



Workplace Response to HIV/AIDS

A quarterly e-newsletter of the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean

October 2006

The ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the world of work

The ILO is a specialized agency of the United Nations with responsibility for the world of work. It has a special place in the fight against AIDS because its tripartite structure enables it to mobilize governments, employers and workers in 178 countries. The ILO has set up a global Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work. Its main objectives are to:

- raise awareness of the economic and social impact of AIDS
- help governments, employers and workers support national efforts to prevent the spread and reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS
- fight discrimination and stigma related to HIV status.

ILO is a co-sponsor of UNAIDS and is the former Chair of the Committee of Co-Sponsors of UNAIDS (July 2005-June 2006). The present Chair is the World Food Programme. On a regional level, the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean works closely with CARICOM through the Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) and the Caribbean Tripartite Council.

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HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme launched in Trinidad and Tobago

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Labour Organization, to implement an HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme in Trinidad and Tobago. The official signing, which took place on 8 August 2006 at a Breakfast Meeting at the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre, marked the formal launch of the programme in Trinidad and Tobago.

Funded by the United States Department of Labor, the programme is an accelerated response to HIV/AIDS in the world of work and is seeking to expand HIV/AIDS workplace education programmes, enhance workplace protection against stigma and discrimination, and increase worker access to prevention, care and support, and treatment services. The programme is managed by Mrs. Carol-Ann Senah, based at the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean.

A Project Advisory Board, appointed by Senator the Honourable Danny Montano, Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, in accordance with Cabinet's decision, has been set up to provide guidance on the execution of the workplace education programme and ensure coordination with other national HIV/AIDS efforts. The Board is chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development and comprises representatives from

workers' and employers' organizations, the National AIDS Coordinating Committee, People Living with HIV and AIDS, the Office of the Chief Personnel Officer, the Ministries of Health and Education, the Tobago House of



Mr. Carl Francis, Permanent Secretary (Ag.) in the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development and Dr. Ana Teresa Romero, Director, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean sign the Memorandum of Understanding to formally launch the HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme in Trinidad and Tobago.

Assembly and Head of the United Nations Theme Group for HIV/AIDS.

Following the formal launch in August, the Project has conducted sensitization workshops for trade unions, employers and government personnel. A mapping exercise, which represents a snapshot of the situation as it relates to HIV/AIDS and the world of work in Trinidad and Tobago, has also been completed.

UNAIDS estimates an HIV adult prevalence rate for Trinidad and Tobago at around 3.2% and People Living with HIV/AIDS at approximately 29,000. The statistics also reveal that 70% of new infections are in the 15-49 age group which represents a large portion of the workforce.

(For further information on the Programme, please contact senah@ilocarib.org.tt)



Workplace Action Against HIV/AIDS Promoted at XVI International AIDS Conference

This year, the XVI International AIDS Conference, held in Toronto, Canada, placed a heavy emphasis on the role of the workplace in delivering prevention, education, care, treatment and support and in reducing stigma and discrimination against persons living with, and affected by HIV and AIDS. In addition to the ILO, the Global Business Coalition against HIV/AIDS, World Health Organization, World Bank and Family Health International were all involved in promoting the possibilities that the workplace held for ensuring a comprehensive response to the

epidemic. Immediately preceding the Conference, the Canadian Labour Congress, supported by the ILO, convened a two-day Labour Forum on AIDS.

Together with UNAIDS, ILO held a joint satellite Meeting on solutions to poverty, inequality and AIDS. Sir Roy Trotman, Secretary General of the Barbados Workers' Union

and Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Body of the ILO was a panelist at the joint ILO/UNAIDS Meeting. Mr. Harry Husbands, Executive Director of the Barbados Employers' Confederation was also on hand to present a poster discussion on his Organization's action for HIV prevention and non-discrimination in the workplace.

ILO was involved in the organization of a number of satellite meetings, abstract and non-abstract sessions, skills-

building workshops, poster presentations and participated in a number of fora and informal meetings during the Conference, all focused on the world of work and its constituents. This year, the ILO Centre for Advice and Information Exchange on workplace issues and strategies was a welcome addition to the Conference and its Publications Booth was well patronized.

