of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the lives of Caribbean persons. Moreover, PLWHA, through CRN+, are part of the discourse on the design and implementation of policies and programmes for their benefit thus ensuring that these will indeed have a positive impact.

4.4.1.2 Programme Management/Implementation

CRN+ provides programme management/implementation services to organizations wishing to impact the PLWHA groups within the Caribbean. Currently the organization is engaged in implementing two such projects:

1. Regional Organizational Development Initiative (RODI) – in partnership with GNP+ aimed at developing the capability of regional PLWHA organizations, starting with the Regional Boards.
2. Strengthening the Institutional Response to HIV/AIDS/STI in the Caribbean (SIRHASC) – in partnership with the CARICOM Secretariat on behalf of the European Union

It is also expected that within the next year the organization will be asked to undertake additional projects with the following agencies:

- ◆ UNDP – to establish national networks and provide capacity building services to the Dutch territories in the Caribbean
- ◆ CAREC/UNAIDS – a project related to regional communications initiative
- ◆ CIDA – an advocacy project in association with CARICOM.
- ◆ World Bank – Establishment of a database of PLWHA.

4.4.1.3 Events Management

CRN+ regularly hosts meetings, workshops and conferences on all matters related to HIV/AIDS. In fact the organization played a significant role in hosting the 10th International Conference for People Living with HIV/AIDS in Trinidad and Tobago in October 2001. This is an important service to provide, particularly for PLWHA who are stigmatized by their national communities.

4.4.1.4 Information Exchange

CRN+'s position at the forefront of the movement to secure the interests of PLWHA is thus in the unique position of having access to the most up to date information on the latest medical and other advances in the disease as well as the opportunity to influence government policies within some Caribbean countries. It thus acts as an important source of information not only for PLWHA but for external organizations involved in research, policy development, charity/voluntary work and education.

4.4.1.5 Capacity Building

This service is deemed very important to the membership who recognizes that they need to have new skills in order to participate in eradicating HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean. Members look forward to training workshops which are held in conjunction with the annual general meeting each year.

While these activities have been limited, CRN+ hopes to expand its human resource development programme over the next five years.

4.4.2 Pricing

CRN+ is concerned with placing a value on the product/service that the organization provides and the amount that the buyer of that service is willing to pay. Currently, CRN+ does not charge PLWHA, Partners or others for the services they provide. In fact, the cost of the services provided by CRN+ is met by some of its strategic partners, in particular, The European Union, GNP+, UNAIDS and UNDP. The organization must examine this state of affairs very carefully in order to identify potential pitfalls that its current strategy may create.

4.4.3 Place/Distribution

CRN+ is concerned with the process of making products/services available at the place and time that they are desirable to its stakeholders. The issue of accessibility is very important to CRN+ particularly because its Secretariat is located at the “end of the Caribbean chain”. Although Trinidad and Tobago has good communication links with the rest of the world the high cost and logistics of regional air travel constitute invisible barriers to access. Having said that, it is true to say that the same may apply to any regional country in which the Secretariat might be located. The language barrier also constitutes an impediment to accessing the services of CRN+. Information would have to be made available in different languages.

4.4.4 Promotion

CRN+ is concerned with the communications aspect of its marketing function. This is a challenging area for the organization. It recognizes that except for its advocacy work, it has done very little in the way of deliberate marketing communications with more than a few of its strategic partners. This emphasizes the need for a Communication Specialist for the organization to undertake this critical function.

4.5 Finance

The financing of CRN+, as with many other NGOs, is erratic. It depends on the goodwill of others for its funds. It was funded by GNP+ in its first 3 – 4 years of existence. This funding was ‘proposal/project driven’, in that funds were provided as proposals were submitted to GNP+. More recently, the EU/CARICOM SIRHASC Project has been its primary source of funds, particularly for institutional strengthening activities.

The Board/Secretariat wants to move to a position where the organization has sustained funding and, in this regard, are considering a mix of fund raising activities to achieve this goal for example, applying a fee for CRN+'s services.

4.6 Conclusion to the Internal Analysis

CRN+ has within its network a number of key strengths on which it can build so as to sustain its operations in the future. It must continue to enhance its capacity especially as it will be depending on the funds of institutions like the Global Fund, The European Union, CARICOM, The World Bank etc., who expected a certain level of output and accountability. There is a recognition that some weaknesses do exist. The key then, will be for the organization to build on the key strengths and overcome the weaknesses it has identified.

5.0 SWOT ANALYSIS

The foregoing environmental and internal analyses identified the key external and internal variables that confront CRN+ at the time of this activity and which, it is anticipated, will confront them in the future. The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis attempts to categorize these variables in a structured format that will allow the organization to prioritize its activities based on whether they deem these variables to be major, average or minor (for example, a major threat, average opportunity, major strength or minor weakness).

5.1 Strengths & Weaknesses

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|--|--|
| <p>Organization</p> | <p>Organization</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Network organization – provides a high degree of autonomy while retaining important collaborative links. - CRN+ has already begun a strategic planning process – draft vision, mission and long-term objectives. There has already been some degree of institutional strengthening as a result of CRN+ involvement in projects such as RODI and SIRHASC. - CRN+ is acknowledged as a major partner in the regional response to HIV/AIDS - The Board and members of CRN+ are representative of the English-, Spanish-, French-, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. - The Secretariat is managed by a group of individuals with a good balance of skills (organizational, advocacy, inter-personal) and experience. - Spirit of excitement, optimism, partnership, participation and empowerment among the Board, Secretariat and membership. - CRN+ can express concerns globally through its alliance with GNP+ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Network organization – can pose difficulties in coordinating activities and achieving consensus. When combined with a geographically dispersed membership with different languages and culture, this form of organization can lead to a sense of fragmentation. - The Constitution, which has been adopted from that of GNP+ with few amendments, has not been evaluated to determine whether it is applicable to Caribbean realities. There is a need to align the Constitution so that it can be more reflective of the anticipated nature and scope of activities of CRN+. - Existing organizational structure of CRN+ is no longer adequate to serve the envisioned scope of the organization’s activities. - Small size of the Secretariat staff is a challenge given the volume of work to be undertaken by the organization and limits capability of CRN+ to add more services/activities. - Non-functioning management groups: although the Board is the primary decision-making organ, much of the decision-making is done by the Secretariat, in particular, the Regional Coordinator. |

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|---|---|
| Organization (cont'd) | Organization (cont'd) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The national networks are at different stages of development. This poses challenges for project implementation and control. - National networks are inadequately staffed and lack proper infrastructure for effective operation and communication. |
| Human Resources | Human Resources |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board members possess a broad mix of talents, educational backgrounds and work/life experiences. - Courage and commitment of Board and members of the national networks are tremendous assets to CRN+. - Access to technical personnel through strategic alliances. - The membership of CRN+ is an excellent source of information/collaboration for regional and international institutions, placing CRN+ high in demand as a partner organization in the fight against HIV/AIDS. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical and managerial skills within the organization need to be further enhanced – e.g. dearth of foreign language and diversity management skills at the level of the Board and Secretariat. - Capacity – intellectual, size, resources – of CRN+ and national networks to carry workload, including implementation of the Strategic Plan. - Absence of a comprehensive database of PLWHA and HIV/AIDS resource personnel available to PLWHA - Stigma and discrimination among persons in organizations interacting with PLWHA, especially medical personnel - Turnover in human resources at CRN+ and national networks is difficult for sustaining training/skills development. |
| Operations | Operations |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Secretariat offices are well equipped with modern equipment and Internet connectivity. - The location of the Secretariat in Trinidad places it close to other key regional/international agencies e.g. CAREC, UNAIDS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office does not provide the high level of privacy/confidentiality required by PLWHA - The geographical spread of members, political/legal systems and language constitute barriers to the establishment and universal adoption of processes and procedures. |
| Marketing/Communications | Marketing/Communications |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CRN+ produces the core services of project management, advocacy, event management and information exchange for its members and strategic partners. - CRN+ currently enjoys a positive reputation in the international community. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of a comprehensive Marketing & Communications Strategy - Accessibility to the Secretariat can be hampered by expensive regional travel and high communication costs. |

