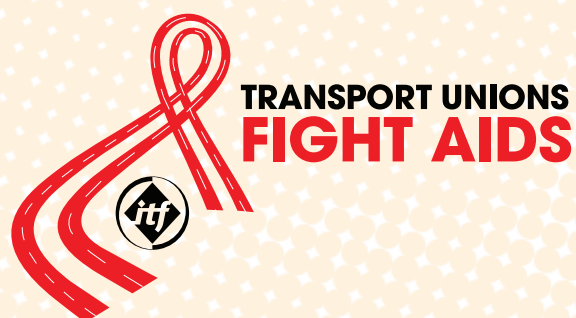


HIV/AIDS: TRANSPORT UNIONS TAKE ACTION

CASE STUDIES AND GOOD PRACTICES FROM ITF AFFILIATES



About the ITF

The ITF is an international federation of 751 unions, representing over 4.5 million transport workers in 154 countries. It is allied with the International Trade Union Confederation and a member of the Global Unions AIDS Programme.

HIV/AIDS is of particular concern to transport workers. The ITF supports global and national responses by raising awareness and promoting trade union action in the workplace. It produces regular e-bulletins and the magazine 'Agenda: challenging HIV/AIDS in transport', organises projects with affiliated unions, and provides technical and policy guidance to affiliates and the transport sector in general.

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Introducing the case studies

"The transport industry is a vital partner in the response to HIV/AIDS. It moves millions of people every day, both within and across borders. These movements can become a powerful channel for disseminating the information, knowledge and understanding on which effective prevention depends." David Cockcroft, General Secretary ITF

Long absences from home, poor working conditions and stress make transport workers particularly vulnerable to HIV, whether they work on land, sea or air routes. The ITF argues that it is as wrong to blame transport workers as it is to make victims of them: for over a decade it has committed itself firmly and actively to helping transport workers and workplaces become part of the solution. With support from the ITF, transport unions are taking responsibility for acting on this major social issue, providing tangible assistance to their members, and contributing to national efforts on HIV/AIDS.

In 2006 the ITF launched a major new campaign to mobilise and support its affiliated unions to incorporate HIV/AIDS in their core programmes and activities, including collective bargaining. With the organisational strength of over 750 affiliated unions in 154 countries, the ITF believes it can make a real difference in taking the message of prevention, treatment and support into the workplaces where it has not always been heard.

The ITF's global work includes active participation in the Global Unions AIDS Programme and exchanges of information between trade unions, a day of action to mark World AIDS Day each year, and a training programme to help unions develop HIV/AIDS bargaining strategies, policies and programmes.

Purpose of the case studies

But the important work happens at country level. Many ITF affiliates confront the threat and impact of HIV/AIDS on a daily basis; all ITF affiliates wish to promote HIV prevention and take a stand against discrimination. These case studies have been collected to give some insights into the range of work being carried out on HIV/AIDS for the sake of union members and of the wider community. They show how transport unions in all regions have tailored their activities to the needs and circumstances they face, and how they've built up their programmes over the years to make them progressively more focused, sophisticated and effective.

These case studies are not simple presentations of project activities. The ITF and its affiliates wish to share the journey they've taken to respond to HIV/AIDS in the diverse situations in which they work: from mountain passes to ports and docks; from the high seas to city taxi routes; as well as long-distance road and rail networks in every continent. They wish to share the obstacles faced as well as the successes that have been achieved. They show that action is possible in every part of the world and every type of setting, whatever the HIV prevalence and impact.

There is, however, another agenda. The ITF, along with the other Global Unions whose networks reach millions of workers, believe that it will be difficult for any country to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support unless the workplace is involved and mobilised. These case studies demonstrate how workplace structures and organisations have been adapted to make them powerful tools against discrimination and for prevention and care. Since 2001, workers and workplaces have benefited from the blueprint for action provided by the *ILO Code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work*. A further step was taken this year when the 2010 International Labour Conference, with the participation of governments, employers' organisations and trade unions (including the ITF), discussed and finalised a new labour standard on HIV/AIDS: Recommendation no. 200 Concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work. This will promote and guide the development and implementation of a national policy on HIV/AIDS and the world of work in ILO member states across the world.

Using these case studies

This collection is first and foremost for the benefit of ITF affiliates, other global unions and their affiliates, and our social partners, the employers and their organisations. We hope that all of you will take inspiration from the work that is being carried out in the transport sector, adapt some of the good practices described, and use them as the basis for practical collaboration at country level. We urge you to share these examples with governmental and non-governmental bodies running HIV/AIDS programmes to help them see the importance of unions and workplaces as partners. We also hope that employers will find practical information here as well as encouragement to take joint action with workers on an issue which is a threat to us all.

We hope that governments and their authorities in the workplace will be reminded of the ways the AIDS

epidemic threatens production and the economy and of how strategic responses in the workplace can help mitigate its impact. We hope that ministries of health, national AIDS programmes, the Country Coordinating Mechanisms of the Global Fund, and NGOs will see how the transport sector can contribute to an effective multi-sectoral response and help achieve universal access.

If any reader would like more detail on specific actions or processes, the ITF will make that available, including sample materials and other tools.

Learning the lessons

Lessons learnt in the course of practical activities have been summarised for each study, but we would like to point to three themes that have been repeatedly stressed:

Comparative advantage of trade union and workplace action

Workplaces are well-placed to deliver prevention education as well as protect rights – they have structures in place where AIDS responses can be integrated at low cost. Unions have a strong comparative advantage in terms of the large numbers they can reach and organise, and their experience in protecting and promoting rights. Labour-management cooperation and joint development of an HIV/AIDS policy for the workplace are key to combating discrimination.

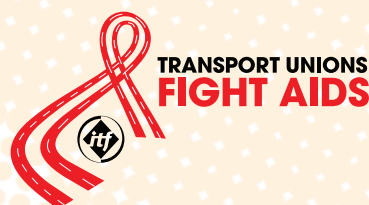
Insights into successful prevention

Successful prevention helps people understand their individual risks and responsibilities in relation to HIV/AIDS: peer educators have been very effective here, and in breaking down shame and stigma. Programmes take into account the reality of sexual behaviour and mainstream gender so that women reduce their vulnerability and men take more responsibility for sexual health. Education should be supported by practical interventions such as treatment for tuberculosis (TB) and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), as well as condom availability.

Targeting and partnerships for effective action

Programmes targeted to the needs, circumstances and culture of populations at risk are essential to achieve universal access to HIV services. Priorities should be worked out and coordination organised at local levels and by those concerned. Combination approaches should be used, supported by partnerships among those with common concerns and relevant experience, especially organisations of people living with HIV.

More information about the ITF's work on HIV/AIDS is available at www.itfglobal.org. We publish an annual magazine on HIV/AIDS and the transport sector called 'Agenda', fortnightly e-bulletins, plus an annual action package for organising around World AIDS Day.



ARGENTINA



Population: 39 500 000
National adult prevalence: 0.5%
Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): 0.6% of young men, 0.25% of young women
TB prevalence: 48 per 100 000 population
Number of adults living with HIV: 120 000 (32 000 are women)
HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): 5 400

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

Centro de Jefes y Oficiales Maquinistas Navales

Established: 1897
Membership: 2001, of whom 16 are women
Organises: Merchant marine engineer officers; also some members among inland navigation workers and fishermen.

Trade unions are showing a growing interest in this issue, not only because their members may be affected but also because unions - with their extensive networks and commitment to fight discrimination - have a crucial role to play. The Argentine maritime union, Centro de Jefes y Oficiales Maquinistas Navales (Chief Engineers' and Engineer Officers' Union), has been in the vanguard of creative responses to HIV/AIDS.

Union leader Mujica Gustavo Andres said: "Transport can contribute to the spread of epidemics That's why prevention and education in our sector are fundamental tools to stamp out disease and deaths. ... Strong and united trade unionism not only improves the social conditions of the workers, but is also an essential factor in preventing the spread of HIV... At the same time it helps confront stigma and discrimination."

