

:: Technical Co-Operation in Sri Lanka

HIV / AIDS

- The ILO's response to HIV/AIDS in the World of Work

Background:

Sri Lanka is a low prevalence but highly vulnerable country to an HIV/AIDS epidemic with the total number living with HIV/AIDS estimated at 4,500 and the estimated adult prevalence rate of less than 0.1%.

The ILO in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour Relations & Foreign Employment is executing the: ILO/USDOL International HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme. It will be implemented by the Ministry of Labour Relations and Foreign Employment, Employers' Federation of Ceylon and other chambers/federations of employers, workers' organizations, selected enterprises, and network(s) of People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). It is a 3 and half year project funded by the U.S. Department of Labour.

The project aims to contribute to the prevention of HIV/AIDS in the world of work, enhance workplace protection and reduction of its adverse consequences on social, labour, and economic development

The objectives of the project are to reduce the level of employment-related discrimination against persons living with HIV/AIDS, and to reduce HIV/AIDS risk behaviors among targeted workers.

ILO will collaborate with the Government, employers' and workers' organizations to ensure that the national legal and policy framework is conducive to workplace prevention and protect workers' rights. It will also collaborate with the management and workers to formulate policy and launch effective programmes within the workplace and will share experiences gained and replicate good practices.

The strategy:

1. The project will work directly with enterprises in selected sectors to create or enhance HIV/AIDS workplace policies and programmes.
2. Focus on creating policies and mechanisms which will ultimately lead to a reduced level of discrimination and provide further support for all stakeholders.

A tripartite Project Advisory Board (PAB) will steer the project.

1. ILO's Inputs:

1. Provide technical expertise in developing the national tripartite policy on HIV/AIDS and the world of work and for the legislation review.
2. Provide assistance for institutional development (capacity building) through:
 - » development of an evaluation programme for the plan of action
 - » creation of a system (website) for dissemination of information on policy, intervention strategies and resource material.
3. Provide assistance for the development of workplace policies and programmes; i.e.
 - » development of resource and training materials
 - » training of trainers programmes for all partners and target groups.

The Launch of the Project and Stakeholders' meeting

The project was launched on 8th July 2005 and the Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Ministry of Labour Relations & Foreign Employment and the ILO. This was followed by a Stakeholders' meeting in order to create awareness among the tripartite constituents on the objectives & the key project approaches and to obtain their inputs.



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Latest Developments

- **Interventions with enterprises within the target sectors:** Manufacturing, Hotels/Leisure and Estates sectors have been identified from the formal sector for interventions in the workplaces. Thirteen enterprises signed Memoranda of Cooperation (MOC) and appointed Focal Points and identified 14 workplaces for the pilot project. A breakfast meeting was held on 10 November 2005 with the CEOs and the Focal Points to sensitize on HIV/AIDS and its impact on enterprises and workers. The focal points received training on the ILO Code of Practice, project strategy, objectives, indicators and the Project Planning and Monitoring system. Basics of HIV/AIDS, and Behaviour Change Communication concepts and processes.

Collection of Baseline data- Workers' Survey: The workers' survey on knowledge-attitudes and practices among workers was conducted among three hundred workers in 6 workplace selected from each sector. A post intervention survey will also be carried out assess the impact of the project. A Formative Assessment to gather more in depth information regarding behaviours was conducted from 23 January to 22 February 2006.

Training Workplace HIV/AIDS Committees

All the workplaces have appointed Workplace HIV/AIDS Committees. They will receive training to plan and implement workplace HIV/AIDS prevention programmes and to develop workplace policies.

- **Training of District Representatives and Leaders of the Lanka Jathika Estates Workers Union :** Twenty five Trade Union Leaders and District Representatives attended a training programme and strategy development Workshop on 3 March 2006.
- **Pilot project in one Industrial Park by the Labour Officers of the Ministry of Labour:** The Worker's Education Division of the Ministry of Labour will implement a pilot project in 20 factories situated in an Industrial Park. An advocacy programme was conducted on 28 February 2006 for the Human Resource Managers of the factories and Labour Officers of the Department Of Labour.

- **Training workshop on the ILO/FHI Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) Tool-kit:** The NPC and the Project Officer participated in a training programme held in Moscow from 12-15 December 2005. Teams from Russia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka participated in the training programme. The BCC Formative Assessment was carried out in all 14 workplaces selected for the project
- **World AIDS Day :** A paper supplement was published in the Finance Section of the Daily Mirror on 1 December 2005 highlighting the HIV/AIDS as a workplace issue and the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work. A live, interactive, weekly, radio programme was launched on 30 November 2005 and continued till 15 February 2006. In addition, a Media Forum was conducted with the participation of the Minister of Labour on the 20th December 2005.
- **Consultative meeting to provide inputs to the National AIDS Policy:** A consultation was held on the 5th October 2005 with participants from the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health, NGOs, Employers' Organisations, Trade Unions, People Living with HIV/AIDS and other interested persons to review the discussion paper on the National AIDS Policy and inputs were sent to the Ministry of Health for consideration.
- **Workshop for development of the Project Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP):** The Strategic Planning and PMP workshop took place from 15-17 August 2005. Over the three-day period a 15 member technical team comprised of tripartite constituents and other key stakeholders participated in the workshop. The group reviewed and adapted the country-specific set of nine generic performance monitoring documents.
- **Interventions with People Living with HIV/AIDS**
The project will attempt to develop capacity of PLWHA to engage in innovative income generating activities and to document stigma and discrimination. In addition, the capacity of PLWHAs to improve their public speaking skills will also be developed.
- **Integration with other ILO projects:** Jobsnet, Factory Improvement Project (FIP), IPEC, Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) and the Youth Employment Network (YEN)

projects of the ILO have been identified to integrate HIV/AIDS education programmes into their activities.

- **Information Education and Communication Material:** Three posters and one leaflet developed in India were adapted and printed in English, Sinhala and Tamil. '*The Promise*' a video documentary was produced for sensitisation and for advocacy programmes with stakeholders. A video documentary '*Siva Sathyam*' has been developed for the plantation sector by the ILO and it is available in Sinhala and Tamil. The ILO Code of Practice is also available in Sinhala and Tamil.