

# Erika Castellanos

Aalscholver 16, 3641 WB Mijdrecht, NL Tel: +31614801993

erika.castellanos.0910@gmail.com Skype: erika.castellanos.bz



Strategically-minded and results-oriented professional with a broad background in the not-for-profit sector, showcasing a solid history of securing outstanding achievements in areas such as resource mobilization, staff leadership, and conflict resolution. Exceptionally adept at applying analytics, leadership, and communicative skills to overcome complex challenges and propel organizational growth. Deeply committed to advancing health, human rights, and equality, focusing on HIV, trans, and gender diversity issues. Continuously seeks personal and professional growth to remain at the forefront of innovative solutions. Aspires to make significant contributions within national and international agencies, utilizing a blend of expertise and forward-thinking approaches to generate meaningful impact.

## **Experience:**

### **Executive Director, GATE (Global Action for Trans Equality)\***

**Jan 2023 – Present:** Spearheaded strategic initiatives, leading to significant advances in trans\* equality through resource mobilization and grant writing. Directed programs from conception to execution, enhancing organizational impact on a global scale.

**Feb 2022 – Dec 2022 (Interim Executive Director):** Successfully navigated the organization through a transitional period, maintaining momentum in key projects and donor engagement.

**April 2017 – Jan 2022 (Director of Programs):** Led program development and implementation, fostering trans representation in critical decision-making arenas. Established robust partnerships with KP networks, significantly contributing to the inclusion of transgender persons in global finance mechanisms.

### **National Coordinator, REDLACTRANS (Latin-American and Caribbean Network of Transgender Women / Trans in Action Belize)**

**April 2016 – Jan 2017:** Pioneered the establishment of Belize's first network for transgender women, aligning national efforts with regional objectives. Managed projects funded by the Global Fund, ensuring adherence to workplans and budgetary guidelines.

### **Executive Director, C-NET+ (Collaborative Network of People Living with HIV of Belize)**

**July 2011 – 2016:** Founded the network, leading to the elimination of outdated medication from national treatment guidelines. Advocated for improved HIV testing and treatment options in Belize, establishing data collection practices for key populations.

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## **Consultant, Ministry of Health of Belize**

**July – August 2014:** Developed and implemented the national plan for Positive Health Dignity and Prevention, enhancing the HIV response by centering the needs of persons living with HIV.

## **Researcher, Regional Stigma and Discrimination Unit**

**Jan 2011 – June 2011:** Conducted foundational research on stigma and discrimination, contributing to a pivotal human rights campaign and enhancing community engagement.

## **Education:**

### **Bachelor of Health Science (Sep 2022 – Present)**

University of the People

Pursuing a Bachelor's degree focused on Health Science, exploring contemporary issues in healthcare, public health policies, and health education methodologies.

### **Social Work Program (Incomplete, May 2016)**

University of Belize

Engaged in coursework covering human development, ethics, crisis management, and more. Although incomplete, this program provided a foundation in social work principles and practices.

### **Certificate in LGBT Health Research (2015)**

University of Pittsburgh under AmfAR Grant

Completed a specialized research program focusing on LGBT health issues. The culmination of the program was a research paper that made significant contributions to the field, implemented in Belize and published in the Journal of AIDS and Behavior.

### **Diploma in Secondary Education (May 1992)**

Sacred Heart College

Successfully completed secondary education with a strong foundation in academic subjects, preparing for further educational pursuits and career development.

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## Online and training courses:

- *Unethical Decision Making in Organization*, University of Lausanne, online, ongoing
- *Global Diplomacy – Diplomacy in the modern world*, University of London, online, ongoing
- *Negotiation, mediation, and conflict resolution*, ESSEC Business School, online, ongoing.
- *Initiating and Planning Projects* by the University of California, Irvine, on Coursera. Certificate earned on March 26, 2018
- Emotional Intelligence of Health Care Workers – USAID
- HIV treatment, care, and support – Belize Red Cross
- Leadership development – UNDP