Union strategy: forming alliances to ensure integrated programmes

The Centro de Jefes y Oficiales Maquinistas Navales believes that unions need to be aware of the social and labour implications of HIV/AIDS and able to provide prevention programmes so that workplaces, families and communities remain free of the disease. The union therefore combines the integration of HIV/AIDS in core workplace structures such as collective bargaining agreements with focused education and training for workers. In order to secure specialist support for its programme, the Centro has signed agreements with three key bodies - the national association of ship-owners, the renowned Muñiz Hospital in Buenos Aires, and the Nautical National School "Manuel Belgrano", regional branch of the World Maritime University and one of the few naval schools in the world to be certified with ISO 9000.

Activities

- The union successfully negotiated a collective bargaining agreement with ship-owners' representatives that includes a clause highlighting the need to implement the International Labour Organization Code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work and other standards established by the Argentine government.
- The cooperation agreement with the Muñiz Hospital is intended to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and promote prevention education among seafarers. This follows an informal collaboration when the union and the hospital organised two seminars on HIV/AIDS. As part of the cooperation agreement health workers based at the hospital will set up further education sessions on HIV/AIDS tailored to the circumstances and needs of seafarers. Three seminars on HIV/AIDS were held for union affiliates in 2009.
- The agreement with the nautical school has wide-ranging and long-term benefits as the school will include HIV/AIDS in its curriculum of health, safety

PARTNERSHIPS TO PROTECT SEAFARERS: MARITIME UNION TAKES THE LEAD

Even though HIV prevalence is under one per cent, Argentina has concentrated epidemics among at-risk populations. Prevalence in the maritime sector is higher than the national average. The main mode of HIV transmission is sexual intercourse, and infections are increasing among young people, especially young women. Most countries of South America - including Argentina - have good if not universal access to HIV treatment.

Prevention programmes, however, have been more limited, as a result of a lack of political will and insufficient resources. Prevention has often been left to NGOs and international bodies, with honourable exceptions such as Brazil, where prevention has been linked to the defence of rights.

and first aid courses. This will ensure that the seafarers passing through its programme have a basic understanding of HIV/AIDS and are able to provide education to their peers onboard ship.

- The Centro produced three documentary films on health risks and HIV/AIDS for transport workers that were circulated to members and shown on the union website (<http://www.maquinaval.org.ar>).
- The Centro is taking action to extend its prevention campaign to other transport workers, and in the process to sign an agreement with the Department of Agriculture, Stockbreeding, Fishing and Food to include workers in the fishing sector.

Challenges

Although sex education has been identified as a priority issue, very few HIV programmes focus on sexual health. Many taboos and severe stigmatisation surround sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. Young women are at particular risk of HIV due to their lower level of education, more limited access to formal employment, and limits on their ability to negotiate the use of condoms or safer sex.

Countries bordering Argentina may not have similar HIV/AIDS programmes for transport workers, which increases risk for Argentinean workers. On the other hand, growing HIV awareness offers the possibility of cross-border cooperation and the development of a regional policy.

It is not easy to persuade NGOs to collaborate with trade unions on HIV prevention, even in the transport sector.

Results so far

- The integration of HIV/AIDS in industry agreements and in training curricula has resulted in significant numbers of serving and future seafarers being reached by prevention messages as well as benefitting from the protection of rights and access to care.
- Trade union awareness of HIV/AIDS is growing and the first seminar on Trade Unionism and Health held by the ITF and the Naval University attracted the participation of 20 unions.
- Numbers of new infections in the maritime sector are starting to fall.

Lessons learned

- Alliances between the union and other stakeholders - in particular employers, vocational training institutions and medical specialists - have brought benefits to all concerned. Unions have a strong comparative advantage in terms of the large numbers they can reach and organise, and experience in protecting and promoting rights. They have a particular contribution

to make where public health services are weak. In alliance with the HIV community they can help their countries move towards the goal of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

- Education programmes are profoundly strengthened by having a gender dimension, as men can be helped to understand the vulnerability of women - especially young women - and to take more responsibility for sexual health generally.
- Lessons have been learnt about prevention strategies which could be applied to other diseases that affect the region.

Future plans

Three HIV/AIDS workshops will take place in 2010 at the National Nautical School "Manuel Belgrano", and approximately 250 officers will be trained.

The union plans to produce a second film on HIV prevention.

A cooperation agreement will be made with the Docks and Navigational Roads Secretariat and probably the Transport Secretary's Office as well to extend HIV prevention more widely through the transport sector.

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GUYANA



Population: 738 000

National adult prevalence: 2.5%

Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): 0.5% of young men, 2% of young women

TB prevalence: 215 per 100 000 population

Number of adults living with HIV: 12 000 (7 000 are women)

HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): 660

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

Clerical and Commercial Workers' Union (CCWU)

Established: 1948

Members: 2002, of whom 844 are women

Organises: Transport; commerce; postal; graphical; media, entertainment and tourism; finance & banking industries

with all the companies where they represent workers. It is union policy that all collective bargaining agreements should include provisions on HIV/AIDS, and the union has established a set of core rights and minimum standards based on the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work. These have been shared widely with other unions as well as employers.

Employers were involved from the outset. The union ran awareness workshops with support from government, and included managers and supervisors in the process. "Some employers weren't interested at first. We had to keep going back to them to convince them to get on board. But we now see good worker-management collaboration as well as tripartite action with support from the government", said Sherwood Clarke, HIV/AIDS coordinator of the CCWU.

Recognition of the constructive and effective role of trade unions in tackling the disease led the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to include a seat for trade unions. The CCM is responsible for developing proposals to the Global Fund and implementing funds awarded. A democratic election resulted in the seat going to the CCWU in 2007.

Through the CCM and in other forums, the CCWU lobbies actively for the government to take a comprehensive view of the issues surrounding the epidemic and the most effective ways to address them, including health system straightening and infrastructure development. The union also works directly with two government departments to address the specific HIV risks in the transport sector, with a focus on the role of the family in protecting workers.

Activities

- Promotion of voluntary counselling and testing in partnership with employers;
- Ongoing awareness work including information on sexually transmitted infections, World AIDS Day talks about HIV and sex, rallies on Labour Day (May 1), emphasising the issue of HIV-related stigma and discrimination;
- A network of peer educators, supported by training, follow-up, refresher courses and an online link between peer educators and the training team;
- A referral system to ensure access to social support systems;
- Specific campaign against stigma and discrimination.

CCWU ON THE MOVE AGAINST HIV/AIDS IN THE WORKPLACE

The Caribbean has the second highest average HIV prevalence after sub-Saharan Africa. Governments in the region have not been slow in taking action and civil society is also mobilised. Even so, access to necessary prevention and treatment services is not universal and the trade unions note that many workers do not have access to HIV/AIDS programmes at the workplace. They also report significant impacts of the epidemic in the transport sector.

Union strategy: HIV/AIDS policy and programme at every workplace and a voice for labour on key national AIDS bodies

ITF affiliate CCWU is working with the government and employers to get HIV policies in every workplace, starting

Challenges

The challenges for the union include raising the standard of living of workers to combat poverty and reduce vulnerability to HIV; reaching out to school youth; and achieving recognition for HIV/AIDS as a human rights issue.

CCWU conducted a baseline survey of ten companies in the last quarter of 2008 to establish the extent of risk-taking behaviour, attitudes towards co-workers living with HIV, and the existence of workplace policies and programmes on HIV/AIDS. Among the findings were the fact that 19% of males interviewed said they had unprotected sex with persons who were neither spouse nor live-in partners; 40% of all respondents believed that a worker who revealed his/her HIV-positive status would be dismissed; about 40% indicated they would be uncomfortable working with an HIV-positive colleague; more women than men were favourably disposed to condom use; none of the ten companies had HIV policies or services.

