



SUCCESS STORY

Perseverance and endurance: the story of Mrs. Veronica Bourne - a wife, mother and grandmother

USAID's interventions provides Mrs. Bourne with a source of psycho-social and financial support in the midst of the trials facing her family

Photo: USAID/ASMED

Scotia Bank (Guyana), a member company of the Guyana Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, has made a significant donation to the Care and Support program at Agape Network, a USAID supported NGO that receives technical support from GHARP II, through a partnership facilitated by the GBCHA. This donation will be utilized to provide much needed assistance to people infected and affected by HIV, who are registered in the program.

One beneficiary from this donation is Mrs. Veronica Bourne; a domestic worker that earns a meager wage lives in a low income community in Georgetown with her sick husband and young granddaughter, Maria. From the time her granddaughter was 11 days old, Maria was in the care of her grandmother. Mrs. Bourne's daughter migrated after the birth of Maria and only returned when she became very ill.

Caring for her ailing husband and coupled with raising a girl of such a tender age, Mrs. Bourne needed all of the assistance she would muster, so she confided in a staff member of Agape Network, about her challenges in caring for granddaughter, and about her daughter being HIV infected. The staff member then connected the family to Agape Network, a registered non-governmental, not for profit, faith-based organization that responds to the social needs of Sophia and surrounding communities. Agape assists its members with the creation of educational, economic and other essential opportunities.

Mrs. Bourne quickly sought Agape Network's help in assisting her with her granddaughter. Through her affiliation she was able to receive for her granddaughter - after school classes, school uniforms and supplies, hot meals, hygiene packages. Her granddaughter was also assigned a mentor.

In the midst of caring for her HIV positive daughter and raising her granddaughter, Mrs. Bourne suffered inconsolably by the

death of her husband. Despite the challenges, Mrs Bourne continued to care for the family she had left. Agape Network ensured that Mrs. Bourne's daughter received sufficient HIV Treatment and Care from their staff nurse as well as USAID/Guyana HIV/AIDS Reduction Project phase II (USAID/GHARP II).

During her daughter's illness Mrs. Bourne received frequent visits from the staff at Agape Network. Her daughter died one year after her husband's father's death. When her daughter passed away, Mrs. Bourne continued to receive support from the Social Worker at Agape Network, which gave her strength to cope with the death.

On the day that her daughter passed away, Mrs. Bourne was not in the capacity to prepare a meal for herself and Maria. Agape Network assisted and provided hot meals for them both. Staff members also attended the wake and funeral.

With the donation received, Agape Network will provide ongoing emotional support to the family, and intends to support Mrs. Bourne's granddaughter's education, since these expenses would otherwise pose a challenge to Mrs. Bourne's small budget. The contribution will provide meals, stationery supplies and special Grade 6 lessons to ensure her success at upcoming exams.

One day little Mrs. Bourne's little granddaughter, Maria, aspires to become a Veterinarian because of her fond love for animals. Maria's strength of mind and the economic, educational, and emotional support that she and her grandmother receive from Agape Network and the donation from Scotiabank (Guyana) will propel her to developing herself and making the best of the personal and educational opportunities that will hopefully continue to come her way.