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|---|---|
| Marketing/Communications (cont'd) | Marketing/Communications (cont'd) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The information exchange service it provides has the potential to place the organization at the forefront of the latest data on medical and other advances as well as the possibility of influencing government policies within some Caribbean countries. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data collection systems and the timeliness and consistency in the flow of information from membership need to be improved to keep CRN+ at the 'cutting edge' and a source for other regional/international agencies. |
| Finance | Finance |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CRN+ has generated sufficient goodwill to access funds from strategic partners to sustain its operations in the short term. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financing of the operations of CRN+ is erratic – based primarily on funding from strategic partners. - Currently, EU/SIRHASC Project is the organization's primary source of consistent funding. - CRN+ does not charge its clients (PLWHA, national networks, partners, other agencies) for the services that it provides. |

5.2 Opportunities & Threats

| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
|--|--|
| Political | Political |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political awareness of HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean is at an all time high resulting in an increased focus by governments on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the region. This has led to the development of CRSF, establishment of PANCAP, etc. - Several governments are signatories to the Nassau Declaration, PANCAP, UNGASS and the UN Millennium Goals. - US Government is a signatory of the PANCAP agreement, as is the William Clinton Foundation - Differing political organization of countries within the Caribbean, where the differences can be used as leverage e.g. equal support for French and Dutch Governments on St. Maarten | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inability or refusal by some global and regional leaders to acknowledge the enormity of the HIV/AIDS problem. - Differing political organization of countries within the Caribbean. Some political leaders view support of PLWHA as a 'dead' investment - Regional political processes can be disruptive, especially in relation to issues of policy direction and commitment at the governmental level. - Absence of legislation to protect PLWHA from discrimination in many Caribbean countries. |

| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
|---|---|
| Political (cont'd) | Political (cont'd) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal/ethical framework with respect to HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean region being developed - PANCAP/CIDA programme. - Establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice | |
| Economic | Economic |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional Governments have recognized HIV/AIDS as a developmental issues and not just a health issue. The result is a multi-sectoral approach to the fight against the pandemic. - Worldwide aid available for HIV/AIDS programmes - Commitment of resources in some Caribbean territories e.g. Bahamas, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago (commitment for TT\$500m over next 5 years). - Submission of the regional proposal of USD \$55m to GFATM by PANCAP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uncertain global economy – Sept. 11th and the decline in confidence of the world markets. - Caribbean economies are relatively small and underdeveloped with narrow resource bases. The fragility of these economies make them highly susceptible to external economic shocks. - Deregulation in many critical sectors, combined with WHO/FTAA, opens already fragile economies to potentially fierce competition in their home markets. - Caribbean territories have varying abilities to access resources to fight the disease nationally. As a region, the difficulties of one territory will affect all others. - Increasing levels of poverty/Lack of adequate poverty reduction programmes in the region exacerbates the spread of HIV/AIDS. - HIV/AIDS pose challenges to growth and development of Caribbean economies – depleting skilled and unskilled workforce, fewer working days from labour force, increased costs of health care, premature payments from pension funds, loss of savings, income, etc. - The relatively high GDP of the Caribbean islands means less assistance from international agencies leaving the disadvantaged in these countries at greater risk |

| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
|--|--|
| Socio-Cultural | Socio-Cultural |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a worldwide/global social consciousness – facilitates the establishment and development of relationships across national boundaries. - Development of civil society and in particular the growth and expansion of the NGO movement and its increasing partnership with the state sector. - Development of closer (working) relationships among Caribbean people. - Some religious, political and educational leaders becoming more involved with the care, treatment and support of PLWHA and prevention of those not infected with the disease. - Relatively high literacy rates in most countries. Fairly well educated populations. - Caribbean uniquely positioned to access assistance from family/friends overseas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of many social ills – drug menace and related problems; money laundering; corruption; illegal immigration; tourism sector leading potentially to health concerns as well as poverty-driven prostitution, addiction-driven prostitution, sex tourism; incest, etc. - HIV/AIDS – leading cause of death in the 15-44 age group - Stigmatization and discrimination, apathy indifference and ignorance are still widespread. - Lack of sensitivity/awareness among community leaders, media - There is a lack of trained counselors and access to psycho-social care - High mobility of people through the Caribbean region for employment, tourism etc. - Other chronic diseases – heart disease and diabetes, cancer, etc. - Inadequate access to health care, indifference of health care workers and shortage of health care specialists - recruitment of skilled health care personnel from the Caribbean to the metropolitan countries and a worldwide shortage of health care personnel. - Cultural Myths e.g. “Sex with a virgin cures HIV/STIs” - Early sexual initiation and multiple partnering among children - Increased sexual relations between young people and “older” adults. - Increase in the number of orphans, child-headed houses, street children (child prostitution) as a result of HIV/AIDS - Portrayal of sex without responsibility in the popular media |

| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
|---|---|
| <p>Technological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement in technology worldwide and in the Caribbean have facilitated greater and faster transfer of information within the region and globally thereby creating more beneficial relationships and exchanges of all types. - Increasing application of technology can lead to more cost effective operations especially in situations in which significant economies of scale are not feasible. - New technologies are available through strategic partnerships | <p>Technological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The level of technology and the extent of its application are not consistent across the region. Consequently the process of enhancing communication, cohesiveness and transformation can be retarded unless compensating actions are undertaken. |
| <p>Geo-Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The favourable climatic conditions of the Caribbean are conducive to recuperation from many illnesses. - Proximity to North American and relatively good air links with major metropolitan countries. - Number of Caribbean persons seeking treatment in the US (47% of HIV/AIDS cases in Brooklyn hospital are from Caribbean) may lead to greater funding support from the US to treat patients regionally | <p>Geo-Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climatic conditions in the Caribbean can lead to other problems e.g. dermatological - Visa restrictions in some Caribbean territories can limit access to care and treatment regionally and internationally e.g. Cuba; high cost of visa in Guyana, Trinidad - The geographic spread of the territories in Caribbean can pose challenges to collaborative efforts – (relatively expensive and sometimes difficult) telephone/internet communication, expensive and awkward air and sea travel arrangements. - Access (including land access in the continental territories e.g., Guyana) can increase medical costs. |
| <p>Medical (Health & Social Care)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A large cadre of researchers and other medical personnel worldwide are working tirelessly to develop a cure for the HIV/AIDS. - There have been medical breakthroughs in treatments to slow the progression of the disease and ameliorate its negative impacts – clinical trials for vaccine underway. These developments are ongoing. - Specialist skills are available in the region | <p>Medical (Health & Social Care)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is still no cure for the disease - Despite breakthroughs many people are dying because of lack of access to medical care and treatment or due to susceptible to opportunistic infections - Cost of treatment is still relatively high, especially for the disadvantaged - Not enough trained practitioners. In addition, skilled personnel, especially nurses, leave for better jobs in the US and UK |

| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
|---|---|
| Medical (Health & Social Care) cont'd | Medical (Health & Social Care) cont'd |
| – | – Health infrastructure is generally weak in the region, especially in the areas of monitoring /diagnostics |
| Stakeholders | Stakeholders |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Extensive efforts to coordinate HIV/AIDS initiatives and organizations both on a worldwide basis (e.g. GNP+) and on a regional level (e.g. CAREC) – CRN+ has a number of regional and international strategic partners and other technical personnel whose funding support and collaborative efforts are invaluable to the organization. – A number of interested observers are to be found within individual territories. These individuals possess financial and technical resources that could prove to be very useful for CRN+ if the organization is able to identify them and make targeted approaches. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Managing and seeking to satisfy the diverse interests, objectives, goals and activities of a variety of stakeholders can be challenging particularly to small (non-governmental) organizations and can potentially lead to strategic drift. – Funders often do not support ‘core’ (administrative/operating) costs |
| Competitors | Competitors |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opportunity exists to explore areas of cooperation with competitors for the purpose of creating critical mass, sharing experiences and exchanging data. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Diversion of resources to direct competitors in other regions as well as national networks and indirect competitors such as organizations associated with other social ills and chronic diseases. – Competition among agencies may lead to duplication of efforts |
| Suppliers | Suppliers |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Negotiations with international pharmaceutical companies to provide low-cost ARVs to the region e.g. Trinidad, CARICOM/PANCAP. – Existence of regional generic drugs e.g. In Guyana at USD 400.00 per annum | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The distribution system for making the drugs available to end users is not yet well established. Consequently, supplies can be unreliable and even when they are available they are too expensive for many PLWHA. – The region suffers from inadequate services to PLWHA. These services include laboratory facilities, counseling and medical services. |

| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
|--|---|
| Suppliers (cont'd) | Suppliers (cont'd) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="820 344 1419 436">– Quality and proper delivery management for regionally produced generic drugs need to be assured <li data-bbox="820 447 1419 520">– Trade agreements may prevent purchase of less expensive generic drugs |
| Costs | Costs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="198 590 802 646">– Costs are being shared by regional and international strategic partners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="820 590 1419 751">– High industry costs associated with developing and maintaining a successful anti-HIV/AIDS Programme – laboratories, technical and non-technical personnel, research and development. <li data-bbox="820 762 1419 856">– Costs that are currently borne by strategic partners are not guaranteed in the long term. |