"Stigma and the resulting discrimination associated with HIV has proven to be one of the most difficult obstacles to effective HIV prevention. It arises mostly from fear and lack of awareness about the disease and prevents people from negotiating safer sex, taking tests, disclosing their status to their partners or seeking treatment. Many drivers say that they do not seek treatment for HIV or other sexually transmitted infections because they might face stigma and discrimination." CCWU

Results so far

- National tripartite committee for HIV/AIDS and the workplace is in place (government, employers, workers);
- Increased capacity of government, employers, and workers to take action on HIV/AIDS at the workplace, leading to changes in behaviour;
- Reduced discrimination in the workplace against persons with HIV/AIDS and more open and positive attitudes expressed by co-workers: increased awareness of rights has led to workers themselves reporting violations of the HIV policy - the union then takes the necessary action;
- Increased willingness of relatives and community members to care for people living with HIV;
- Systems in place for voluntary counselling and testing (VCT), with 5000 workers tested between 17 and 20 November 2009.

In the ten companies which provided baseline data (see above), follow-up data are not yet available on attitudes or behaviour, but action by the CCWU resulted in half the companies having finalised a workplace HIV/AIDS policy by late 2009, with the rest expected to finalise within the following quarter.

Lessons learned

- Labour-management cooperation is effective in reducing stigma and discrimination.
- Tripartite action, including government, results in improved coordination, promotion of workplace programmes, and mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS by relevant authorities.
- The workplace need not provide all HIV services, but can i) raise awareness and mobilise uptake, especially of VCT, and ii) establish referral system to community services.
- The basic principle that national AIDS structures, including the CCM, should be multi-sectoral, broad-based and represent the voice of all sections of the community means that a place at the table for labour is an imperative.

Future plans

CCWU is committed to moving forward by providing a platform for open discussion of issues at workplaces, based on the personal experiences of workers living with HIV.

Priority areas include: HIV/AIDS workplace policy issues; staff rules and regulations, including health insurance; recruitment processes; and support for workers living with HIV.

The union is also extending its outreach programme to workers and their families within the community, with a focus on care and support for those directly affected by HIV.

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HONDURAS



Population: 7 106 000

National adult prevalence: 0.7%

Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): 0.7% of young men, 0.4% of young women

TB prevalence: 71 per 100 000 population

Number of adults living with HIV: 26 000 (7 400 are women)

HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): 1 900

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Empresa Nacional Portuaria (SITRAENP)

Established: 1967

Members: 604 of whom 180 are women

Organises: Dock workers

activities into the core union programme since 2008. It works with a number of partners: on the one hand, government, municipal and non-governmental AIDS programmes and on the other, national and international trade unions. In addition to support from the ITF, SITRAENP benefits from Danish trade union federation 3F's union strengthening project, where HIV/AIDS is a central component. This covers dockworkers and surrounding community members with whom they're in contact.

Activities

- SITRAENP regularly organises HIV/AIDS education at workplaces with the support of a cadre of trained peer educators, and distributes information and education materials;
- The union has a condom distribution programme at workplaces;
- It has launched a long-term campaign for the reduction of stigma and discrimination at the workplace, including workshops on stigma for workers' children;
- It organises rallies and other HIV/AIDS activities on World AIDS Day, May Day, International Women's Day and important national days in partnership with other unions.

Challenges

These include denial and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS among members and a lack of commitment from the company management to initiate HIV/AIDS workplace programmes.

The union also has difficulties in getting regular supplies of education materials as well as of condoms, from the government AIDS programme and local health authorities. Funding for HIV/AIDS activities is always a challenge, which it tries to overcome through partnership and collaboration.

The predominant culture of "machismo" and low levels of condom use are also barriers to effective prevention: Honduras has the highest adolescent pregnancy rate in Central America.

Results so far

- SITRAENP has identified and trained a group of peer educators to create awareness among members and offer support;
- The campaign to combat stigma and discrimination at the workplace is well-established and successful in protecting workers' rights;
- The union has negotiated a collective bargaining agreement with the port management, incorporating clauses on HIV/AIDS that include access to VCT and to anti-retroviral treatment for workers who test positive.

CHALLENGING HIV STIGMA IN PORTS

Honduras is home to 17% of the population of Central America but 60% those living with HIV. AIDS is the leading cause of death among Honduran women of childbearing age and the second largest cause of hospitalisation among both men and women. Sexually transmitted infections are common, and condom use in risky sexual encounters is sporadic. It should be noted that 40% of the Honduran population is under 24.

Union strategy: Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS responses in core union and workplace activities, and partnership with national and international agencies

SITRAENP recognizes the threat of the epidemic to its members and to society at large. With the aim of protecting workers and supporting the government's response to the epidemic it has integrated HIV/AIDS

Lessons learned

- A core team with some dedicated members is essential to planning, implementing and sustaining action;
- Developing partnerships with local and national organisations, including organisations of people living with HIV, is important in terms of technical, financial and moral support;
- Progress in preventing HIV depends on removing misconceptions and helping people understand their individual risks and responsibilities in relation to HIV/AIDS.

Future plans

The next target is to provide HIV/AIDS education to 300 workers, family members and the surrounding community.

SITRAENP will continue the campaign against HIV/AIDS stigma and discrimination at work and articles on HIV/AIDS will be regularly published in the union bulletins.

During the next round of collective bargaining with management the union will introduce more clauses on HIV/AIDS.

SITRAENP will work with sister union SIREMAH to organize local fishermen and offer HIV/AIDS activities.

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INDIA



Population: 1 169 000 000

National adult prevalence: 0.3%

Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): 0.3% of young men, 0.3% of young women

TB prevalence: 299 per 100 000 population

Number of adults living with HIV: 2 400 000 (880 000 are women)

HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): n/a

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF)

National Federation of Indian Railwaymen (NFIR)

Members: AIRF (founded in 1924) has 24 affiliates totalling approximately 1 million members.

NFIR (founded in 1949) has 24 affiliates totalling approximately 900 000 members. The affiliates cover the various geographical zones of the country.

INDIA'S RAILWAYS: A MEETING POINT FOR HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

Although adult prevalence is under 1%, there are still about two and a quarter million Indians living with HIV, 90% of them of working age. The epidemic is unevenly spread, with four southern states accounting for over 60% of all people living with HIV. There are also concentrated epidemics affecting, in particular, sex workers, men who have sex with men and injecting drug users. Mobility is also an issue, with higher risk associated with the transport sector and with migration. As the epidemic has matured, women account for a growing proportion of people living with HIV (38% in 2005), especially in rural areas.

The railway unions are concerned to identify specific risks and vulnerabilities among members. The NFIR found

higher than average HIV risk among the unorganised railway porters in Hyderabad, who are often migrant workers from other states. A Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) study revealed that about half the porters lacked correct knowledge about HIV transmission and about a third reported multi-partner sex.

Union strategy: joint action to challenge stigma, raise awareness, and promote prevention

HIV/AIDS is an issue which has brought together a number of India's unions. In 2007 the five central trade unions of India issued a Joint Statement of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.

In the transport sector the two national railway federations, plus unions of seafarers, dock and port workers, road transport and civil aviation workers, have come together to develop a joint programme on HIV/AIDS. Together they represent several million transport workers and cover over half the Indian states. They have worked together to advocate for an HIV/AIDS policy on Indian Railways. In addition to education programmes for members they take advantage of their many contact points with the public to run campaigns to extend awareness and break the silence and stigma around HIV/AIDS. Joint activities have included holding rallies, exhibitions, awareness programmes and seminars, street plays, cultural shows, condom distribution and blood donation camps.

In response to the KAP survey among porters (see above), the South Central Railway Employees' Sangh (an NFIR affiliate) joined forces with the Indian National Trade Union Congress, the Andhra Pradesh State AIDS Control Society and the ILO to provide education and services. A focal person was appointed, peer educators trained, two condom machines put in place, and referral systems set up for the treatment of sexually transmitted infections and HIV counselling and testing.

