

# Reaching Impact, Saturation, and Epidemic Control

# RISE

## HIV patients benefit from improved drop-in center at JC Menard Clinic

Dr. Gregory Jacques, who is responsible for the drop-in center (DIC) of the JC Menard Clinic in Port-au-Prince, knows all too well the importance of having a welcoming environment for patients. “Our DIC has no air conditioning. When we had to receive around 15 people, they complained about the heat, which disturbed the sessions.”

Unfortunately, JC Menard’s DIC suffered from a number of issues, including a lack of essential amenities in the waiting room which resulted in the refusal by many potential clients to visit the center, as they felt it was not fit to provide the required treatment.



Gregory Jacques at the DIC at JC Menard Clinic

With an estimated 150,000 people living with HIV/AIDS, Haiti has one of the highest rates in the Americas. While it is still considered an epidemic, the Government of Haiti has been working tirelessly with its partners, including the US President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), to contain the virus and develop strategies to improve the quality of services offered to patients.

DICs play an important role in Haiti’s efforts to combat HIV. A DIC is a safe space, set up to serve as an educational place where clients can access a package of services to reduce the

risk of and vulnerability to HIV, including HIV testing, medication, as well as other preventive services such as cervical cancer screening. The main objective of a DIC is to provide prevention, care, and treatment services to a marginalized and stigmatized population. Therefore, it is critical that DICs and their staff provide an environment that takes into account the needs of each client so they stay in touch and adhere to the provided treatments.

To support and respond to the challenges of the JC Menard DIC, and other centers like it around Haiti, the RISE Haiti SPOTLIGHT project, funded by PEPFAR through USAID, coordinated the donation of equipment and materials to improve the client-provider relationship. Based on an initial facility needs assessment conducted by the project at start up, RISE-Haiti purchased these materials using PEPFAR funds through USAID to improve the waiting room area.



Thanks to this work, the DIC was able to completely refurbish its waiting room, which now includes additional chairs, a small TV, a water cooler, and two small fans. Dr. Jacques said, “The two fans offered by the RISE Haiti SPOTLIGHT project will solve this problem [of the heat]. We had a small TV. Now, the one received from the project will facilitate a better viewing of the HIV informational and educational videos. In addition, we did not have a water cooler at the DIC before. We are now more comfortable thanks to the donation of materials and we thank the RISE Haiti SPOTLIGHT project.”

The clients noticed the change and expressed their satisfaction. One client shared that “I really like the change brought by this donation of materials. These materials will encourage me visiting the DIC and at the same time continue to renew my Pre-exposure prophylaxis medication when necessary.”

As of April 25, 2022, the project had distributed equipment in 72% of health facilities within the five departments of implementation—Nord, Nord-Est, Sud, Artibonite, and Ouest. RISE-Haiti SPOTLIGHT is continuing to distribute the waiting room materials to the remaining target health facilities across the five departments in an effort to improve their clients’ experience.



Health providers during a discussion following the presentation of a documentary for clients. The TV was provided by RISE Haiti SPOTLIGHT.

## RISE Project Overview

Reaching Impact, Saturation, and Epidemic Control (RISE) is a 5-year global project funded by the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) which works with countries to achieve a shared vision of attaining and maintaining epidemic control, with stronger local partners capable of managing and achieving results through sustainable, self-reliant, and resilient health systems by 2024.