6.0 STRATEGIC CHOICE

To respond proactively to the particularities of its external and internal environments, which have been characterized by the Environmental Analysis as challenging yet opportunistic, CRN+ will 'roll out' its strategic activity in three distinct phases:

- ◆ 2003 – 2004: Stabilization, with Internal Growth
- ◆ 2005 – 2006: Expansion
- ◆ 2007: Consolidation

6.1 2003 – 2004: Stabilization, with Internal Growth

6.1.1 Stabilization

In the short term (2003 – 2004) CRN+ will pursue strategies aimed at stabilization, with some areas of internal growth.

Stabilization aims at building a solid foundation (or launching pad) for CRN+. In this phase the organization will work at improving its core services of *advocacy, capacity building and programme management* as it is important at this juncture that the present momentum and other advances are not lost as a result of this transition.

Additionally, the Interim Board, established in October 2002 will have the critical task of leading *the development of an organizational structure and revising the Constitution and Charter for the network by October 2003*.

Indeed, it is important to stabilize the organization because of the number of changes that implementation of the Strategic Plans will bring. These include changes in decision-making and reporting relationships, membership and the resource base. Ultimately, therefore it is important to manage the change process, even from the short term, so as to ensure that 'buy-in' and enthusiasm; for implementation to remain high among members and partners; and to ensure that the organization remains firmly focused on achieving its vision, mission and objectives over the long term.

6.1.2 Internal Growth

Alongside stabilizing CRN+, the organization must simultaneously engage in growth and development activities in a number of critical areas including:

1. Building the capability of the Board, Working Groups and Secretariat to meet the expanded demands of members and partners,
2. Developing efficient systems³¹ within the Secretariat to support improved delivery of the core services of CRN+ - advocacy, capacity building and programme management
3. Human resource mobilization aimed at supporting the development of national networks in countries where these do not exist
4. Identifying and accessing sustainable sources of funds for the current and expanded programme of activities³²

6.2 2005 – 2006: Expansion

The period of consolidation and internal growth will give way to a period of expansion in the medium term (2005 – 2006). A prominent feature of this planning horizon will be the deepening and widening of the short-term activities and the inclusion of others:

1. Enhanced Advocacy/representation – in national, regional and international fora
2. Development of additional National Networks
3. Building capacity among the wider (general) membership of CRN+
4. Technical Support – receiving from and providing support to strategic partners and the wider communities in the region and internationally
5. Development of information management and dissemination services including a research agenda for CRN+ in collaboration with partners

6.3 2007: Consolidation

The dynamic period of expansion between 2005 and 2006 must inevitably give way to a much slower but still vibrant phase of consolidation in which the gains made in the previous planning phases will be evaluated with a view to identifying key issues for the next planning period and secure a mandate for a new way forward.

³¹ Administration, financial, technological, communication/public relations, human resources etc.

³² The identification and acquisition of sustainable sources of funding is a prerequisite to the fulfillment of the remainder of the plan. Without this, the implementation process will stall. However, the success of this initiative will depend on CRN+'s ability to build effective partnership through networking as well as enhancing the capability to efficiently manage funds and comply with the requirements of funders.

7.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

7.1 Critical Success Factors for Achieving the CRN+'s Vision and Mission

Ultimately, the strategies employed by this Strategic Plan are to positively impact the lives of PLWHA (in collaboration with partners). The environmental analyses have highlighted several key issues which CRN+ must address in order to realize its vision, mission and purpose in the long term. These are:

1. **Continuous improvement of the delivery of core services** – advocacy, capacity building and programme management – for the benefit of current and potential members and PLWHA in general.
2. **Building awareness (visibility) of CRN+ and the national networks** (membership) and their role in addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Caribbean in order to: a) mobilize PLWHA across the region to join the network; b) promote the protection of the rights of PLWHA and c) build deeper, sustainable partnerships, particularly at the governmental level.
3. **The design and implementation of an appropriate³³ organizational structure and the revision of the Constitution and Charter of the organization** (in keeping with the Vision) to address the relationship and roles and responsibilities of CRN+ to the national networks/membership and vice versa; the options for the leadership and management structures (at both the regional and national level) and the composition and function of the Secretariat.
4. **Human resource development and mobilization** to affect the empowerment of PLWHA and the full participation of PLWHA (members) in the regional and national effort to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and strategies for attracting and effectively utilizing human resource of CRN+, firstly PLWHA but also non-PLWHA, in the work of CRN+.
5. **Development of operating systems** (administration, communication, HR, IT, finance etc.) **and procedures which support the delivery of high quality services** to CRN+'s stakeholders taking into account that the organization is regional in scope, meeting the needs of PLWHA across physical, political and language borders and as such there must be compatibility between the regional

³³ i.e. Able to respond effectively to the internal and external demands of the organization

machinery and the national machinery (national networks). Moreover the systems must allow CRN+ to operate cost effectively. The technology 'platform', for example, will be critical as this will be the basis for timely communication with membership and partners across the region, communicating cost effectively among board members and management groups, advocacy and promotional activities (via CRN+'s website), CRN+'s human resource information system (HRIS), proper project and financial management and so on.

- 6. Mobilizing funding resources and prudent financial management** are also of great importance to CRN+. The organization current dependence for funding on external agencies poses both advantages and challenges to the accomplishment of organizational objectives. Nevertheless, there is the opportunity to access newer, non-traditional sources including introducing fees for CRN+'s services to partners.

7.2 The Strategic Priorities

7.2.1 Short Term: 2003 - 2004

The focus of the organization between 2003 and 2004 will be a judicious implementation of the key priorities³⁴. The priority areas of activity of CRN+ during the planning period 2003 to 2004 are:

1. Developing the Organizational Structure and Revising the Constitution and Charter
2. Developing a multiple dimensional³⁵ advocacy programme to increase demands for improved access to quality, affordable care and treatment of PLWHA, reducing stigma and discrimination against PLWHA (especially among health care workers), healthy practices among PLWHA and the involvement of PLWHA in Caribbean development
3. Provide support for PLWHA viz:
 - Information/referral to providers³⁶ of quality care, treatment, counseling, legal services, support facilities (e.g. safe houses, children's homes etc.)
 - Peer Counseling/Peer Support within CRN+

³⁴ The 2-Year Action Plan 2002-2004 will detail the specific strategies and activities that will be employed in this phase of activity.

³⁵ Participation in meetings, conference; CRN+ website; visibility on regional radio, television and newspaper, cabinet/government briefings with partners etc.