The Women's Committee of the Southern Railway Mazdoor Union (AIRF affiliate) set up a Red Ribbon Committee following an ITF education programme on HIV/AIDS which trained 25 peer educators (12 women, 13 men). This now drives the union's activities for members and for the general public. Special efforts are made to involve men, as women tend to be more active in HIV awareness-raising, as in most social issues.

Activities

- As a sign of the integration of HIV/AIDS in core union business, NFIR has messages on HIV prevention on all Federation letterheads and envelopes.
- The South Central Railway Employees' Sangh regularly conducts education sessions at workplaces for different cadres of railway workers.
- On World AIDS Day and International Women's Day

every year the AIRF organises a public information campaign on HIV/AIDS, sometimes including sporting events, at and near railway stations. They place particular emphasis on voluntary testing for HIV and other STIs.

- The Northern Railwaymen's Union (AIFR affiliate) organised a motorcycle campaign to spread HIV/AIDS Awareness. A group of 25 activists rode the 1500km from Lucknow to Jammu and stopped at every railway station, village and town on the way to spread HIV information and reduce stigma.
- The railway unions gave support to the Red Ribbon Express project, devised by the National AIDS Control Organization and the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. The Express travelled around India for a year from December 1st 2007 building awareness about HIV/AIDS; it was then extended a further year in order to reach more stations and villages.
- Unions also play an important role in collecting blood. The railway unions regularly organise voluntary blood donation camps in branches all over the country, and ensure that all donated blood is screened for HIV.

Challenges

Discrimination and stigma are deeply ingrained in Indian society and the unions report many instances of dismissal related to HIV status, as well as rejection of people living with HIV by co-workers and even families.

The vast size of India and the varying prevalence rates and types of epidemic make it difficult to convey consistent and coherent messages across the country.

Results so far

- On two separate occasions, the intervention of the union saved the life of a worker with HIV who had been disowned by the immediate family and was on the verge of committing suicide. Union leaders talked to the families concerned and helped them change their views.
- A network of 30 peer educators is in place for the railway porters' programme: they have been trained and receive regular refresher training; surveys show an increase in HIV knowledge and understanding, and reported condom use has increased.
- Each year Indian railway workers donate around 0.25 million units of blood, screened by the railway medical service, for use in transfusions.

"HIV/AIDS is a workplace issue. Trade unions - as key actors in the workplace - help to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS. They share the same background as the people they represent, so the messages are more readily accepted", said Nishi Kapahi of the ITF's Delhi office.

Lessons learned

- Programmes work better when an identified focal person is responsible, especially if funds are raised so that they can work full-time.
- Advocacy with management has resulted in practical support, such as the provision of facilities for activities and time off work for education activities, but there are still many managers who are not yet involved.
- The involvement of people living with HIV, and their associations, is very effective against stigma.
- Linkages with the State AIDS Control Society are important in improving service provision for members and enabling unions to sustain their programmes.
- Peer education is particularly effective among women, who quickly feel less inhibited when other women like them discuss issues linked to AIDS.

Future plans

AIFR is negotiating with the Railway Board to secure the inclusion of at least one session on HIV/AIDS in the official Indian Railways training curriculum. This would take advantage of the existing in-service training arrangements for railway staff provided by a national network of training schools.

A number of the unions are planning to extend their HIV/AIDS education programmes to spouses and family members.

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KENYA



Population: 37 000 000
National adult prevalence: 7.1% - 8.3%
Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): 2.4% of young men, 8.2% of young women
TB prevalence: 334 per 100 000 population
Number of adults living with HIV: 1.6 million (1 million are women)
HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): 100 000

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

Kenya Dockworkers' Union

Established: 1954
Members: 6500, of whom one-third are women
Organises: Dock workers

BREAKING THE SILENCE AT KENYA'S PORTS: FOOTBALL, STORY-TELLING AND AN HIV/AIDS POLICY FOR THE WORKPLACE

Kenya has a severe, generalised HIV epidemic, although in recent years there has been a decline in new infections. Most HIV-positive Kenyans do not know their HIV status so the government has set up a programme with the aim of testing 80% of Kenyans by 2010. They launched accelerated HIV testing and counselling campaigns in health facilities, at mobile VCT sites and at homes (door to door), during health camps and other settings.

The Kenya Port Authority (KPA) employs some 7 000 workers, mostly male. By the mid-1990s it estimated that about 27% were HIV-positive, about 12 staff and/or dependants were dying each week, and the Authority was experiencing rising running costs at the same time as falling productivity.

Union strategy: combat stigma, promote VCT and mainstream gender issues

The KPA started HIV education in the 1990s but did not establish an HIV/AIDS policy for its workers until 2009. ITF affiliate the Kenya Dockworkers' Union played a central role in advocating for and developing the policy - it will also be involved in monitoring its implementation. Around 500 workers and supervisors attended the launch ceremony. Union peer educators used drama and role-plays for awareness-raising, and the KPA medical service organised a voluntary blood donation camp.

The guiding principle of the policy is protection of the rights of employees, as well as job applicants, in access to employment, training, promotion, benefits and services. According to Simon Sang, General Secretary of the Dockworkers' Union, "This policy will help us to fight stigma and discrimination at the workplace. [It] will ensure mobilisation of resources to support and sustain HIV/AIDS programmes at workplaces. This policy does not only cover workers but also their dependants, and includes ARVs for all of them".

The KDWU set up a Gender and HIV/AIDS Committee which gave a great boost to the union's work in this area.

Activities

- The KDWU has a well-established HIV/AIDS information and education programme, run by peer educators, with a focus on voluntary counselling and testing. In collaboration with KPA, for example, it organised HIV awareness-raising activities during the popular interdepartmental football tournament - which includes a women's team. Union educators performed plays and recited poems on the dangers of HIV and AIDS. Key message: "Footballers should always wear shoes and not play barefoot since the ground is full of thorns" - meaning that they should use condoms and not have unprotected sex.
- The Gender and HIV/AIDS Committee has established regular Friday awareness sessions in different departments at the workplace where members discuss gender issues and HIV/AIDS with the personnel of different sections based there.
- The union and the KPA jointly organised a workshop on gender equality and HIV/AIDS in Lamu island, where most of the 100,000 population are Muslim. The workshop discussed issues related to sexuality, factors contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS, the importance of women's empowerment in preventing infections and dealing with HIV/AIDS in the workplace, including fighting stigma and discrimination.

- The union has been part of a pilot ITF project with the NGO Narrativ to use storytelling to break the silence, fear and stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS. Throughout history people have understood and dealt with their personal situation through the telling of stories. Transport workers, due to their mobility, can lose touch with community relationships and values and become disconnected from their own life histories. ITF and Narrativ held four one-day workshops for small groups with common working situations: truck drivers and dockworkers, who are heavily stigmatised as the conduits of HIV in Kenya; members of an HIV-positive support group; doctors and nurses at the KPA clinic; members of the dockworkers' union and ITF.
- The union also works very closely with other ITF affiliates in Kenya, such as the Kenya Long-Distance Truck Driver and Allied Workers' Union, and together they organised a week-long "Moonlight VCT" programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Transport. This encouraged and enabled truckers to go for a voluntary test at night when they rest at parking lots. The unions also organised a procession of truckers and sex workers.

Challenges

Challenges include on the one hand denial, silence and shame and on the other discrimination, stigmatisation and rejection related to HIV/AIDS. These stem from fear and the lack of knowledge, which the union seeks to remedy. Transport workers are particularly vulnerable to risk but also to stigmatisation.

The union also faces practical obstacles such as the lack of funds for HIV/AIDS activities, variable commitment of union members and leaders, and logistical difficulties in reaching all the different branches and depots of the KPA.

