



Evaluation Summaries

HIV/AIDS workplace education programme in China

Quick Facts

Countries: China

Final Evaluation: July 2009

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: HIV/AIDS

Evaluation Management: ILO-Beijing

Evaluation Team: Mei Zegers

Project End: Aug 2009

Project Code: CPR/04/51/USA

Donor: United States, Department of Labor,
for USD 3,500,000

Keywords: HIV/AIDS, workplace education

Background & Context

The project “HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme in China” was implemented by the International Labour Organization with the financial support of the US Department of Labor (USDOL), and in consultation with the national partners the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS) and China Enterprise Confederation (CEC). The project carried out a wide-ranging workplace HIV programme to reduce high-risk behaviour among workers - as well as future workers - and to eliminate HIV related employment discrimination. Migrant workers formed the primary group on which the project concentrated its actions. Migrant workers in China face social and economic situations which influence potential high risk behaviour. The project was officially launched in January 2007 and will end on August 31, 2009. The project was evaluated by an independent

evaluation team in July 2009. Stakeholders unanimously praised the project. Objective measures indicate that the project met objectives and laid a good foundation to replicate and expand project actions. The project’s underlying goal was to support the Chinese government to create a sustainable, integrated and well-targeted national programme to address the challenges of HIV/AIDS in the world of work in China. The project objectives were:

- Reduced HIV/AIDS risk behaviours among targeted workers.
- Reduced level of employment-related discrimination against workers living with HIV/AIDS or affected by HIV/AIDS.

The development objectives were to be accomplished by pursuing four immediate objectives: i) Improved knowledge and attitudes related to HIV/AIDS risk behaviours; ii) Increased awareness and use of available HIV/AIDS workplace services; iii) Reduced stigma against persons living with HIV/AIDS; iv) Increased knowledge of HIV/AIDS workplace policy /guidelines. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the achievements of the project toward reaching its targets and objectives as outlined in the cooperative agreement and other project documents. Specifically, the goal was to assess the impact and achievements of the project, document any lessons learned that may be applicable to other workplace programmes, as well as to develop recommendations for the Government of China and other stakeholders to ensure sustainability.

The field work for the final evaluation was carried out during the evaluator's mission to China from June 28 to July 11, 2009. UN Evaluation norms and standards and OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards were followed. To ensure a thorough evaluation the evaluator used a combination of methods so that a well-rounded evaluation could be carried out consisting of document analysis, field visits, reporting of initial findings followed by collection of additional stakeholder inputs.

The methodology allowed for an assessment in accordance with the standard evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Key elements included an analysis of project planning, overall progress at enterprise and national level, monitoring and evaluation and project management. The evaluator prepared a detailed methodology including questions for each type of stakeholder prior to the field assessment in China. The project design was valid, clear, logical and relevant to the situation in China. The principal project partner was the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security which is appropriate to the context in China. The government is vital to the implementation of any activity in China and also has the resources to provide support to implement activities and provides scope for sustainability. Employers' organizations at national and provincial level as well as workers' organization representatives, particularly at enterprise level, were also included.

The project is comprehensive and works at national, provincial and local levels with a wide range of stakeholders. The project strategy was in line with national strategies on HIV, internal migration and non-discrimination including China Strategy on HIV Control in the country. The project is also in support of the China Decent Work Country Programme. The project focuses strongly on internal rural to urban migrants, a group that has more than doubled in number between 2000 and 2007. The project concentrated on

three provinces with high rates of internal migrants, either as a source of migration (Anhui), or as a destination (Guangdong and Yunnan). The project conducted a research review and initial mapping exercise of existing behavioural and biological surveillance data to identify geographic areas, sectors and types of enterprises where workers were known to engage in risk behaviours. These locations as well as the sectors were appropriately selected based on the available prevalence data in the research review and mapping exercise. A range of private and public enterprises as well as employment agencies were associated to demonstrate that it was possible to implement actions in both private and public environments. Vocational schools were also included in the project because the students constitute a population of potential future migrant workers. Stakeholders noted that there is a long list of other types of sectors and enterprises that need to be included in future HIV programs.