³⁶ As far as possible tied to CRN+ partners' programmes

4. Providing efficient, high quality programme management services for existing and proposed projects.
5. Promoting CRN+ through multiple media to build a positive image of the organization and awareness of its role, successes, goals and objectives with regard to the improvement of the quality of life of Caribbean PLWHA
6. Building the capacity of the Board members, Secretariat staff and working groups to be able to manage the Network and its programmes³⁷ to the benefit and satisfaction of stakeholders
7. Institutional strengthening of the Regional Secretariat in terms of staff, systems, processes and procedures for efficient management and service delivery and to build a model for the management of the national networks
8. Supporting the sustainable development of additional national networks across the Caribbean region.
9. Identification of sources of sustainable funding and introduction of a financial management system taking onto account:
 - a) Identifying new (non-traditional) sources of funds;
 - b) Revenue earning from services rendered by CRN+
 - c) Developing a financial system to manage relatively large sums of money, control of funds across several countries simultaneously and manage funds from multiple projects simultaneously
10. Strengthening relationships with existing partners/funders and develop new mutually beneficial associations.
11. Building and sustaining 'buy-in' and commitment to the implementation of the strategic plan.

7.2.2 Medium Term: 2005 - 2006

The priority areas of activity of CRN+ during the medium term planning horizon, 2005 to 2006, are:

1. Expansion of the Advocacy Programme in order to:
 - a) Identify, mobilize and train PLWHA to become informed advocates in their own countries and regionally and internationally on of behalf of CRN+
 - b) Mobilize PLWHA and non-PLWHA 'champions' in spheres of influence (regionally)

³⁷ Including programmes for which CRN+ is (or proposed to be) the implementation agency e.g. SIRHASC, Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework, UNDP PAF etc.

- c) Ensure that the needs of PLWHA are presented at the highest levels of Government³⁸
 - d) To influence other regional institutions in particular, the justice system and media
- 2. Expansion of CRN+ to the Wider Caribbean by supporting the growth and development of national networks or some form of representation in all Caribbean territories. This priority is consistent with the vision of CRN+ to be the authentic voice of PLWHA in the Caribbean.
- 3. Institutional strengthening of the national networks for proper administration and delivery of services to members
- 4. Strengthening the technical capability and contribution of CRN+ in the regional response to HIV/AIDS by assessing³⁹ and tapping the human resource among the membership and non-PLWHA 'friends of CRN+' and training and development of members in specific technical areas. CRN+ must be perceived by partners, governments and citizens as technical resource (of first choice).
- 5. Capacity Building among wider membership in a number of key areas: advocacy skills, training, marketing, planning and development, leadership, project and programme management, event management etc.
- 6. Developing and implementing an Information Management & Dissemination Strategy aimed at having CRN+ become a source of high quality information on all matters related to HIV/AIDS (but with special emphasis on the issues concerning PLWHA)
- 7. Prudent Financial Management following from the implementation of the financial management system in the short term (2003 – 2004)

7.2.2 Long Term: 2005 - 2007

The Year 2007 will end with a major strategic planning session that will be designed to identify the strategies that would take CRN+ into the second decade of the twenty first century. In this regard, the priority areas of activity for CRN+ in the long term (2007) will be:

- 1. Developing a Research Agenda for CRN+ in conjunction with its partners especially with regard to evaluating the impact of policies and programmes targeting PLWHA initiated at national and regional levels in the 'scaled up' response to the epidemic.
- 2. A comprehensive Evaluation exercise viz:

³⁸ Where possible in conjunction with partners e.g. CARICOM at Heads of Government or CHOSOD meetings

³⁹ This includes the development of a Human Resource Information System for CRN+ (HRIS)

- a) **An Environmental Audit** – which involves analysis of the major macro- and micro-environmental forces impacting on the environment
- b) **A Strategic Audit** – which focuses on a review of the organization’s objectives and activities with a view to determining how well suited they are to the current and forecasted in the environmental audit
- c) **An Organizational Audit** – to determine the structural capability of CRN+ to determine whether it could sustain the projected level of activity
- d) **A Systems Audit** – which reviews the quality of CRN+’s systems for planning, analysis, implementation and control
- e) **A Productivity Audit** –which looks at the cost effectiveness of different aspect of CRN+’s activities as well as their profitability
- f) **A Functions Audit** – which is a detailed examination of the different functional areas of the organization.

The Board will decide the number and extent of audits to be undertaken.

8.0 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | STRATEGY |
|--|--|-----------------|
| SHORT TERM 2003 – 2004 | | |
| <i>To develop the Organizational Structure and Revise the Constitution and Charter</i> | 1. Produce revised CRN+ Constitution and Charter by June 2003 | Legal Framework |
| <i>Developing a multiple dimensional advocacy programme</i> | 1. By September 2003, document CRN+'s position on PLWHA issues ⁴⁰ for replication to various media (website, publication, SOPs for members, presentations etc.) | Advocacy |
| | 2. Establish Advocacy Management ⁴¹ group of the Board at the AGM 2003. | Advocacy |
| | 3. By June 2004, CRN+ advocacy campaign translated to CRN+ website, regional radio, television, CRN+ newsletter, partners publications and newspapers. | Advocacy |
| | 4. Establish 3 new partnerships each year in 2003 and 2004 | Advocacy |
| | 5. Participate fully in CARICOM/CIDA project to develop a legal/ethical framework on HIV/AIDS for the Caribbean to ensure that the views of PLWHA are properly addressed | Advocacy |

⁴⁰ E.g. reducing stigma and discrimination within the healthcare system, the workplace and society at large; access to quality care and treatment; reducing the cost of care and treatment; legislative reform to protect the rights of PLWHA; the establishment of support systems for PLWHA such as safe houses, etc

⁴¹ This activity is dependent on the management structure developed by CRN+ in the upcoming exercise to revise the Constitution and Charter and develop an appropriate structure for the organization.

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | STRATEGY |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Provide support for PLWHA</i> | 1. By December 2003, develop a base PLWHA 'toolkit' outlining tips for accessing quality care and support | Information Management & Dissemination |
| | 2. 'Toolkit' containing information on providers of care, treatment and support services for PLWHA to be replicated for each member country by September 2004 | Information Management & Dissemination |
| | 3. Establish a peer support/peer counseling programme among CRN+ members by March 2004 | Human Resource Development |
| <i>Provide efficient, high quality programme management services</i> | 1. Efficient, high quality, timely, cost effective implementation of current projects – SIRHASC – RODI | Programme Management |
| | 2. Approval and then efficient, high quality, timely, cost effective implementation of proposed projects – CDC-GAP – UNDP-PAF – World Bank – CRN+/NAPWA Twinning Project | Programme Management |
| | 3. Establish protocols for programme management by June 2004 | Programme Management |
| <i>Building a positive image of CRN+ and awareness of its role, successes, goals and objectives and services</i> | 1. Establish CRN+ website with links to those of strategic partners by September 2003. | Information Management & Dissemination |
| | 2. Develop Marketing/Communications/PR Plan by September 2003 | Marketing/Communication/PR |

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | STRATEGY |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| <i>Building a positive image of CRN+ and awareness of its role, successes, goals and objectives and services (cont'd)</i> | 3. Institute satisfaction survey for members and partners by March 2004 | Marketing/Communication/PR |
| | 4. Build relationship with regional media: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Host media breakfast at a CARICOM/CHOSOD meeting in 2003 (or other high profile regional meeting/conference held by a partner of CRN+) ! Establish at least one (1) contact in the media in every member country by December 2004 | Marketing/Communication/PR |
| <i>Building the capacity of the Board members, Secretariat staff and working groups</i> | 1. Establish an HR/Training Management group of the Board at the AGM 2003 | Human Resource Development |
| | 2. Establish an Orientation Programme for Board members, working group members and Secretariat staff by AGM 2003. | Human Resource Development |
| | 3. By September 2003, a Training Plan is developed for Board (elected at AGM 2003), Working Groups and Secretariat Staff. | Human Resource Development |
| | 4. Implementation of Training Plan for Board, Working Groups and Secretariat Staff between AGM 2003 – September 2004. | Human Resource Development |

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | STRATEGY |
|--|--|----------------------------|
| <i>Institutional strengthening of the Regional Secretariat</i> | 1. By December 2003, CRN+ Secretariat functioning effectively and staffed by ⁴² : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! A Regional Coordinator ! Territorial Coordinators⁴³, ! A Communication Officer⁴⁴, ! An HR/OD/Change Management Specialist⁴⁵ ! A Financial Officer, ! An I.T. Officer ! An Administrative Assistant | Organizational Development |
| | 2. Conduct an assessment of the spatial requirements for the Secretariat (based on function) and make recommendations for the size and layout of the existing/new office by December 2003. | Organizational Development |
| | 3. Develop an IT Support Plan for CRN+ by December 2003. | Technological Development |
| | 4. By June 2004, all administrative/operational policies, processes and procedures (HR, IT, reporting, financial management, job descriptions etc.) for the Secretariat are detailed and published in standard operating procedures (SOP) manual (electronic). | Organizational Development |
| <i>Supporting the sustainable development of additional national networks across the Caribbean</i> | 1. Establish two full service national networks with effectively functioning Boards each year in 2003 and 2004 | Organizational Development |

⁴² These persons should have change management competencies

⁴³ Not necessarily at the head office

⁴⁴ This officer should be multilingual.