ILO's delegation to the Conference included persons living with HIV and 14 social partners from all regions that it serves.



ILO presenters at the Skills Building Workshop at the XVI International Conference: Henrik Moller, ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities; Akua Ofori-Asumadu, National HIV/AIDS Project Co-ordinator, Ghana; Amrita Sietaran, ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities; and Madhuri Supersad, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean.



Harry Husbands, Executive Director of the Barbados Employers' Confederation presents a poster demonstration of his Organization's work on HIV prevention and non-discrimination in the workplace.

Saving Lives, Protecting Jobs:

Interim Report of the International HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme of the ILO

The Interim Report of the International HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme of the ILO, entitled *Saving Lives, Protecting Jobs* is now available. It provides an update of the progress of the ILO/USDOL partnership programme for the workplace which began modestly in India in 2000 and now extends to 23 countries reaching about 300,000 people in about 300 enterprises. The programme which has evolved to be known now as the Strategic HIV/AIDS Responses for Enterprises (SHARE) operates across sectors from banking to construction and to informal street vendors.

Ninety per cent of the 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide continue to work. The majority are aged between 15 and 49, and are in the most productive segment of the labour force, with skills and experience that families, workplaces and countries cannot afford to lose. Individuals living with the virus often face discrimination and stigma from employers and fellow workers,

while having no information about or support for their illness, or access to treatment. The ILO is attempting to address this issue through the SHARE Project.

The five Caribbean countries that are part of the SHARE programme are Guyana, Belize, Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. Some selected outcomes so far from 4 of these countries are presented below. In 2006, the SHARE Programme is being expanded to include countries from the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) in a fast track approach for workplace action.

Selected Outcomes -ILO/USDOL PROJECT

Outcomes	Belize	Guyana	Barbados	Jamaica
Workplace with written HIV/AIDS policies	10	11	07	08
No. of workers and managers involved in the development of behaviour change strategies and programmes	39	38	52	89
No. of workers directly benefiting from ILO/USDOL programme	4,807	9,657	2,652	16,254



Regional News Snippets

Model HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy for the Caribbean drafted

The Caribbean region will soon have its own model HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy. The Caribbean Tripartite Council, an arm of the PANCAP Project funded by the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, has drafted a model policy based on the outcome of regional tripartite consultations which were held in Grenada in July 2006 and in Barbados in September 2006. The model policy will serve as a template for policy development in both the public and private sectors. The revised model policy was presented to the Fifteenth Meeting of CARICOM's Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD), 19-21 October 2006.

"Stop AIDS – Keep the Promise" Scotiabank Barbados HIV/AIDS Pledge Programme

Scotiabank Barbados used the occasion of its 50th anniversary to launch a National HIV/AIDS Pledge Programme in August 2006. This Pledge Programme is a joint initiative of Scotiabank, Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the ILO through its HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme in Barbados, funded by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), and it is supported by the National HIV/AIDS Commission, Ministry of Health and the Social Partners.

The joint effort is aimed at encouraging personal accountability for stopping the spread of HIV and AIDS.

Law, Ethics and Human Rights Workshop for legal providers

Greater and more informed legal services to be afforded to PLWHA and vulnerable communities and more comprehensive legislation were among the recommendations made at the CARICOM/PANCAP Law, Ethics and Human Rights Workshop for legal service providers held on 19-21 July 2006 in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Participants included

representatives of the legal profession from the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, and of the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean.

Workshop participants considered the issues facing persons living with HIV and other vulnerable communities, that emerged from testimonies and case studies. They also examined the challenges in providing and accessing legal services for these groups and

possible strategies and opportunities for overcoming such challenges. Participants also made recommendations for increasing the capacity of legal service providers to provide services to PLWHA and vulnerable communities.

The main facilitators were Glen Betteridge from the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network (CHLN) and Alexis Downes-Amsterdam of the CARICOM Legislative Drafting Facility.

A similar workshop was held in February 2006 for participants from the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).