Results so far

- The current situation is that 826 employees are on anti-retrovirals (ARVs) and new infections are declining; productivity has been raised and HIV-related costs reduced. The KPA is satisfied that the workplace programme is successful, thanks to union support.
- During the union's VCT week in November 2009, 234 dockworkers went for testing.
- Among those who took part in the storytelling activity, only one person was openly HIV-positive at the start. During the final ceremony, 12 people disclosed that they were HIV-positive, and told their stories to the assembled gathering. They committed to becoming public advocates. One participant said: "For those who felt shy or hesitated, this workshop removed the stigma that had been present for so long. If we speak out together with our stories, we can speed up the search for solutions to the spread of HIV/AIDS."

Lessons learned

- Collaboration with the employer and joint development of an HIV/AIDS policy are key to combating discrimination.
- Workplaces are well-placed to deliver prevention education as well as protect rights: the HIV/AIDS programme at Kenya's docks has promoted behaviour change, provided care and support, and helped the employer and union manage the impact of the epidemic.
- The active involvement of workers in developing HIV activities arouses enthusiasm and makes programmes more relevant and effective.

Future plans

The union will work with management to ensure that all employees know about the workplace HIV/AIDS policy and to oversee implementation and monitoring.

The workplace programme will be extended to workers' families and the surrounding communities, and more partners will be sought to help with this outreach.

A resource centre with information on HIV/AIDS is being set up at the union's headquarters. The union is also planning to publish a range of materials such as posters, brochures and DVDs.

The curriculum of all technical courses at Bandari College, the staff development college of the KPA, will include HIV/AIDS.

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NEPAL



Population: 29 331 000 (Estimated in 2009)
National adult prevalence: 0.5%
Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): 0.3% of young men, 0.3% of young women
TB prevalence: 240 per 100 000 population
Number of adults living with HIV: 68 000 (17 000 are women)
HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): 4 900

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

Nepal Yatayat Mazdoor Sangh (NETWON)

Established: 1990
Membership: 45 000, two-thirds in the road transport sector which includes 200 women members. The Nepal Cleaning Workers' Union , Nepal Tourism Workers' Union , Nepal Taxi workers Union , Sajha Yatayat Employees Union and Kathmandu Metropolitan City Driver's Union are affiliated to NETWON. NETWON is affiliated to Nepal TUC-I

MIGRATING WORKERS, MIGRATING DISEASE: UNIONS TAKE CROSS-BORDER ACTION TO CONTAIN HIV/AIDS

Nepal faces rising HIV prevalence among at-risk populations such as sex workers, injecting drug users, men who have sex with men, and migrants. It is estimated that 1.5 to 2 million Nepalese migrate internally and externally for seasonal and long-term labour. In addition, there is significant trade between Nepal and neighbouring India.

Removal from traditional social structures can promote unsafe sexual practices, such as multiple sexual partners including commercial sex. Most migrants and mobile workers do not have access to information, condoms or support services which enable them to have safer sex.

A 2002 study suggested that HIV prevalence is nearly 8% amongst migrants returning to Nepal from Mumbai in India.

Union strategy: Promoting health and defending rights by mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in union business and having a presence at the border for counselling and condom distribution

ITF affiliate Nepal Yatayat Mazdoor Sangh (NETWON) believes that only the involvement of community organisations, including trade unions, will make it possible for Nepal to develop a viable response to the pandemic. For this reason the union places HIV/AIDS at the centre of its core agenda. This process started at the union's grassroots, the district level.

HIV/AIDS awareness programmes were initiated by union district committees for members through local programmes run by the Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN) and other NGOs. The issue was then taken up by head office and now HIV/AIDS is regarded as a core union activity. All trade union education programmes include a session on HIV/AIDS. NETWON also used its national congress to raise the awareness of members on HIV/AIDS. The 2009 congress passed a resolution on HIV/AIDS, and hosted an HIV/AIDS information booth and educational side events.

The union goes to where its members are with information and education on HIV/AIDS and on the dangers of trafficking at key points along the border with India.

Activities

- NETWON's ongoing education activities include seminars and awareness training programmes for district-level leaders and national office bearers, and workshops to train peer educators and counsellors, with support from the ITF and ILO.
- The union has expanded its HIV/AIDS activities to include raising awareness on human trafficking and supporting governmental and non-governmental prevention measures along the Nepal-India border. Together with local NGOs it has set up information kiosks at bus stands along the border with India. The union also works with trafficking inspectors to detect instances of human trafficking.
- NETWON takes action on World AIDS Day each year, and was an active participant in the National Condom Days, organised by the NANGAN (National NGOs Network Group Against AIDS , Nepal) and the responsible government agency.

Challenges

Nepal's poverty, political instability and gender inequality, combined with low levels of education and literacy, make HIV prevention and control particularly difficult, as do the denial, stigma, and discrimination that surround the disease. Myths and misconceptions need to be tackled, as well as the lack of correct information.

"It's been tough to get people to talk about HIV and AIDS", said Nishi Kapahi, ITF HIV/AIDS Coordinator for the South Asia region. "Embarrassment is often writ large on the faces of people attending our programmes. There have been occasions when women have walked out of the room, refusing to participate in the 'shameful' discussion. However, once the ice is broken, enlightened participants carry home the promise of sharing their newly acquired knowledge."

Results so far

- Taking health and HIV prevention services to where transport workers rest and meet has resulted in increasing numbers presenting for voluntary testing and STI treatment, as well as reported behaviour change in terms of condom use. Another reported change is more open discussion of HIV/AIDS and STIs at workplaces across the transport sector.
- Building HIV/AIDS knowledge and capacity among transport workers who have direct contact with the public, and using them as conduits for awareness-raising, has caused a ripple effect and enabled NETWON and its partners to reach significant numbers of people. Hundreds of taxis in Kathmandu and hundreds of long-distance trucks can be seen with stickers in the windows carrying HIV/AIDS messages.
- NETWON worked with local NGOs to get condom vending machines installed at two petrol stations in Kathmandu. They are used by union members and the general public.
- As awareness among trade union leaders is increasing, they are getting involved in the care and support of their members. There have been a number of instances where family and friends refused to arrange the funeral of someone who had died as a result of AIDS - so the union provided the service.
- More un-organised workers have been organised in the union through the awareness campaign.
- The profile of unions has been raised and their role recognised by NGOs, the ILO and the Ministry of Health.

Lessons learned

- Reaching mobile and migrant workers at staging posts on their journeys is useful and necessary, as they have few other opportunities to access HIV/STI information and services.

- Peer educators from among the transport workers have been very successful in breaking down barriers of shame and stigma.
- Support from the union leadership has been critical in getting HIV/AIDS recognised as a core union responsibility.
- Transport workers in contact with the public, especially taxi and municipal drivers, can become a new sort of peer educator with appropriate training and support.
- HIV/AIDS awareness-raising provides an opportunity to highlight the work of trade unions more generally, especially their social role, and attract new members to the union.

Future plans

In addition to continuing and expanding the education programme for members and transport workers generally, the following areas have been identified by NETWON as priorities in the near future:

- advocacy with the Government to develop a national policy on HIV/AIDS for transport workers - seek support from the employers/transport entrepreneurs, arrange meetings with the relevant authorities and prepare a draft policy to stimulate action;
- build outreach programmes with the communities most closely linked to transport sector activities;
- set up mobile health check camps, including an HIV/AIDS information booth, at least once a month;
- initiate a cross-border programme along the India-Nepal border, with support from the Indian unions and from the ITF Delhi office;
- develop behaviour change communication (BCC) programmes for workplaces, with tailored materials such as stickers, pamphlets, leaflets and posters;
- facilitate more condom vending outlets at workplaces.

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SOUTH AFRICA



Population: 48 500 000

National adult prevalence: 18.1%

Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): 5% of young men, 14% of young women

TB prevalence: 998 per 100 000 population

Number of adults living with HIV: 5.7 million (3.2 million are women)

HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): 350 000

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

South African Transport Allied Workers' Union (SATAWU)

Established: 1990

Members: 130 000, of whom about 18 000 are women.

Organises: 43 000 are in the cleaning and security sectors and 87 000 in transport (all modes) with 36 000 members in road freight.