⁴⁵ Not regular staff, retained by the organization for specific functions

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | STRATEGY |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Identification of sources of sustainable funding and introduction of a financial management system</i> | 1. To secure 100% of funds needed from external and internal sources between 2003 and 2007 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 100% of funding for 2003 from partners – CRN will contribute at least 10% of funding needed through fund raising and revenue generation in 2004 – CRN will contribute at least 30% of funding needed through fund raising and revenue generation by 2007 <i>(see provisional budget for 2003/4 in Section 11.0)</i> | Funding Mobilization & Financial Management |
| | 2. Establish financial management system for CRN+ by September 2003 (including a fee structure for CRN+ services) | Funding Mobilization & Financial Management |
| | 3. Design and implement an annual fundraising event in 2004 | Funding Mobilization & Financial Management |
| | 4. Establish the “Friends of CRN+” in 2004 | Funding Mobilization & Financial Management |
| | 5. Establish PLWHA Speaker’s Bureau/Writer’s Circle by March 2004 | Funding Mobilization & Financial Management |
| | 6. Host two (2) donor breakfasts in 2004 to update partners on existing programmes, advise on new programmes in need of support and secure at least 4 new funding partners in 2004 | Funding Mobilization & Financial Management |

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | STRATEGY |
|--|--|----------------------------|
| <i>Strengthening relationships with existing partners/funders and develop new mutually beneficial associations</i> | 1. Establish a database of partners and potential partners by September 2003 | Marketing/Communication/PR |
| | 2. Host an annual 'thank you' event for partners beginning in 2003 | Marketing/Communication/PR |
| <i>Building and sustaining 'buy-in' and commitment to the implementation of the strategic plan</i> | 1. By September 2003, develop a Change Management Plan to support implementation of the Strategic Plan. | Change Management |
| MEDIUM TERM: 2005 – 2006 | | |
| <i>Expansion of the Advocacy Programme</i> | 1. By March 2005, implement a training intervention (video based) to develop advocacy skills among the wider membership. | Human Resources Management |
| | 2. By September 2005, develop a modular plan that will assist the national networks (or member groups) to implement the CRN+ advocacy programme in their own countries and spheres of influence | Advocacy |
| | 3. Conduct at least one formal presentation per month in 2005 and 2006 to national Governments, regional institutions, business sector or other regional or international fora on issues affecting Caribbean PLWHA | Advocacy |
| | 4. Support the acceptance of the legal/ethical framework developed through the CARICOM/CIDA initiative by regional Governments | Advocacy |

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | STRATEGY |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| <i>Expansion of CRN+ to the Wider Caribbean</i> | 1. Establish 5 fully functioning national networks each year between 2005 and 2006. | Organizational Development |
| | 2. Establish a presence in each Caribbean country by December 2007 | Organizational Development |
| <i>Institutional strengthening of the national networks</i> | 1. Establish Internet access for all national networks by December 2004 | Organizational Development |
| | 2. Assist 5 networks each year in 2005 and 2006 to develop their own marketing/communication, IT, HR, OD and Fund raising plans | Organizational Development |
| <i>Strengthening the technical capability and contribution of CRN+</i> | 1. Develop a Human Resource Information System (HRIS) for CRN+ by June 2004 (incorporating both PLWHA and non-PLWHA resources) | Human Resources Management |
| | 2. Develop criteria for incorporating different categories of non-PLWHA members into CRN+ by December 2004 | Human Resources Management |

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | STRATEGY |
|---|--|----------------------------|
| <i>Capacity Building among wider membership</i> | 1. By December 2004, a Training Plan is developed for members in conjunction with the national networks/country representatives (including training of trainers) | Human Resources Management |
| | 2. Develop a cost effective mechanism(s) to deliver training to members across the network by December 2004 | Human Resources Management |
| | 3. By June 2006, a cadre of trainers has been developed in CRN+ in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ! Advocacy ! Networking ! Counseling ! Management ! Leadership ! Communication ! Finance ! Mobilization ! Peer Education | Human Resources Management |

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | STRATEGY |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Developing and implementing an Information Management & Dissemination Strategy</i> | 1. By December 2004, develop a media plan to include a weekly newspaper column and weekly 30 minute radio presentation (to be implemented by March 2005) | Information Management & Dissemination Strategy |
| | 2. Establish CRN+ Newsletter by March 2005 | Information Management & Dissemination Strategy |
| | 3. Documentation of best practices across network by March 2005 | Information Management & Dissemination Strategy |
| <i>Prudent Financial Management</i> | 1. Establish SOPs and financial management policies and procedures for CRN+ and national networks by September 2004. | Organizational Development |
| | 2. Begin annual independent audit of CRN+ financial records in 2004. | Funding Mobilizing & Financial Management |
| LONG TERM: 2007 | | |
| <i>Developing a Research Agenda for CRN+</i> | 1. Conduct training for a cadre of members in research skills in 2006 | Information Management & Dissemination Strategy |
| | 2. Develop a research agenda for CRN+ (in conjunction with partners) by March 2007 | Information Management & Dissemination Strategy |
| <i>Evaluation/Audit</i> | 1. Conduct organizational evaluation/audits through September – December 2007 | Organizational Development |
| | 2. Begin new strategic Planning exercises in January 2008 | Organizational Development |

9.0 STRATEGIES

To meet its priorities over the planning period CRN+'s strategic activities will be derived from six (6) 'core' strategies and five (5) 'enabling' strategies.

The six core strategies are focus on delivering high quality services to its members and partners over the next five years. They are:

7. Advocacy (Lobbying, Representation) Strategy
8. Programme Management Strategy
9. Human Resource Development Strategy
10. Organizational Development Strategy
11. Funding Mobilization & Financial Management Strategy
12. Information Management & Dissemination Strategy

The enabling strategies are recommended to, in collaboration with the core strategy of Organizational Development, *prepare and equip* CRN+ to improve the quality and range of services to stakeholders. These strategies are:

6. Change Management Strategy
7. Marketing, Communications & Public Relations Strategy
8. Legal Framework of the Organization
9. Technological Development Strategy
10. Technical Support

9.1 The Core Strategies

9.1.1 Advocacy/Lobbying (Representation) Strategy

Advocacy (Representation) is a core service of CRN+ to its members. Moreover, by providing representation for PLWHA by PLWHA it is the most unique and therefore 'competitive' services from the network. In the next five years, Advocacy will remain at the heart of the range of services of CRN+ and will be conducted on three platforms – national, regional and international.

