



Testimonial: Monica Ruiz

I am Monica, a self-identified trans woman, Executive Director and Founder of Trans Este Podemos Avanzar (TEPA), which works with the trans community in the east of the Dominican Republic. I am also a founding member of TRANSSA Dominicana and UBI, an international organization that works with MSM and sex workers within the tourism sector.

I have 11 years of experience working with the trans community. It has been a constant struggle for us.

At the moment, our community is challenged by the transition that is taking place with regards to obtaining external funding for our work. We acknowledge the support that the Global Fund has provided over the years for our trans community, and the LGBTI community in general, in my country. I am glad that, through several initiatives, the Global Fund has recognized the importance of providing support during the transition period, as this is something that small organizations like mine need.

When I arrived at the activity, I had few expectations, but during the process of the two days, I realized that the discussion would be very helpful for me. It has been very difficult as a trans community to get ahead, but over time the people in my organization have been able to show that they are capable, just like anyone else. I particularly loved the tool and the methodology applied.

“Being able to represent ourselves as trans individuals is very important because even though we may not possess degrees or have graduated from technical courses, we have fought to stand out so that our voices will be heard when we share about the realities that we experience on a daily basis as a community and as transgender persons.”

GATE is doing a great job in reaching out to the trans communities in the Caribbean region and helping small organizations like mine to build capacity and become more empowered. Please continue to do this by providing us with follow up support, so that this will not be just a once-off event but an ongoing collaboration.

DATE: 22 April 2018

ACTIVITY: 2-Day Session on “Sustainability of Trans Communities in the HIV and Tuberculosis Response, Forging a Joint Vision and Action Plan beyond the Global Fund (GF)

COUNTRY: Dominican Republic