



SUCCESS STORY

Haitians with HIV/AIDS Embrace Hope

Through the New Partners Initiative, Haitians provide and receive HIV/AIDS services.



World Hope International

Nelia and Soliman celebrate their marriage and a new life together.

HPH-WHI has helped build a legion of Haitians who are creating and implementing activities that have reached over 40,000 fellow Haitians.

Nelia never finished elementary school and had no job or income, yet she had always been able to survive with the help of family and friends. That changed in 2000 when Nelia learned that she was living with HIV/AIDS. Upon disclosing her status, she was shunned and all support disappeared. Faced with poverty, persistent discrimination, and rejection from friends and family, she eventually found herself homeless and alone.

When Nelia heard that the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) started providing antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) in Haiti, she sought care and support at St. Michel Hospital, one of the first ARV centers in the country. She was put in touch with *Konbit Ayisyen Pou Lavi Miyo* (KALMI), the Haitian Collective for a Better Life. KALMI is one of seven indigenous nongovernmental organizations that form Haitian Partners for Health (HPH), an umbrella organization that works under the auspices of New Partners Initiative (NPI) grantee World Hope International (WHI).

Managed by the U.S. Agency for International Development, NPI enhances the technical and organizational capacity of new PEPFAR partner organizations and supports community ownership to ensure the quality and sustainability of HIV/AIDS programs. With NPI support, HPH-WHI helped KALMI strengthen its administrative systems, expand its services, and develop the skills of volunteers. It has helped build a legion of Haitians who are creating and implementing activities that have reached more than 40,000 of their fellow Haitians.

Nelia is one of many beneficiaries of KAMI. Through the organization, she is able to access medical care, receive monthly assistance to cover the costs of clean water and nutrition, and attend a support group where people living with HIV/AIDS come together in a safe environment to discuss common struggles and voice their feelings. In addition, Nelia received NPI-supported training at KALMI, which enables her to help others in similar situations. Volunteering time, she visits the homes of other PLWHA and accompanies them to service delivery sites and workshops on income-generating activities.

Nelia benefited from KALMI in another important way; through the organization's activities, she got to know a man named Soliman, who is also HIV positive. On January 17, 2009 – just days after Haiti's devastating earthquake – the couple married. Strengthened by hope, they are determined to build a new life together no matter what.