

# **Theme: Reducing HIV Vulnerability Through Economic Empowerment**

## **CONCEPT PAPER**

### **LAUNCHING THE CEEP INNOVATION FUND AND THE NATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE**

**Dates: 18-19 July 2013**

**Venue: Birchwood Hotel, Boksburg**

#### **BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) implements different initiatives that support the SADC development agenda of controlling and reversing the impact of HIV and AIDS. From 2007-2010, the ILO supported the National Department of Transport, Employers and Workers in the transport sector under a previous intervention. This project achieved a number of results, including assisting the Transport Sector to develop policies, systems and programmes on HIV, AIDS, STI and TB in the workplace and the formation of Transport Sector HIV, AIDS, STI and TB coordinating committee in 2007.

Upon recognition of the project achievements, the ILO in consultation with SIDA extended the project to vulnerable groups along the transport corridors and communities, leading to implementation of the project on HIV vulnerability reduction through economic empowerment focusing women, men, young girls and boys to HIV.

This project is implemented in six African countries Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe by supporting policy makers and promoters to make evidence-based decisions to mainstream the economic empowerment model into HIV and AIDS regional and national agenda, providing economic empowerment for target men, women and youth along the transport corridors by increasing availability of economic services to prevent and mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS in selected transport corridors and lastly reducing HIV vulnerability by increasing access to effective HIV and AIDS prevention and impact mitigation services provided by target social economy organizations along the transport corridors.

In South Africa, the project is implemented in collaboration with various stakeholders in the following provinces:

- Free State: Harrismith and Ventersburg,

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- Gauteng: the City of Tshwane,
- Mpumalanga - Nkomazi municipality to Lebombo border post,
- North West: Ramotshere Moiloa municipality to Skilpad border post and
- Western Cape: Beaufort West Municipality.

### **THE PROBLEM STATEMENT**

HIV interventions are often focused on the biomedical approaches, thus undermining the effectiveness of these programs. Secondly, there is lack of collaboration among organizations that implement HIV interventions, thus creating competitive instead of complementary programs. Thirdly, some organizations lack the capacity and resources to translate policy into action. Lastly, the marginalised members of communities along Transport corridors like, vulnerable women and young girls are involved in informal trade and often lack resources to sustain or improve their business thus making them vulnerable to risky behaviours like sex work.

### **PROJECT PROGRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The ILO advocates for creation of decent work, through this project, LO provides HIV and business capacity building interventions for vulnerable groups, institutional support for employer and employee organizations, and facilitates access to economic services by project beneficiaries. As part of project support for policy makers and promoters, the ILO commissioned a study to explore intersections between Economic Empowerment, Gender and how they contribute to HIV infections in Free State; Maluti-A-Phofung and North West; Ramotshere Moiloa Municipalities.

Under the capacity building components, the project trained 496 beneficiaries on HIV and business skills and facilitated the formation and registration of fifty business groups in eight project locations.

In this two-day event, the ILO will:

1. Launch the Corridor Economic Empowerment Innovation Fund – a micro-credit scheme designed to address the needs of the vulnerable groups' of women, young girls and men operating in the informal sector of selected communities.
2. Promote the model on HIV Vulnerability Prevention through economic empowerment,
3. Share programs and research findings with all stakeholders in order to:
  - a. Provide detailed potential programming directions that will address critical policy gaps on intersections between HIV vulnerability, Gender and economic empowerment.
  - b. Stimulate commitment of key stakeholders on the model for integration of Economic Empowerment and Gender into existing HIV policies and programs.

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- c. Invite additional resource persons to the National Project Technical committee on HIV and Economic Empowerment.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the two day event is to popularise the Corridor Economic Empowerment and HIV prevention strategy and launch the project Innovation Fund. Secondly, through the policy dialogue the project seeks to facilitate evidence-based policy development and programming on intersections between Economic Empowerment, Gender and HIV. Thirdly, is to equip stakeholders with information on HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for vulnerable individuals', groups and communities.

### **PROGRAM**

**The program for the two day events is planned as follows:**

- **18<sup>th</sup> July 2013 : 08h00 – 12h00** - The launch of the Innovation fund
- **18<sup>th</sup> July 2013 : 12h10 – 12h30** - Official opening of the National Policy dialogue
- **19<sup>th</sup> July 2013 : 08h00 – 14h00** - Policy dialogue continues

### **PARTICIPANTS**

Participants from all three spheres of Government, Parastatals, Academic Institutions, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organizations, Private Sector and project beneficiaries from selected locations will be invited to participate in the launch of the Corridor Economic Empowerment Innovation Fund as well as National Policy Dialogue.

It is envisaged that the Government Ministers will launch the Corridor Economic Empowerment Innovation Fund and officially open the National Policy Dialogue on HIV Vulnerability Prevention and Economic Empowerment on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2013.