TRUCKERS AGAINST AIDS

HIV prevalence among truckers in South Africa is higher than the national average. It is estimated that 28 000 workers are HIV-positive out of the 70 000 workers under the National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight Industry. A 2001 study by the South African Medical Research Council found that 56% of long distance truck drivers in the KwaZulu Natal Midlands were HIV-positive. This has repercussions not only for the individuals concerned, and the families and communities who depend on them, but for the economy as a whole: "Our slogan is 'When the Trucks Stop, the Economy Stops' ", said Trucking Wellness chairperson Tabudi Ramakgolo.

In 2009 The Guardian newspaper in Britain reported that the number of women truck drivers is increasing as HIV/AIDS takes its toll on their male colleagues (see www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/22/women-lorry-drivers-south-africa-hiv).

Union strategy: an industry-specific partnership to meet the needs of truckers for HIV treatment and care as well as prevention

Trucking Against AIDS emerged from an agreement between ITF affiliate SATAWU and the Road Freight Employers' Association (RFEA) in 1997, following a one-day strike held in protest at the refusal of the freight industry to fund work to tackle HIV/AIDS. Launched by the National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight Industry (NBCRFI) in 1999, its purpose is to create awareness about HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections among trucking industry employees and related sex workers. The programme has recently been renamed Trucking Wellness to demonstrate its holistic focus on health promotion rather than on specific diseases.

The NBCRFI brings together employer organisations and trade unions in the road industry; the Wellness Committee which runs the Trucking Wellness programme is answerable to the NBCRFI board. The Ministry of Transport has also been supportive.

Activities

- Trucking Wellness has developed an HIV/AIDS policy for South African trucking companies. The policy sets out guidelines for employees and employers on HIV.
- The programme's services include roadside wellness centres along major truck routes, each consisting of two modified containers. Primary health care services and information on HIV, other STIs and healthy living are also offered. Each wellness centre employs a coordinator, a nurse, a trainer and a peer educator. One container is fully equipped with medication and a qualified nurse provides healthcare, voluntary testing and counselling. The other is equipped for use as an education and training facility. If a driver tests HIV-positive at a centre, he (or she) is referred to a doctor, clinic or hospital close to their home to determine whether or not they need ARV treatment.
- Technical services are run by specialist providers, for example for training, testing and treatment, as are certain management services, such as research, monitoring and procurement. They all answer to the Wellness Committee, which is responsible for policy and oversight.
- SATAWU also has its own HIV/AIDS programme and strives to provide leadership in this difficult area. It organised regular activities to promote VCT and enrol more of its members in ARV. "HIV/AIDS is a workplace issue that isn't going away," recognises Randall Howard, former General Secretary of SATAWU. He decided to set an example by getting tested for HIV as part of the union's World AIDS Day activities. "Being tested helps all of us to take the necessary steps to contribute to HIV prevention and to make sure those of us who are infected can still enjoy quality of life," said Howard.

He was prepared to make his results public so that members could take courage and consider challenging themselves directly. There were still huge difficulties in talking about HIV/AIDS, let alone being able to acknowledge that we are infected or affected.

Challenges

Apart from the universal and pervasive issues of shame and stigma, Trucking Wellness is concerned about the fact that only limited numbers of operators have started their own HIV/AIDS programmes or are taking part in existing programmes. SATAWU and its partners would like to see small-time truck operators taking action and larger companies investing in anti-retrovirals. "The loss of experienced drivers has direct consequences for industry productivity", said Tabudi Abner Ramakgolo.

Results so far

- There are now 15 roadside wellness centres promoting primary health care and providing comprehensive free services as follows:
 - treatment of STIs;
 - HIV/AIDS education, counselling and testing;
 - condom distribution;
 - general health services, including treatment for diabetes and TB;
 - food and nutrition supplements;
 - free anti-retroviral treatment to all drivers whose employers are registered with the NBCRFI, with guaranteed confidentiality.
- The rollout of ARVs is the most significant development, as the programme was not previously accredited. A service provider has been sub-contracted to deliver ARV treatment and support.
- Before the availability of ARVs the main emphasis was on STIs. "About 30 truck drivers visit the wellness centres each night," said Louis Hollander, former chairperson of Trucking Wellness. "Our main focus is treating STIs because they increase a person's chances of contracting HIV. Our biggest success has been bringing down the rate of STIs among truck drivers by 17%."

Lessons learned

- Programmes targeted to the needs, circumstances and culture of populations at risk are essential components of national programmes to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Risk and vulnerability need to be more broadly interpreted and more fully understood.
- All the partners in Trucking Wellness agree that a combination of in-house programmes and roadside clinics is the best way to reach drivers.

- Bringing together both unions and employers in the industry for a concrete and focused activity has led to the building of trust, the pooling of resources, and more extensive coverage.

Future plans

The vision of Trucking Wellness is to extend the reach of the network to offer the industry's workforce a wider choice of centres and greater access to services. To achieve this they will concentrate on involving many more of the industry's employers, so advocacy and awareness-raising will be a priority. Four existing clinics are in the process of being brought into the Wellness project as additional centres, and surveys are regularly conducted to establish needs in other areas.

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SWEDEN



Population: 9 120 000

National adult HIV prevalence: 0.1%

HIV Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): <0.2% of young men, <0.2% of young women

TB prevalence: 4.6 per 100 000 population

Number of adults living with HIV: 6 200 (2 900 are women)

HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): <100

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

Svenska Transportarbetareförbundet (Swedish Transport Workers' Union)

Established: 1897

Members: 63 000, 74 % male, 16 % female

Organises: Truck, coach and taxi drivers; dockers; airport ground staff; security guards; garbage handlers; gas station operators ; and related industries.

LEARN AS YOU GO: REACHING SWEDISH TRUCKERS WITH HIV/AIDS INFORMATION

Sweden is a country in Europe with a good system of health and social welfare. It has a relatively low HIV prevalence, so why should Swedish transport workers be concerned about the disease? The reasons are clear. Self-interest and solidarity with others go hand-in-hand. In this globalised world, where people travel so does the virus.

The 1980s saw extensive information on HIV but now people have a sense that the problem is over. This is not the case. Infection rates in most industrialised nations are rising, especially among the young, even if AIDS is no longer a death sentence. The disease is spreading in Eastern Europe, and discrimination - including at the workplace - remains an issue in all regions.

Union strategy: global solidarity in road transport through adapted communications

Trade unions in Sweden have a long tradition of solidarity with unions across the world. It was during a Swedish Transport Workers' Union course in union solidarity that its HIV project for truck drivers was born.

One of the participants was Markus Pettersson, the STWU research officer. Together with journalist Jessica Ritzén, they came up with the idea of using audio books to spread information about how HIV travels along transport routes throughout the world - and how to prevent it.

Activities

Work started on the project in 2006 and was completed in 2007, with support from the LO-TCO Secretariat of International Trade Union Development Co-operation. Interviews were conducted with truck drivers, union representatives and experts in several countries, including Sweden, South Africa and Uruguay. These were then turned into an audio documentary to raise awareness of the problem and stimulate discussions among workers. They were put onto CDs that were given away free through nine roadside libraries at truck stops where transport workers can borrow audio books throughout Sweden and listen while driving.

The project has also grown to include a website where people can see a video trailer and download the audio documentary, as well as information on HIV/AIDS. The CD also contains a song by Luther Martin Kintu, specially written for the project and targeting HIV/AIDS from a creative angle.

Challenges

Challenges include the sense that HIV/AIDS is someone else's problem and no longer an issue in Sweden. There is also the embarrassment people feel everywhere in talking about their personal lives and sexual behaviour, and the tendency to stigmatise or stereotype people affected by AIDS. "Transport workers are not by nature more irresponsible than other groups - they just travel more. We hope our audio book will help them to travel more safely," said Markus Pettersson.

Results so far

- The 6 000 copies of the CD produced in Swedish have been distributed and reached the target group. The positive response led to it being translated into English, Polish and Russian to benefit foreign truck drivers operating in Sweden. The English version is on an mp3-file for free downloading.
- The webpage usually has about 700 visits per year.