Dr. Amery Browne, Technical Director, National AIDS Coordinating Committee, Trinidad and Tobago addresses delegates at the ILO/UNAIDS Meeting in Brasilia, Brazil. Seated next to him is Dr. Sophia Kisting, (left) Director, ILO Global Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work (ILO/AIDS).

Call to step up workplace action on HIV and AIDS in the Caribbean and Latin America

Participants attending the ILO/UNAIDS Meeting on AIDS and the World of Work in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Brasilia, Brazil on 6 May 2006 committed to strengthening and stepping up their action on HIV and AIDS at and through the workplace. Noting that every potential partner and all possible entry points needed to be mobilized and integrated into expanded national responses to the humanitarian and development challenges of HIV/AIDS, they called on all leaders in the world of work to urgent action including the generation of resources for the financing of a sustainable expansion of workplace activities in all regions.

Tripartite partners from Member States, representatives of national AIDS organizations, UN and other agencies and civil society

organizations in the region, including those of persons living with HIV attended the Meeting. Discussions centred on challenges and best practices, ways the world of work can help achieve Universal Access to Prevention, Care and Treatment at national and regional levels and how to develop an effective, coordinated and rights-based approach to HIV/AIDS in the world of work.

Dr. Celsius Waldo Waterberg, Minister of Health, Suriname, Mr. Trevor Thomas, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Guyana and Dr. Amery Browne, Technical Director, National AIDS Coordinating Committee, Trinidad and Tobago shared the experiences of the Caribbean subregion with participants during various sessions of the Meeting.

Resources



An HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy for the Education Sector in the Caribbean

This policy provides a framework for addressing HIV and AIDS as a workplace issue in education sector institutions and services through social dialogue processes, in complement of other national workplace or overall education sector policies where they exist. www.ilo.org/aids

The Workplace: gateway to universal access. The role of the ILO in increasing access to prevention, care and treatment for HIV and AIDS

This brochure gives a succinct overview of the role of the ILO in reducing discrimination and increasing access to HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. www.ilo.org/aids

Background papers of the ILO/UNAIDS Brasilia meeting:

- HIV/AIDS and the world of work in Latin America and the Caribbean: opportunities and challenges
- The workplace as an entry point to strengthen national responses to HIV and AIDS

- People at work: addressing stigma and discrimination
www.ilocarib.org.tt/oldwww/system_links/link6tst.html



UNAIDS 2006 Report on the global AIDS epidemic

This report includes figures on the commitments met, as well as an overview of the state of the epidemic. It concludes that AIDS seems to be slowing globally, but new infections continue to increase in certain regions and countries.

ILO Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum adopts Declaration and Plan of Action for Decent Work

HIV/AIDS among its priorities

Ministers of Labour and other high-level representatives of governments, employers' and workers' organizations of the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean have resolved to advance decent work priorities in their national development agendas. This was



Dr. Ana Teresa Romero, Director, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean addresses delegates at the closing ceremony of the ILO Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum on 12 October 2006.

of workers living with and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Hosted by the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Civil Service, Barbados, the three-day Forum examined measures in pursuit of the ILO-initiated Decent Work Agenda.

The Decent Work Agenda focuses on elements required to ensure that economic growth and development are matched by action to generate more and better jobs, promote respect for rights, improve social protection, and promote social dialogue.

Upcoming Events

9 - 10 November 2006

The Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) Annual General Meeting: British Virgin Islands

13 - 14 November 2006

Dissemination Workshop - ILO HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme - Belize

the outcome of the ILO's Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum held on 10-12 October 2006 in Barbados at which a *Tripartite Declaration and Plan of Action for Realizing the Decent Work Agenda in the Caribbean* was adopted by over 150 delegates.

Among the priorities identified in the Declaration and Plan of Action was the implementation of national and workplace HIV/AIDS policies and programmes to eliminate stigma and discrimination and to protect the rights

KEY PRINCIPLES OF HIV TESTING



It should be
VOLUNTARY
CONFIDENTIAL
and accompanied by
pre- and post-test
COUNSELLING

We'd like to hear from you . . .

This newsletter is an opportunity to learn and share information related to HIV/AIDS in the workplace and the work of the ILO/USDOL HIV/AIDS Project. We invite you to share news and other articles of interest and would welcome your feedback.

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