## Publications: (sample of varies publications)

1. **Physical, Emotional, and Psychosocial Challenges Associated with Daily Dosing of HIV Medications and Their Impact on Quality of Life Indicators: Findings from the Positive Perspectives Study.** de los Rios, P., Okoli, C., Castellanos, E. *et al.* Physical, Emotional, and Psychosocial Challenges Associated with Daily Dosing of HIV Medications and Their Impact on Indicators of Quality of Life: Findings from the Positive Perspectives Study. *AIDS Behav* (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-020-03055-1>
2. **Treatment aspirations and attitudes towards innovative medications among people living with HIV in 25 countries.** de los Rios, P., Okoli, C., Young, B., Allan, B., Castellanos, E., Brough, G. ... Van de Velde, N. (2020). Treatment aspirations and attitudes towards innovative medications among people living with HIV in 25 countries. *Population Medicine*, 2(July), 23. <https://doi.org/10.18332/popmed/124781>
3. **Barriers and Facilitators to past six-month HIV testing among Men who have sex with men in Belize.** Chandler, C. J., Bukowski, L. A., Sang, J. M., Harpel, C. K., Castellanos, E., Stall, R. D., & Egan, J. E. (2020). Barriers and facilitators to past six-month HIV testing among men who have sex with men in Belize. *International Journal of STD & AIDS*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956462420947574>
4. **Prevalence, determinants, and impact of suboptimal adherence to HIV medication in 25 countries;** de Los Rios, P., Okoli, C., Punekar, Y., Allan, B., Muchenje, M., Castellanos, E., ... & Van de Velde, N. (2020). Prevalence, determinants, and impact of suboptimal adherence to HIV medication in 25 countries. *Preventive Medicine*, 139, 106182.
5. **Shared Decision Making between Patients and Healthcare providers and its Association with Favourable Health Outcomes Among People Living with HIV;** Okoli, C., Brough, G., Allan, B., Castellanos, E., Young, B., Eremin, A., ... & de Los Rios, P. (2020). Shared Decision Making Between Patients and Healthcare Providers and its Association with Favorable Health Outcomes Among People Living with HIV. *AIDS and Behavior*, 1-12.

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## Professional Skills:

- **Exceptional Communication:** Expertise in delivering clear and concise, written and verbal messages in English and Spanish. Skilled in cross-cultural communication and adept at tailoring messages for diverse audiences.
- **Resilience Under Pressure:** Demonstrated ability to maintain poise and efficiency in fast-paced and challenging environments. Skilled in staying focused and making informed decisions during critical moments.
- **Strategic Decision Making:** Proven track record of making timely and effective decisions by assessing all aspects of complex situations, considering both short-term and long-term implications.
- **Advanced Time Management:** Expert in prioritizing tasks and managing schedules to maximize productivity and meet tight deadlines without compromising quality.
- **Self-motivation:** Highly self-driven with a continuous pursuit of personal and professional development. Capable of initiating and completing tasks independently with minimal supervision.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Skilled in mediating disputes by identifying the root cause and facilitating constructive discussions to reach amicable resolutions.
- **Leadership & Team Building:** Natural leader with experience in guiding diverse teams towards achieving common goals. Effective in motivating, mentoring, and fostering a collaborative team environment.
- **Adaptability:** Agile in adjusting strategies and approaches in response to changing environments or unforeseen challenges. Thrives in dynamic settings requiring flexibility and creativity.
- **Collaborative Teamwork:** I am committed to working cohesively with team members, leveraging individual strengths to enhance team performance and achieve collective objectives.
- **Innovative Problem-Solving:** Creative in developing novel solutions to complex problems. Demonstrates a keen ability to think outside the box and implement effective improvements.
- **Event Planning and Coordination:** Proficient in organizing and executing successful events, from conceptualization to execution, ensuring attention to detail and seamless operation.
- **Bookkeeping and Financial Management:** Skilled in managing financial records and transactions with accuracy and integrity. Familiar with bookkeeping practices, financial reporting, and budgeting.
- **Multilingual Communication:** Fluent in English and Spanish, offering the ability to conduct business and negotiate in both languages effectively. Basic conversational and written skills in Dutch, enhancing communication with Dutch-speaking colleagues and clients.

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## **Other activities:**

- Member of UNAIDS Council on Inequalities (2023-present)
- Vice-chair GNP+ Board, 2016 to November 2018
- Board member to the board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria for the Communities Delegation (2017 - 2020)
- Co-chair ViiV Positive Action Program for MSM and Trans, 2018-2019
- Member of Communities, Rights and Gender Advisory Group (2015 - current)
- Latin American and Caribbean delegate to the UNAIDS PCB (2015-2017)
- Member of the advisory group REDCA+ (2015 -2016)
- Referral focal point REDLACTRANS (2015-2017)
- Executive member of the National AIDS Commission Belize (2011-2017)
- Vice-chair of the 7<sup>th</sup> Central American conference of people living with HIV
- Volunteer at Corner Stone Foundation Belize (2009-2010)
- Volunteer at Oasis San Juan de Dios (hospice), México (2001-2006)