Lessons learned

- Audio books are popular with long-distance drivers and an ideal way to reach the union's members on the road. The existing network of roadside libraries meant that no new distribution system was needed.
- Workers in Sweden, as in all industrialised countries, need to be reminded that HIV/AIDS is not over, that the virus is a global risk, and that there is no place for complacency in HIV prevention.
- With the right information and support, transport workers are part of the solution not the problem!

Future plans

The project was completed with the translation of the materials into Polish and Russian. Future plans will depend on the evolution of the disease and the identification of need: the situation will continue to be monitored.

This case study benefits from the article by Theodor Lundgren in Agenda magazine, 1 2007.

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UGANDA



Population: 30 800 000
National adult prevalence: 5.4%
Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): 1.7% of young men, 5% of young women
TB prevalence: 561 per 100 000 population
Number of adults living with HIV: 810 000 (480 000 are women)
HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): 77 000

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

Amalgamated Transport & General Workers' Union (ATGWU)

Members: As of December 2009, 2 733 contributing members out of whom 385 are women. Transport sector, 952 contributing members out of whom 242 are women.

Organises: Aviation, road and oil, property services (cleaning and security).

CROSS-BORDER PARTNERSHIPS AGAINST HIV/AIDS

Uganda has reduced HIV prevalence to 6% as a result of government commitment and community involvement. Truck drivers, however, still experience higher infection rates than the national average, with an estimated HIV prevalence in 2005 of 13.5% among truck drivers along the Northern Corridor (Morris and Ferguson).

East Africa's Northern Corridor runs 1 200 kilometres from Kampala in Uganda to the Indian Ocean city of Mombasa in Kenya. Routes feed into it from neighbouring countries including Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania and Sudan. Some 8 000 drivers regularly work the Corridor, with monthly earnings on average equivalent to US\$150, and an almost equal number of sex workers also ply the route, charging around US\$2 per

customer (see Morris, C. and Ferguson, A. [2007], Sexual and treatment-seeking behaviour for sexually transmitted infection in long-distance transport workers of East Africa).

"My husband was a long distance truck driver. Sometimes he was away from the family for two weeks at a time. I didn't know how he was behaving. We only realised he was sick at the final stages of the disease. We tried our best to get him treatment. But it was too late. I want to tell everybody that life is precious. In life there are no spare parts. If you mess up you always pay the price at the end. Truck drivers must take care. And they must remember that they have families to take care of." Caroline Akoch, quoted in *Agenda* 2007

A satellite symposium at the 2008 International AIDS Conference in Mexico examined the role of truck drivers in the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa. Organised by the North Star Foundation, the World Food Programme, the International Office of Migration and the ITF, the symposium provided an analysis of root causes of risk in the transport sector and challenged the typical stereotypes of "irresponsible sexual behaviour fuelled by drugs and alcohol".

United Nations Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, Elizabeth Mataka, warned against blaming truck drivers for the spread of HIV, noting that poor working conditions make drivers vulnerable. The ITF stressed that it is not only behaviour that makes transport workers vulnerable but also underlying factors including poor working/living conditions and stigmatisation. As a result, it is very important to remove the root causes of vulnerability as well as providing awareness and behaviour change programmes. The families of transport workers should be included.

Union strategy: addressing root causes of HIV risk, partnering with sister unions for cross-border HIV prevention, and reaching out to the wider community

With support from the ITF, concerned unions met in 2007 to address working conditions along the Northern Corridor and the root causes of drivers' exposure to risk. The participants - the Amalgamated Transport & General Workers' Union (ATGWU) plus the Uganda Long Distance and Heavy Truck Drivers' Association, the Kenya Long Distance Truck Drivers' Association, and the Communications and Transport Workers' Union of Tanzania - signed a memorandum of understanding to cement their cross-border cooperation on HIV/AIDS information and education.

Particular targets are the respect of drivers' rights, the harmonisation and/or removal of tedious clearance procedures at border posts which foster excessive delays and corruption. "The delays also encourage changes in the

social behaviour of drivers, who tend to go off to find something to do, including engaging in casual sex," said ITF Regional Secretary Joseph Katende. Malaba on the Uganda-Kenya border has recently become Africa's first one-stop border post, and others are following suit. Measures are being taken so that border points will be open 24 hours a day, thus reducing waiting time from days to less than three hours. As a result of coordinated HIV/AIDS interventions by the trade unions, these notorious "hot-spots" along the Northern Corridor will become safer stopping points for the drivers and other members of the community.

Activities

- The ATGWU and ITF affiliates from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Tanzania are supporting two projects for long-distance drivers along the Northern Corridor, the USAID-funded ROADS Project and the Great Lakes Initiative on HIV/AIDS (GLIA) supported by the World Bank. Under the ROADS Project, the ATGWU runs a resource centre at each of four border crossings. Under the GLIA, the ATGWU, in partnership with the National Forum of People with HIV/AIDS Networks in Uganda (NAFOPHANU), has established three knowledge rooms along the Corridor. The resource centres at the border points and the knowledge rooms at the intermediate truck stops sites offer similar and complementary services. Full-time coordinators supervise teams of trained HIV/AIDS peer educators and counsellors who conduct sessions for drivers and local community members at the centres and through outreach visits.
- Alongside the peer education, drivers are offered voluntary HIV testing and treatment for STIs, malaria and tuberculosis. Those who are HIV-positive receive treatment for opportunistic infections and anti-retroviral therapy (ART). The cross-border nature of the services means that people on the move can receive supplies, including ART, at sites in any of the participating countries if they need to.
- The centres provide "edutainment", where drivers and members of the local community can play indoor games, such as pool; watch films; listen to invited speakers on HIV/AIDS and other topics and take part in discussions. Internet access is also available. The centres also provide the participating unions with the opportunity to recruit and inform members on labour and road safety matters.
- The ATGWU negotiates with employers in the industry for the development of workplace HIV/AIDS policies.

Challenges

Limited resources prevent the union from undertaking programmes that adequately meet the needs and aspirations of all members in their various sectors and companies.

Projects covering many countries and having multiple implementing agencies are difficult to coordinate and target. They also tend to ignore some of the specific needs of beneficiaries and of implementing organisations.

The nature of their work means that truck drivers sometimes have insufficient time for effective pre-test counselling.

Reaching the families of truck drivers with HIV/AIDS interventions is still an uphill task.

Employers of mobile transport workers do not cooperate sufficiently in these initiatives.

Results so far

- The growing network of HIV/AIDS centres, established at strategic points on transport routes, is reaching ever-increasing numbers of drivers; the uptake of services is also growing. Follow-up investigations by the ATGWU have found that although a few drivers still put themselves at risk through reckless behaviour, the safe sex message is getting through. General Secretary Romano Ojiambo-Ochieng summed it up: "Despite all the very real hardships and challenges, what we see on the ground gives us all cause for optimism. Awareness is widespread. Risky sexual behaviour is gradually being avoided. Drivers are patronising the resource centres and knowledge rooms more and more. HIV counselling and testing is becoming popular among the drivers and communities. Condoms are increasingly being used."
- The union is helping to ensure a sound policy base through negotiating HIV/AIDS provisions with employers: to date it has signed ten HIV/AIDS policies or collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) with HIV/AIDS clauses.
- Together with the International Labour Organization and the International Road Transport Union (employers' organisation) the ITF has developed a toolkit for the road transport industry, including a manual, films and guidelines, which the ATGWU helped to field-test and revise before its finalisation and dissemination.