The choice of partners was strategically appropriate for the implementation of the project. The project contributed to increased coordination and cooperation between tripartite constituents and other partners at national and provincial level. The project thus fostered the involvement of the tripartite partners and promoted social dialogue, particularly on models to address HIV and decreasing stigma and discrimination. The project developed a methodology that the tripartite partners reported to be effective. The project was also associated with NGOs. The inclusion of the China Family Planning Association at national and provincial level into the discussions on project efforts, policies and other activities contributed to widening cooperation beyond the classic tripartite constituents. The government and enterprises had little experience cooperating with NGOs in the past. The project helped create avenues for such cooperation which, after initial reticence, was mostly well received although there is still scope for improvement.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The project promoted the adoption and improvement of laws, regulations and policies at national level through advocacy in meetings with tripartite stakeholders. Changing national laws and regulations as well as the adoption of policies is a long process, however, and is largely beyond the control of a project such as this one. There was and continues to be a need for the national government to provide clear directives to local labour departments on how these policies should be implemented and enforced. So far 5 labour inspectors have been trained through the project in collaboration with the government to facilitate implementation of HIV/AIDS legislation and policies. The number of labour inspectors in China, currently estimated at 60,000, is very small compared to the actual need. The ability of labour inspectors to fully play a role in the application of HIV related laws, regulations and policies is, therefore, still limited. There is a need to continue training labour inspectors and clarify their roles and responsibilities for protecting the rights of workers with HIV. The project has also made some headway to promote the need for employers and workers organizations to work to ensure that policies on worker rights related to HIV are communicated to managers and workers but this will need to continue.

Although the project was able to maximize the positive aspects of the centralized organizational structures in China these same systems also posed some challenges. A highly centralized approach has some benefits because it can help ensure that lower hierarchical levels pay attention to issues deemed important at national level. In fact, national level directives helped promote the project's ability to advance and gain cooperation for the development and adoption of provincial policies. The challenge was - and continues to be - to determine how to tap into the hierarchical system to ensure that local levels are allowed flexibility to tailor local responses. In *some* instances provincial level structures could have had higher levels of ownership, which could be attained by

ensuring that directives allow for such local flexibility. It should be noted, however, that ownership among enterprises and vocational schools was good.

The project has exceeded its objectives and reached its target groups through strategic cooperation with key partners, building on existing structures to dispense information and training, and responding to opportunities to develop innovative actions as they arose. The project implemented a baseline study and completed an end-line study that included a control group to assess the changes that occurred as a result of the project in terms of worker knowledge, attitudes and practices. The results (see Table 1) indicate that the project was able to meet the four immediate project objectives. Results indicate improvement on all measures including a reduction in the percentage of workers who reported casual or commercial sex during the previous three months prior to the end-line study. Despite the positive results there is still room for improvement, particularly with respect to condom use during last casual or commercial sex encounter, acceptance of people living with HIV and awareness of all five measures for prevention. Evaluation interviews with employers and workers indicate that they have a relatively good understanding of HIV and AIDS, a finding that substantiates the results of the end-line survey. Implementation partners have a good understanding and capacity to address HIV/AIDS at the workplace through workshops and other media.

At the time of the evaluation 15 pilot companies had passed workplace HIV policies to reduce discrimination, protect employment rights of people living with HIV and guarantee on-going prevention and health service referrals. The policies were adopted after social dialogue among the employers, workers and local government. The policies are in line with the key principles of the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work. Pilot enterprises are aware of the ILO Code of Practice and the supporting provisions in

national and provincial policies. The evaluator noted solid commitment by labour and management of the enterprises, employment agency and vocational schools visited during the evaluation. Commitment and collaboration with the project and its partners was evident in the integration of HIV related training into on-going training provided to workers. The large number of project posters, billboards as well as brochures and small flip charts and other BCC materials also provided solid evidence. Technical support needed to be adapted in line with the different types of enterprises, whether state-owned or privately-owned. Each type of enterprise had its own advantages and challenges. State-owned enterprises tended to function more bureaucratically but had large company resources and resources in the local community such as their own TV station and newspaper.

The project implemented a Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) model that was solidly based in information acquired from the baseline and mapping exercise but also on previous experience of project staff and partners. Sites selected for intensive implementation of the BCC campaign were selected based on HIV and STI prevalence of both workers and identified most at-risk groups. The project prioritized Gejiu, Yunnan, for example, because of the high HIV and STI prevalence in the area as identified through extensive behavioural and biological research conducted by the US National Institute of Health in 2006. The FSW prevalence was 13% in 2008, the miners' STI prevalence was 19% and HIV 0.8%.

The project obtained continuous input from all project partners and also from pilot enterprises to refine the materials and BCC methods. The BCC model had two principal components; a mass media component that aimed to reach as many workers as possible with relevant messages and a more intensive training/peer education component. The intensive component was implemented in enterprises, vocational schools and in one large employment agency. One challenge was to

determine how to localize HIV training in the Chinese context. In response the project developed the highly appreciated Hometown Fellows Campaign that aimed to reach rural migrant workers using their own socio-cultural networks.