In the short term (2003 – 2004) an Advocacy Programme will be developed (and implemented) with some distinct elements:

- a) Establishing an Advocacy Management Working Group
- b) Focus on PLWHA issues viz: reducing stigma and discrimination within the healthcare system, the workplace and society at large; access to quality care and treatment; reducing the cost of care and treatment, especially ARVs; legislative reform to protect the rights of PLWHA; the establishment of support systems for PLWHA such as safe houses, etc
- c) Expanding the media for advocacy to include use of CRN+'s website and regional radio, television and newspapers
- d) Flexibility in the design to allow for the inclusion of additional issues which may become critical
- e) Deepening of existing partnerships and the development of new partnerships especially with other PLWHA groups internationally

In the medium to long term (2005 – 2007), the Advocacy Programme will be expanded to include:

- a) The development of a modular plan that will assist the national networks (or member groups) to implement the advocacy programme in their own countries and spheres of influence (community, workplace, church, nationally)
- b) Training to develop advocacy skills among the wider membership
- c) Mobilizing PLWHA and non-PLWHA in regional spheres of influence
- d) Representation at national, regional and international fora of the highest levels especially in Government, the legal sector and business.
- e) Impacting policy and legislative development and reform e.g. through the CARICOM project developing a legal/ethical framework for HIV/AIDS

9.1.2 Programme Management Strategy

Programme Management is another core service of CRN+. This strategy will focus on improving project and programme management of existing projects such as SIRHASC and RODI and developing work planning systems and protocols to ensure that:

- a) Programmes are properly implemented, in a timely fashion with cost efficiency
- b) That tangible benefits accrue to CRN+ members, PLWHA
- c) Projects meet set criteria established by CRN+

- d) The quality of programme management builds to image of CRN+

9.1.3 Human Resource Development Strategy

In the next five years, CRN+ will continue to mobilize PLWHA through its national networks. Utilizing the Secretariat as the facilitator, CRN+ will work with the national networks to first identify and then increase membership and develop strategies to sustain commitment.

Recognizing that the services of CRN+ are to empower PLWHA, the Human Resources Development Strategy in the short term (2003 – 2004) will focus on building the capacity of the leadership and the Secretary so that these groups can deliver improved services to the wider membership. Strategic activities in the short term will also include:

- a) Establishing an HR/Training Management Working Group
- b) Developing an HR policy that will govern how human resources⁴⁶ will be recruited, developed, rewarded and remunerated for ‘serving’ in the organization (e.g. remuneration for Board Members, Management group members etc.)
- c) Building a Human Resource Information System (HRIS) to track the wealth of skills within CRN+ and its partners, to be able to tap these skills as required

Another key element of the HR Strategy in the short term will be the development of a peer counseling/peer support programme among CRN+ members. This initiative will be especially useful for new members of the Network.

In the medium term (2005 – 2006) The Human Resource Development Strategy will involve:

- a) Capacity Building of the wider membership of CRN+ in a number of key skills areas such as advocacy, making presentations and public speaking, training, marketing, planning and development, leadership, project and programme management, event management etc.
- b) Developing a mechanism for cost effective training/capacity building activities to impact PLWHA/members in several countries across the region e.g. Internet based programmes, video training materials and/or special programmes in partnership with UWI Distance Education.

⁴⁶ PLWHA (members) and non-PLWHA in the long term

9.1.3.1 Key Issues

Many complex, sensitive issues revolve around the incorporation of non-PLWHA members into CRN+ and the national networks. Caribbean societies are by nature relatively small. This suggests that issues of discretion, sensitivity and confidentiality are paramount. It is therefore a fairly risky proposition for CRN+ to engage non-PLWHA within its unit. It is however with a full awareness of the risks posed to both the individual and the organization that CRN+ has decided to proceed in this direction.

This position is born of the conviction that the potential risks to which members and the organization itself are exposed must be subordinated to the need of enlisting a wide cross-section of Caribbean people in the fight against HIV/AIDS and the stigma and discrimination that lie in its wake. In any event the organization must face the reality that, due to illness, PLWHA are not always able to contribute as meaningfully as they would like.

Further, CRN+ recognizes that there are many individuals and organizations (with many motivations) that are willing to contribute positively to improving the lives PLWHA. The organization recognizes this important stake-holding group and is willing to create the opportunities for them to make their contributions. Notwithstanding CRN+ will do all in its power, and in fact reserves the right, to protect the interests of PLWHA and the organization from any breaches of trust from within or without.

9.1.4 Organizational Development Strategy

The Regional Secretariat of CRN+ is the heartbeat of the organization because it is the center from which all the decisions of the Board are implemented. The effective functioning of the Secretariat is critical to the delivery of services to CRN+'s members and partners and also for implementation of any strategy that emerges from this Strategic Plan. The Secretariat assumes even greater importance as a key coordinating unit within a network type of organizational structure and moreover, one which operates across several countries. Indeed, the fact that members are geographically dispersed and face diverse local conditions provides further basis for the strengthening of the Regional Secretariat to spearhead the strategic implementation process. The strengthening of the Secretariat will take many forms including increased staffing, physical facilities expansion and the establishment of formal policies, processes and procedures.

9.1.4.1 Increased Staffing Levels

To provide range and quality of services that CRN+ has set itself over planning period as well as other tasks associated with implementation of the Strategic Plan necessitates

an increase in the staffing levels of the Regional Secretariat. In the short term (2003 – 2004) staffing will be increased to include the following positions.

1. **Finance/Accounting Specialist** – to be concerned with the sourcing and application of funds and developing a financial system to meet the special needs of CRN+.
2. **Marketing/Public Relations Communications Specialist** – to coordinate the development and implementation of a communication strategy that will support advocacy, building awareness of CRN+, communication to members, networking and partnering etc.
3. **Change Management/Human Resource Specialist⁴⁷** – to coordinate the development of a training plan for CRN+, a human resource policy, HRIS and other activities to ensure proper planning for, and the development and management of, the human resource of CRN+. However, this officer will also be responsible for assisting the leadership to sustain commitment to implementation of the Strategic Plan among the membership and instituting programmes which will prepare stakeholders at each stage of the transformation process.
4. **Information Technology Specialist** – to develop and implement a technology plan for CRN+ which will be the basis of efficient, cost effective administration and operation of the Network (both at regional and national levels)
5. **Territorial Coordinators** – for North Caribbean, Eastern Caribbean and Southern Caribbean/Continental Territories. They will be selected from among the membership to assist in mobilizing PLWHA in their territories, assisting with development of national networks, information dissemination in their territories and coordination of member events in their regions. These coordinators will be located in their own countries and will be employed as part time staff.

9.1.4.2 Physical Facilities Expansion

The physical facilities of CRN+ require expansion so as to provide accommodation commensurate with its more extensive role and to promote a higher level of privacy, particularly for members visiting from national networks. It is also important to have adequate meeting/conference facilities particularly when hosting overseas visitors and making presentations to, or conducting negotiations with, existing and potential strategic partners. The acquisition of such facilities will also have the impact of reducing the costs associated with renting hotel and meeting facilities. The new facility

⁴⁷ The HR Specialist will be retained by CRN+, not full time, regular staff

will perform the symbolic role of being the “home” or “headquarters” of the national networks where they can come for advice or assistance with local issues.

9.1.4.3 Formalization of Policies, Processes and Procedures

The formalization of policies, processes and procedures is important so as to promote efficiency within the Secretariat. These relate not only to the internal functioning of the Secretariat (decision-making, human resource/industrial relations, etc.) but also its relationship with its national networks (reporting, dissemination of information, areas of autonomy, etc.), existing and potential strategic partners (areas of collaboration, joint initiatives, etc.) and the general public. It is anticipated that some of these issues would be resolved when the constitution, organizational structure and charter are developed and implemented.

In addition, as policies, processes and procedures becomes formalized these can be transferred to the national network as a model for their own Secretariat operations.

9.1.4.4 Establishment of Effectively Managed National Networks

Over the planning period CRN+ will support the development of national networks in each member country with the intention of making them as self sufficient as possible. The effort will be intensified in the medium and long term (2005 – 2007). The Regional Secretariat will spearhead the effort to conduct leadership, advocacy, management, counseling, communications and personal development training to prepare the leadership and members at the national level to take up their roles and responsibilities⁴⁸.

9.1.4.5 Regional Board Development

The capacity of Regional Board is critical because of the pivotal role they will be expected to play in the future of CRN+ and its members and partners. Their deliberations especially as it relates to policy direction, strategic partnerships and service delivery will impact directly to PLWHA in the region and by extension to realizing the Vision of CRN+. Consequently, over the planning period, the Board⁴⁹ will be the target of many training initiatives including management of NGOs, leadership, language skills, diversity skills management, law and personal development.

⁴⁸ These roles and responsibilities are likely to be detailed in the exercise to revise the Constitution and Charter for CRN+

⁴⁹ As an Interim Board is currently in place, much of training identified will be fully initiated upon selected of the new Board at the next AGM in 2003.