Lessons learned

- Deepening the HIV/AIDS understanding of unions and building their capacity to run activities is the way to reach their mass memberships with prevention education, and strengthen services for care and support.
- Given the nature of the transport industry, cross-border cooperation among trade unions is an effective way of reaching transport workers with HIV/AIDS interventions.
- In order to be effective, workplace HIV/AIDS programmes must take into account the reality of the sexual behaviour of men and women, and make every effort to mainstream the gender dimension.
- Including HIV/AIDS in collective bargaining agreements is particularly effective as rights are then safeguarded and HIV/AIDS activities integrated in company business plans.
- In view of the weak financial and human resource base of most trade unions in Africa, partnerships are essential in order to maximise resources and make progress. For the ATGWU these have included the employers and the government, NGOs, relevant UN agencies, as well as sister unions in other branches of transport (such as rail) and in other countries.

Future plans

The union aims to:

- reach more workplaces with quality HIV/AIDS interventions;
- fully mainstreaming all HIV/AIDS activities in the union's agenda and programmes to ensure sustainability;
- engage more employers in workplace action on HIV/AIDS, and in particular negotiating more workplace policies and CBAs on HIV/AIDS.

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UKRAINE



Population: 46 205 000

National adult prevalence: 1.6%

Prevalence among young people (15-24 years): 1.6% of young men, 1.5% of young women

TB prevalence: 102 per 100 000 population

Number of adults living with HIV: 430 000 (190 000 are women)

HIV deaths in adults and children (previous year): 19 000

Estimated figures, source: Epidemiological Fact Sheet on HIV and AIDS, 2008, UNAIDS/WHO/UNICEF & WHO TB statistics (2006-7)

Trade Union of Railway Workers and Transport Constructors of Ukraine (TURW)

Established: in 1905 it brings together 1958 local trade unions in the rail and related industries from all over Ukraine

Members: 538 000, including 187 000 women, 120 000 young people (up to 28 years) - this represents almost 98% of all railway employees in Ukraine

USING THE RAILWAY NETWORK TO REACH YOUNG PEOPLE AND WORKERS

Ukraine has one of the most severe AIDS epidemics in Europe, with one fifth of the new HIV diagnoses in Europe and Eurasia in 2006. The annual number of HIV cases has more than doubled since 2001. TB is also on the rise. The government and donors have so far concentrated on high-risk groups such as intravenous drug users and sex workers. Data on new HIV cases suggest that Ukraine has not managed to contain

HIV/AIDS or TB within high-risk groups, and that the epidemic is spreading to the general population. HIV/AIDS and TB services at the local level continue to be of poor quality, especially in terms of prevention.

Alexandr Gnatuk, TURW representative, explained: "A recent survey showed that a large majority of our members are very worried about HIV/AIDS and TB, and that they think that trade unions should play a leading role in informing their members about these diseases. Our trade union is very committed to take its social responsibility in addressing HIV/AIDS and TB."

Union strategy: innovative approaches to reach adults and youth

Together with the NGO Labour, Health and Social Initiatives (LHSI), TURW has developed a three-strand project which targets union members, government authorities and the general public in order to:

- i) increase the union's capacity and resources to carry out HIV/AIDS and TB workplace prevention programmes, specifically aimed at young workers;
- ii) increase the participation and influence of trade unions in policy-making processes, including on HIV and TB;
- iii) make use of the railway network to provide public information on health, including a focus on youth.

Activities

The project focuses on three cities in Donetsk, Ukraine's most industrialised region, and one of high HIV and TB incidence. Activities include the training of peer educators among railway workers and arranging education sessions for union members. They also organise a training programme for Donetsk Railway medical staff and have helped establish protocols for diagnosis and treatment of opportunistic diseases, post-exposure prevention and management of VCT.

Certain employees are in direct contact with significant numbers of people every day. The union, with the active participation of its Youth Council, conducts special prevention training for these groups of workers: most of them are conductors, locomotive drivers and staff of industrial medical institutions.

Since this is the first combined HIV/AIDS and TB workplace prevention programme in Ukraine, special attention is being given to developing materials that can be used by other Ukrainian trade unions, such as manuals, guidelines and best practice publications. Materials were also produced for an intensive public information campaign,

including putting up posters on trains and at stations and distributing one million leaflets on HIV/AIDS and TB to railway passengers.

TURW participates in regional and national HIV/AIDS and TB coordination councils, and has helped the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to include provisions for the workplace in the National HIV/AIDS and TB strategy. TURW has also supported local HIV/TB strategy development in two of the three cities covered by the project. TURW carried out an assessment of railway workers' exposure to TB risk and made recommendations to the management on improved TB detection.

Challenges

The dominant focus on high-risk groups has been a very strong barrier to the promotion of primary prevention in Ukraine. Even though statistics on new HIV cases clearly show that high-risk groups no longer account for the majority of new cases, the authorities maintain their emphasis on treatment with an almost total neglect of prevention.

The global economic crisis has hit Ukraine very hard and reduced private sector investment in workplace prevention. This, combined with constraints on the national budget, means that HIV/AIDS and TB activities at the workplace and in the wider community are likely to be extremely underfunded for the foreseeable future.

Results so far

- TURW's capacity to carry out HIV/AIDS and TB workplace prevention has been increased through the training of 52 peer educators, who have provided HIV/AIDS and TB education to over 12 000 railway workers. This has included training for members of the Youth Forum. Significant changes in knowledge and attitudes were demonstrated by a KAP survey.
- HIV/AIDS and TB have been included in the collective bargaining agreement negotiated by TURW, and HIV/AIDS and TB committees have been set up in enterprises linked to Donetsk Railways. Both management and employees are committed to ongoing HIV/TB prevention activities. One example of management commitment has been the provision free of charge of advertising space on trains and at stations, worth tens of thousands of Euros.
- The fact that trade unions have taken their rightful place on key policy-making bodies has been a significant achievement. The TURW has become a member of the ad hoc committee under the National Coordination Council (NCC) and workplace prevention has become an integral part of the National HIV/AIDS and TB Strategy.

Lessons learned

- Cooperation between LHSI and the unions (TURW and the Federation of Trade Unions) has been very fruitful, with LHSI supporting the TURW strategy and activities through its experience in project management, proposal writing and resource mobilisation. "We are proud that our trade union is leading the way and showing what trade unions can do to address HIV/AIDS and TB. This project will be an example for other trade unions in Ukraine and ... in other countries of the former Soviet Union", said Alexandr Gnatuk.
- The position of trade unions and the value of workplace programmes are strengthened by the participation of union representatives in policy-making.
- A KAP study carried out at the beginning and towards the end of the project has shown very positive results in knowledge and attitude changes during the relatively short period of 18 months during which workers received information and education about HIV/AIDS and TB.
- The combination of access to a large number of citizens (through the railway) and access to a large number of employees (through the TURW) resulted in large scale, innovative and effective prevention activities at low cost.
- The establishment of HIV/AIDS and TB coordination councils at the local (municipal) level has been effective in identifying local priorities, increasing community mobilisation and fostering cooperation between government, unions, NGOs and citizens.

Future plans

The TURW will work to ensure the implementation of collective agreement provisions on HIV/AIDS and TB in workplaces.

The TURW will promote replication of project activities by other railway networks and other trade unions, including sharing project outputs (manuals, best practices etc.).

The LHSI has signed memorandums of cooperation with the TURW to continue their cooperation on labour-related issues - this may include establishing staff health insurance schemes for the railways financed jointly by employers, employees and the TURW.

The TURW, through its representation on the NCC, will develop activities to be included in the Ukrainian HIV/AIDS proposal to the Global Fund in 2010.

This case study benefits from the work of Jan Edwin Waanders, a Kyiv-based consultant to TURW and LHSI, and of Alexander Mushenok, Head of the Social and Labour Relations and the Domestic Work Department of the Trade Union Council.



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For more information please contact education@itf.org.uk



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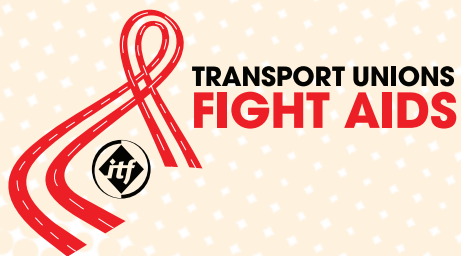
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