Given the short duration of the project at the time of the final evaluation (just 2 ½ years) it is laudable that some companies have already started some outreach campaigns. Aside from mass media broadcasting of the project film on company TV stations, company buses etc. they also assisted by placing billboards and posters in public locations and distributing materials at company sales points.

The monitoring system to collect performance data was mostly appropriate to monitor the project implementation and measure the impact of project performance. Data from the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and qualitative information was regularly shared in meetings on the Decent Work Country Programme and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. It would have been useful to include more qualitative aspects to the end-line survey to learn in greater detail which aspects of the actions were particularly effective. One gap was the lack of a well rounded monitoring system for the vocational training schools as this component was actually an add-on to the project.

The project was efficient in terms of the results obtained in relation to the expenditure incurred and resources used by the project. The Staff were professional, committed and competent. The project management built on the strengths of individual staff members and was perceived as well organised by stakeholders. The project had hired staff in the provinces to act more as contact points and coordinators and less to provide technical input. In fact, it would have been preferable if staff had been hired who already had a background on HIV from the start.

The project has potential for continued impact. The project was able to ensure that enterprises reached out to existing workers but also established policies and/or integration of training into routine company training. This means that it is likely that the project will continue to contribute to sustained improvements beyond the current project time frame. The project also achieved wider impact because it developed new and innovative strategies to reach beyond the targeted workplaces, such as through mass media efforts and training in additional government training institutions and an employment agency.

The materials that the project developed will also likely continue to be used over time. The materials are effective, interesting and attractive so they are likely to contribute to sustained interest levels although it will be necessary to continue to develop new materials also.

At the national level the impact of the project is likely to be substantial. Some of the national policies need to be further fine-tuned to ensure that they are very clear with regards to HIV, stigma and discrimination. Systems for collaboration between the tripartite partners and NGOs on HIV, stigma and discrimination and related issues have now been instituted and are likely to continue. The enthusiasm of the tripartite partners to continue the initiated work was evident. Some partners noted that they will be able to attribute resources to expanding impact in space and time while others requested on-going support. Most interviewees still felt that much more technical support is needed to be able to take the project initiatives to additional sites throughout the country. A number of interviewees indicated that the gender aspect could have been highlighted more strongly in the different project components.

The project is likely to have good sustainability in terms of lasting effects after the termination of the project and the withdrawal of external resources. China has

more human and other resources as well as a well developed system of communications, training and education than most other countries. The project tapped into this system to develop the entire project and to develop the sustainability options for action. The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security as well as participating companies, vocational schools and an employment agency have already indicated that they will work to sustain the actions. Most of the enterprises have already integrated the actions into their routine training courses. A project sustainability plan is being implemented with good potential for positive results. For full realization some of the sustainability plan components will need to continue being implemented after the project ends.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

1. Policy Development and Implementation:

Provide technical support for the development of HIV policies in additional provinces. (Executing agency, Government, Employers/Organizations, Workers' Organizations, NGOs)

2. Awareness Raising and Entry into Enterprises: Continue to specifically target most at-risk migrant workers in order to focus limited resources. An updated study of prevalence levels and risk behaviour in such sectors and provinces would be useful to improve targeting of actions on HIV.

3. Develop detailed manual to promote actions on HIV and entice new companies to implement programs on HIV (Executing agency, Government, Employers' Organisations, Workers' Organisations, NGOs).

4. Training and Behaviour Change Communications:

Establish system for regular updating of materials to ensure continued public interest and adaptation to new information. Establish a system to implement quality control of new messages

and images through key designated experts on existing panels/committees. (Executing agency, Government, Employers' Organizations, Workers' Organizations, and NGOs).

5. Training for Trainers and Overall Capacity Strengthening of Partner Agency Staff: Implement system to train individuals responsible for replicating the entire model at provincial levels. (Government).

6. Extend training to more new trainers, establish certified master trainer system. (Executing agency, Government, Employers/Organizations, Workers' Organizations, NGOs).

7. Management, Monitoring and Evaluation: Scale up coordination of ILO with other UN and international agency projects, e.g. on HIV in vocational school training. (Executing agency).

8. Sustainability, Replication, Expansion: Expand Hometown Fellows Campaign as widely as possible in all relevant locations. Disseminate other BCC materials widely. (Executing agency, Government, Employers/Organisations, Workers' Organisations, NGOs).

9. Project to shift from management of a project on HIV to providing technical support to replicate and expand project initiated efforts. A technically experienced team should be in place to assist with this process. (Executing agency).

10. Promote and encourage extension of enterprise outreach activities. (Government, Employers/ Organisations, Workers' Organisations, NGOs).