

Cost and Benefit Ratio in Implementing HIV/AIDS Prevention Programme in Company

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BALI (ILO News) - What is the potential loss for companies if they do not implement HIV/AIDS workplace programmes? What is the benefit for a private sector company to invest in HIV prevention, care and support?

Those are common questions asked by companies that can now be quickly answered by an interactive calculation programme called "Cost and Benefit Ratio in Implementing HIV/AIDS Programme in Companies". The interactive programme is part of the Executive Brief Guidance for Employers, developed by the ILO and the Indonesian Employers' Association (Apindo).

The programme was presented during an oral session, "Private Sector Involvement: Building Up Partnership for AIDS Response," attended by representatives from unions, employers' organization, governments and international organizations on 11 August at the 9th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP) in Bali.

The calculation tool is specifically developed for employers as a means to raise greater awareness on the linkages between the HIV/AIDS and productivity. It also provides information and guidance on the importance of the HIV/AIDS prevention programme at company level, in order to maintain and improve the productivity of workers.

The programme consists of two main features. Its helps to estimate how a specific company and its workers and managers could be vulnerable to HIV. It also allows them to calculate the cost and benefit ratio of investing in an HIV/AIDS workplace programme for a company, taking into consideration its size and sector of activity.

"Simply by responding to easy, quick questions, the two main features of the programme are able to provide the employers with calculations on the cost borne by the company to tackle the impact of HIV/AIDS, and on the investment spent and profit gained when implementing the HIV/AIDS prevention programme," explained Early Nuriana Dewi, the officer of the ILO's HIV/AIDS programme in Indonesia..

In Indonesia, this interactive programme was launched in 2007 and has already been tried out in seven cities (Jember, Madiun, Kediri, Manado, Makassar, Pontianak and Palembang) by a total of 190 national companies. Following the use of the programme as an advocacy tool, about 76 companies stated their commitments to implementing a HIV/AIDS workplace policy and programme.

"Workers now have wider access to information on prevention, treatment, voluntary counseling and testing, and referral systems have been established to health facilities. Policies addressing issues of stigma and discrimination have been adopted," Ms. Dewi added.