9.1.5 Funding Mobilization & Financial Management Strategy

9.1.5.1 Funding Mobilization

Funding mobilization is critical to achieving the aspiration of CRN+ and its members. For the organization to continue to provide services to PLWHA, grow and expand throughout the Caribbean will take significant sums of money.

At present, CRN+ is wholly dependent on its partners, largely through projects, to meet its administrative and operating costs. As a result, in the short term (2003 – 2004), the Financial Strategy will focus on identifying new source of funds for CRN+ and develop a schema where the organization is not challenged by necessarily having to ‘projectize’ services to members, human resources needs and core costs⁵⁰.

A key aspect of attracting new sources of funds will be tied to advocacy and marketing/communication strategies, where by additional networking and building awareness of CRN+ and its role and services, the organization should be able to attract new partners. One goal in this regard, is to encourage Caribbean Governments to partner with CRN+. As a result, advocacy at the national level and at the regional level, especially through existing partners, becomes critical.

However, it should also be recognized that attracting new sources of funds is also dependent on the how well CRN+ delivers on current projects and partner arrangements. As such, improving the quality of programme management services will be in the best interest of the organization.

The Financial Strategy will include:

- a) Identifying new partners in all sectors – especially Governments and the business sector
- b) Identifying revenue streams for CRN+ services⁵¹ such as programme management, event management, membership fees/network fees, Speaker’s Bureau, Writer’s Circle etc.
- c) High-impact fund raising events (e.g. SERVOL’s⁵² Poor Man’s Dinner)
- d) Establishing a “Friends of CRN+” Programme⁵³ (or similar programme) which will allow interested parties to bestow gifts to the organization

⁵⁰ Indeed these costs (administrative) are often not met by project funds

⁵¹ This will be developed over the planning period as CRN+ seeks to become less dependent on external funding

⁵² SERVOL is a non-profit organization providing programmes and services for poverty eradication and youth development.

⁵³ Legal authorization will be required

9.1.5.2 Financial Management

Financial Management will be critical in the next five years, especially as CRN+ envisages that it will be responsible for managing very large sums of money in order to facilitate partners programmes (such as the CARICOM Strategic Framework and the Global Fund Against HIV/AIDS) provide core services and manage the Network.

At the heart of prudent financial management will be a financial system (designed and implemented by the Financial Officer in the short term) which takes into consideration

- a) The geographic spread of the network
- b) Need to manage several projects simultaneously, possibly across several countries
- c) Project based accounting
- d) Varying compliance arrangements among partners
- e) The need for cost effectiveness and cost control
- f) Compatibility of the system with the national networks
- g) Management of large sums of money

The Financial Management Strategy will also be closely linked to the HR Strategy, which will provide financial management training for the Board and Secretariat (in the short term) and wider membership (in the medium term) to ensure that funds are handled judiciously and therefore will be able to produce maximum benefit to PLWHA.

9.1.5.3 Philosophy

CRN+ will maintain a philosophy of complete transparency and adherence to strong business ethics in relation to its financial affairs. The application of strict finance and accounting principles to the business of CRN+ will be decisive in establishing and maintaining confidence in the process and the ability of the organization to sustain its transformation thrust. The preparation of annual financial statements represents the medium through which stakeholders can evaluate the performance of the Board and Secretariat in respect of the sources and application of the funds at their disposal.

9.1.6 Information Management & Dissemination

Over the planning period, CRN+ will develop its capacity for management and dissemination of information on HIV/AIDS. As a network of PLWHA in the Caribbean region, CRN+ is in a unique position to provide timely, accurate information on a number of issues impacting its members that is required by national, regional and

international governments, agencies, researchers, medical personnel and interested observers. Moreover, CRN+ needs information for its own planning and decision-making processes to ensure that its programmes and services are meeting the needs of PLWHA.

In the short term (2003 – 2004), the Information Management & Dissemination Strategy will focus on constructing a website for CRN+ with content to include:

- a) Information about CRN+ – vision, mission, services/programmes and contact information
- b) Information for PLWHA – access to quality care, support services available to in their countries, strategies for living with HIV/AIDS etc.
- c) Information on CRN+'s advocacy issues – eliminating stigma and discrimination, GIPA, improving access to care and treatment etc.
- d) Information on HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean and the regional/national effort to eradicate the pandemic including the progress of testing and research, negotiations for more affordable drugs and other initiatives
- e) Links to partners websites

In addition, a key short term activity will be providing critical information in the form of a 'toolkit' for PLWHA that will outline how they can access quality care, treatment and support services along with other important information to help them protect themselves and their loved ones.

In the medium term (2005 – 2006), Strategy will focus on expanding the media for information dissemination. Firstly, the website content will be expanded to include:

- a) Best practice of PLWHA targeted programmes/interventions across the Caribbean
- b) PLWHA statistics
- c) Information on prevention

Secondly, other feasible media for information dissemination will be explored such as:

- A newsletter (print and electronic)
- A speaker's bureau
- Articles in partners' publications
- Weekly column in regional newspapers⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Through partnering with regional/national media associations

In the long term (2007) the Information Management and Dissemination Strategy will also include developing a research agenda and the capacity for research within CRN+ (such as skills in data collection, survey design and administration and developing databases to support analysis). However, these research activities will be limited to 1) supporting research/evaluation exercises by partners, 2) testing the impact of services/programmes delivered by CRN+ and 3) developing a database to key statistics on PLWHA in the Caribbean.

9.2 The Enabling Strategies

9.2.1 Change Management Strategy

The Change Management Strategy will be key to sustaining the commitment of the all CRN+'s stakeholders during the 'long march' of the implementation of the Strategic Plan activities to attaining the vision. This process has many challenges, but the techniques for managing change offer the best solution for achieving desired future outcomes.

The Change Management Strategy will focus on the development of a Change Management Plan in the short term (2003 – 2004) to support the implementation process which will focus on:

- Maintaining the sense of urgency for organizational transformation over the planning period
- Identify who from Board and/or membership can and would become the change 'champions'
- Attaining 'Quick Wins' as the implementation of the Strategic Plan begins
- Maintaining consistent communication about the implementation process to ensure the on-going involvement of all the actors involved in the change, both within and outside the organization
- Building capacities of the human resources to respond to change along the way
- Celebrating and rewarding commitment
- Assessing the impacts and outcomes of change on the organization and its members

9.2.2 Marketing/Communication/Public Relations Strategy

The marketing/communication function supports CRN+'s core service of Advocacy/Representation. A main goal of the Marketing/Communication and PR Strategy therefore over the planning period would be to widen the reach and impact of advocacy.

However, the marketing/communication/PR strategy will be much broader in scope. The Strategy will support all the Core Strategies and therefore include activities such as developing networking strategies for sustaining existing partnership and developing new ones; creating, managing and implementing funding-raising events; image building for the organization; maintaining consistent communication and flow of information across the network and to partners and testing satisfaction with the services of CRN+ among members and partners.

As a result, in the short term (2003 – 2004), the Strategy will focus on the development of a Marketing/Communication/PR Plan which when effected (2004 – 2007) will address the diverse, strategic needs of CRN+ as outlined above.

An obvious outcome of the implementation of this Strategy is greater visibility of CRN+ and its members. As a result, there is a need to prepare the membership of CRN+ to accept some risk⁵⁵ in becoming more visible, but which is necessary to make the important contacts with its external stakeholders, in particular, the general public, without which progress is impossible.

9.2.3 The Legal Framework for CRN+

This Strategy, to be implemented in the short-term (2003), is primarily concerned with the development of the Constitution and Charter that will govern the legal status of CRN+ and also with determining the most appropriate structure for the organization in keeping with the vision and current and prescribed functions of the organization.

This activity is critical for defining the relationships among the CRN+ Board, Secretariat, the National Networks and wider membership and the roles each group will play as the organization evolves.

An efficient, well structured and organized governance system will be one of the most valuable assets for CRN+ and may be the key to ensuring that the organization is strong, cohesive and successful over time.

9.2.4 Technological Development Strategy

⁵⁵ Until stigma/discrimination are eradicated

Like the Marketing Communication/PR Strategy the Technological Development Strategy will support all the Core Strategies.

