

The Fight against HIV/AIDS

CARM – Club for mutual assistance and support

The club known as CARM has developed, grown and been strengthened over the years since it was first founded.

CARM members now play a major and important role in the fight against HIV/AIDS. One of the founding members is now employed by IPASC as a replacement for Fatuma, (Former Head of HIV Department) who left to be married. He assists with counselling following voluntary testing; as a person living with HIV he is able to support and encourage others through the trauma of finding they are positive.

CARM clubs meet once a month in 4 strategic locations to thank God for their lives, to encourage one another, to share a meal together and to receive teaching and instruction from the HIV/AIDS Department



HIV Department staff from left IPASC Counsellor; CARM Counsellor; Trainee; Head of Service



A CARM reunion in Aru

CARM members assist IPASC staff with registration for food distribution.

Registration



CARM takes part in awareness raising campaigns sometimes with drama and selected members are trained to do home visits and to raise awareness in their communities.



Drama group leaves for a village some distance away



Home visits



CARM members are trained to do home visits of people living with HIV/AIDS

Micro Finance:

IPASC has assisted small CARM groups to set up micro finance and credit. The rules of membership are very strict. Failure to attend a meeting without just cause incurs a small fine. The group elects a committee – Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer. Money is given and received and witnessed by the whole group. The money box has two padlocks and the keys are held by two people. Money can be borrowed for any good purpose and is returned with interest. The total money is distributed amongst all the members once every three months. The system allows People Living with HIV to set up small businesses, educate children and purchase essentials.



Members wearing Tee shirts (Solidarity Group for Finance and Credit: Life for tomorrow) at a meeting for distribution of credit.



Half-way house: some people travel many kilometres to receive treatment at Arua Hospital in Uganda. They have no relatives in Aru and at the present time are housed in two small dwellings near to IPASC.



CARM Aru is building a more user friendly dwelling for these people. This new halfway house is also close to IPASC and can be easily visited by HIV staff in order to monitor and advise the sick people. The members first had to purchase a small plot of land, make the bricks and purchase



cement and roofing material. A recent donation will enable them to complete the building. In Ariwara where CARM is also operating the members are hoping to build a meeting house for all members where they can mutually support one another. This sacrificial giving by

people who have very little and are themselves sick is one of the ways in which they show their gratitude to IPASC for showing them the way.



CARM committee members in Ariwara showing their new meeting house under construction.