Technology will provide the basis for efficiency in the delivery of services by CRN+. Indeed, technology will be employed not only as a tool of administration but also as a tool for cost control and cost saving.

As a regional organization, CRN+ will begin to depend heavily on communications technology to maintain the flow of information across the membership. Teleconferencing for example will be used as a cheaper, yet effective, alternative to travel for meetings of the Board and working groups.

In the short-term (2003 – 2004) an IT Support Plan will be developed for CRN+ which assesses and recommends ways in which technology can improve the quality of service delivery to PLWHA by CRN+, including:

- Enhancing advocacy initiatives via CRN+ website, high-quality interactive presentations etc.
- Video/computer based training for PLWHA through the national networks (in country)
- The human resource information system (HRIS)
- Integrating operations and systems across the Network
- Tool for research – Data collection, storage, analysis
- Information management and dissemination
- Platform for the financial management system
- Platform for programme management

9.2.5 Technical Support

As CRN+ grows and begins to develop and offer additional services its functions will become more technical. The Technical Support Strategy focuses in developing a comprehensive database of technical human resources available among PLWHA (membership) and non-PLWHA, individuals and organizations that (wish to) partner with/support CRN+.

Technical support will be sought in the areas of:

- a) Advocacy – identifying relevant target audiences and delivering the appropriate message

- b) Laboratory/medical information, facilities, equipment
- c) Managerial development – finance/accounting, operations, human resource, organizational development, marketing/communications/public relations
- d) Diversity management – language skills, managing across cultures
- e) Legal – discrimination, corporate
- f) Research – techniques, data processing, analysis, interpretation
- g) Financial – accessing funding, reporting

10.0 MILESTONE PLAN 2003 -2007

| ACTIVITY | TIME IN YEARS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | 2003 | | | | 2004 | | | | 2005 | | | | 2006 | | | | 2007 | | | |
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| SHORT TERM: 2002 - 2004 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Acceptance of Strategic Plan by Board | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Internal discussion of Strategic Plan with PLWHA | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| External discussion of Strategic Plan with strategic partners | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Revise Constitution/Charter | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Establish website | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Expansion of advocacy programme | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Improvement of programme management services | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Increase in Staffing at Secretariat | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Development of IT Support Plan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Development of Marketing/ Communications/PR Plan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Development of Financial System | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Increase in national networks | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Improvement of CRN+ image | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Development and Implementation of Short-term Training Plan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Development of Change Management Plan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Development of PLWHA 'Toolkit' | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Establishment of Operational Protocols | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Establishment of database of internal and external stakeholders | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| ACTIVITY | TIME IN YEARS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|
| | 2003 | | | | 2004 | | | | 2005 | | | | 2006 | | | | 2007 | | | |
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| MEDIUM TERM: 2005 - 2006 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Expansion of CRN+ throughout the Caribbean | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Expansion of Advocacy Programme to wider membership | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Further improvement in image of CRN+ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Further improvement of programme/project management services | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Institutional Strengthening of national networks | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Training and Development for members | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LONG TERM: 2007 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Development of a Research agenda for CRN+ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Begin comprehensive evaluation of CRN+ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preparation for new strategic planning intervention | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

11.0 OPERATIONAL BUDGET 2003 - 2004

11.1 Notes to Budget

The budget for the 2 Year Operational Plan 2003 and 2004, rolling out the short-term period of the Strategic Plan 2003 – 2007, is presented on the following pages. The amounts are summarized by strategy and by year. However, the following should be noted:

2. **The projected amounts for 2003 and 2004 are under-estimated.** Several of the line items of the operational plan are to be determined (TBD) based on plans and proposals to be submitted by various officers over the period. The proposals and plans to be submitted include some significant cost items such as:
 - a) Marketing/Communications/PR and Media Plans
 - b) Training Plan for Board, Secretariat and Management Groups
 - c) The Human Resource Information System
 - d) The Financial Management System
 - e) Office Expansion Plan
 - f) Events (annual fund raiser, 'Thank you' for funders/partners)
 - g) IT Support Plan
3. Programme Management costs are omitted as these costs are directly associated with project proposals and are determined through negotiations with the funding partner. These costs are not directly affected by the additional activities of this operational plan.
4. Projected costs were determined based on existing project and operational budgets in use by CRN+. Footnotes to the line items appear in the Operational Plan.
5. Operational costs are added to provide an overall perspective of funds needed.

11.2 Budget for Core Strategies 2003 – 2004

The budget for the core strategies of the Operational Plan 2003 – 2004 is outlined in **Table 1** below.

TABLE 1: Budget of Strategies and Costs of CRN+ Operational Plan 2003 - 2004

| CORE STRATEGIES | COST (US\$) | |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| | 2003 | 2004 |
| 1. Advocacy | 10,850 | 12,350 |
| 2. Programme Management | Associated with projects | Associated with projects |
| 3. Human Resource Development | 5,900 | 8,500 |
| 4. Organizational Development | 31,540 | 31,040 |
| 5. Funding Mobilization and Financial Management | Included in advocacy, PR strategies in 2003 | 8,000 |
| 6. Information Management and Dissemination | 19,000 | 5,500 |
| <i>SUB-TOTAL</i> | <i>\$67,290⁵⁶</i> | <i>\$65,390⁵⁷</i> |

⁵⁶ Does not include costs to be determined – See notes to budget

⁵⁷ Does not include costs to be determined – See notes to budget

11.3 Budget for Enabling Strategies 2003 - 2004

The budget for the enabling strategies of the Operational Plan 2003 – 2004 is outlined in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Budget of Enabling Interventions and Costs of CRN+ Strategic Plan 2002 - 2004

| ENABLING STRATEGIES | COST (US\$) | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| | 2003 | 2004 |
| Change Management | 25,000 | Based on recommendations of Change Management Plan |
| Marketing/Communications/PR | 7,300 | 1,000 |
| Legal/Ethical Framework | 31,000 | |
| Technological Development | To be determined (see notes to budget) | To be determined (see notes to budget) |
| <i>SUB-TOTAL</i> | <i>\$63,300</i> | <i>\$1,000</i> |

11.4 Overall Budget 2003 - 2004

| STRATEGIES | COST (US\$) | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | 2003 | 2004 |
| Core Strategies | 67,290 | 65,390 |
| Enabling Strategies | 63,300 | 1,000 |
| Operational Costs | 123100 ⁵⁸ | 147,720 ⁵⁹ |
| TOTAL | \$253,690⁶⁰ | \$214,110⁶¹ |

⁵⁸ Based on estimates for 2003 submitted by CRN+ (includes operational costs (US 57, 800) and cost to host AGM 2003 (US 65,300))

⁵⁹ Estimates for 2003 plus 20% - given fairly rapid expansion of the organization 2003/2004 (NB cost of additional staff in OD Strategy estimates)

⁶⁰ Does not include costs to be determine - See notes to budget

⁶¹ Does not include costs to be determined or programme management costs - see notes to budget

12.0 CONCLUSION

The Caribbean Regional Network of People Living With HIV/AIDS is on its way to becoming a lead agency in the eradication of HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean, and indeed, in the world. However, recognizing how far it has to go, it has undertaken a series of initiatives to prepare itself to take up the considerable responsibilities of the task. It has analyzed its environment, matched opportunities and threats in the environment with its core strengths and weaknesses. It has set objectives and has outlined the strategies that will achieve those objectives.

Once the resources required to implement the plans become available CRN+ can be reasonably assured that within the five year planning period it will have become an organization of which its members and partners can be proud and which the Caribbean and international community will appreciate.

CRN+ is destined become an effective instrument of social development of Caribbean peoples through its role in eradication the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS in the region. To this end, it is the most critical agency to ensure that the rights of the most significant stakeholder in the regional response to disease, the PLWHA, are assured.

This Strategic Plan is a road map that will guide the transformation of CRN+. It does not pretend to be the final arbiter of what happens within the organization. Rather it is a statement of the collective will and intention of members to empower PLWHA in the Caribbean, making a meaningful difference to quality of their lives, to remove stigma and discrimination and lack of understanding in Caribbean society to create equal space for PLWHA and to positively impact the lives of Caribbean people in general by partnering in the collaborative fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic.