



Evaluation Summaries

Implementing HIV/AIDS workplace policies and programmes - Sierra Leone Component

Quick Facts

Countries: Sierra Leone

Final Evaluation: June 2009

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: HIV/AIDS

Evaluation Management: ILO/AIDS

Evaluation Team: Christian Bugnion

Project Start: June 2006

Project End: June 2009

Project Code: SIL/06/50/OPE (Umbrella INT/05/11/OPE)

Donor: OPEC - US \$ 2,000,000 (ILO contribution US\$2,000,000)

Keywords: HIV/AIDS, workplace education, informal sector

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the awareness, technical capacity and institutional capabilities of the government and the workplace partners in selected countries to support the development and effective implementation of workplace policies and programme.

The immediate objective is to increase the capacity of the ILO's tripartite constituents, and associated civil society organisations, to design and implement comprehensive workplace policies and programmes for prevention, care, and the protection of rights.

The intervention strategy rests on two key elements:

- Collaborating with the government to ensure that the national legally and policy framework is conducive to workplace programmes and the protection of worker's rights; and
- Collaborating with employers and workers to launch effective gender-sensitive and sustainable programmes of prevention, care and support within the workplace and surrounding communities.

The project covers the mentioned countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and the management is decentralized to the respective field offices covering the project countries, with National Project Coordinators in each country, dealing with the day-to-day management of the project.

Present situation of project

The project came to an end 30 June 2009, with workplace policies and programmes in place in all project countries, with some differences in the level of interventions, taking into account the stage of the epidemic and the countries set priorities within the National Strategic Frameworks on HIV/AIDS. A new phase has been agreed with the OPEC fund and is under design.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation according to the TOR is to:

- Determine if the stated objectives have been achieved and if they were relevant;

- Determine to what extent the strategic approach of the OPEC funded programme is integrated in the ILO programmatic framework, in particular the DWCPs;
- Determine if the interventions were implemented in a way to ensure their continuation after the life of the programme and make recommendations on how to ensure sustainability.
- Determine how this project has strengthened the ILO position to support its constituents.

The evaluation covers three countries selected by the ILO HIV/AIDS work place programme as Bolivia, Senegal (as a second choice after events in Madagascar forced the choice of a different francophone country) and Sierra Leone. Key clients of the evaluation as identified in the TOR are:

- The coordinator of ILO/AIDS Technical Cooperation and its team at HQ, as well as the Director of ILO/AIDS programme;
- HIV/AIDS Technical specialists and national project coordinators in the field, covering project countries;
- Workers', employers' organizations and the Ministries of Labour, and other relevant ministries at country level;
- Cooperatives societies, Informal Sector Associations and Micro and Small Enterprises at country level (including Business Development Services);
- UNAIDS (UN Joint Programme on AIDS);
- NACs (National AIDS Councils);
- The Sub-regional and Field Offices responsible for the countries covered; and
- The OPEC Fund for International Development Methodology of evaluation.

The evaluation has followed a standard project evaluation approach consisting of:

- A documentary review of the programme and the country projects, based on material made available by the HIV/AIDS programme and collected additionally during the field visits;
- Key informant interviews, both individual and group interviews, with the primary project

stakeholders, including the tripartite constituents in each of the project countries;

- Attendance to specific events as part of the project activities (training workshop);
- Observation on-site;
- Interview and briefing with technical programme staff in Geneva.

In order to determine the questions that would be asked, an evaluation framework was prepared. Triangulation was used when confronting diverging information from key informants.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The ILO programme on HIV/AIDS in the world of work has created a strong impact on the tripartite constituents in each of the project countries visited. There is widespread agreement that the programme comes to fill an existing gap.

The programme has been able to change the commonly held view that HIV/AIDS is essentially a health issue, to the fact that HIV/AIDS is a critical aspect of the work place environment.

There is no doubt that the programme is entirely relevant to all stakeholders and in line with national priorities. In fact, it is surprisingly more important in these three relatively low prevalence countries to address the issues of prevention, stigma and discrimination, as people have had less direct exposure to persons who are living with HIV than in other higher prevalence countries. As a result, there appears to be more prejudice and discrimination towards people with HIV in lower prevalence countries given their limited exposure and knowledge about HIV/AIDS.

The individual projects have all achieved their immediate objectives in each project country and some have used innovative and positive approach to maximise resource use (such as in Sierra Leone where there is no NPC and the support is given directly to the NAS) or undertake ground-breaking work with indigenous population (training on HIV/AIDS

with Aymara communities), or working with the informal sector through CBOs in Senegal.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

The primary recommendations are made for the HIV/AIDS programme, with shorter recommendations made for the field offices and NPCs. If ILO wants to make itself known for its **HIV/AIDS programme** and is considering branding this product it should:

1. The ILO should start giving more attention to the resources it places in each project country in line with the objectives, including transportation and definition of the geographical catchment area of project activities.
2. The ILO should determine the fund-raising strategy and ensure it is communicated to the project staff in each project country.
3. The ILO should allocate a realistic time-frame for completion of activities, considering that it is well known that new projects take up to their first six months to get up to speed; the technical staff know this well from experience.
4. The ILO should establish clear objectives and review them annually, and systematically prepare yearly work plans for each project country.
5. The ILO should establish a clear information and communication strategy for relating to staff in project countries. Too much micro-management is taking place from the Geneva office, as well as a strategy for the local media, to ensure greater visibility.
6. The ILO should provide specific training as needed to NPCs, particularly for working with tripartite constituents for new recruits without ILO experience.
7. For countries where there is no field office, such as Sierra Leone, a yearly visit by the ILO technical officials should take place to meet

stakeholders, both at HQ and in the implementing countries.

8. For countries where there is no field office, cross-border exchanges should be encouraged between implementing countries by project support staff to share experiences, challenges and good practices.

9. At the **Regional Sub-office level in Dakar**, the office should determine, in consultation with the programme staff, the need for a separate sub-regional focal point for HIV/AIDS from the project NPC.

10. At the field level, the **project NPCs** should also determine as soon as possible a work plan for the continuation of the project focusing on the hand-over and exit strategy so that at the end of the project ownership can be transferred to the national constituents as much as possible.

11. At the field level, the **project NPCs** should ensure that each constituency is systematically targeted in order to establish a training pool (TOT) to ensure organisational learning and ownership and the subsequent transfer of knowledge to the local levels.

12. At the field level ILO should assess the coverage of project intervention areas and partners selection to ensure that they are both politically and technically balanced and that they can be replicated and up-scaled (e.g. avoid cost-intensive models and continued focus on training and capacity development and awareness raising

Lessons Learned

1. Resources have to match the expected objectives in a realistic manner, and providing seed money is not enough to meet the development objectives.
2. The time-frame for sustained attitudinal and behavioural change is much longer than the projects two-year life. It needs at least a five year programme to address change in a comprehensive manner.

3. The geographical areas where project interventions take place are important. In some countries there is a clear political division and ILO projects should strive to ensure they maintain their credibility and neutrality by working in all regions with the tripartite constituents.

4. Defining a pool of human resources for each of the tripartite constituents can lead to some degree of sustainability provided they are all trained using a TOT approach and in turn the training is passed down to the local levels of each constituency.

5. The private sector needs more efforts from the ILO to win it over to the world of HIV/AIDS in the work place. This can be done through a combination of approaches including more studies on the economic costs of HIV/AIDS and developing awards for best-performing private sector companies.

6. There is a large experience in all twelve project countries which only report to Geneva. There should be more regional events in which cross-fertilisation across the project countries can take place to exchange approaches and learn from each other. Only in Senegal did the NPC have a regional vision, as he was given responsibility for three countries.

7. An explicit exit strategy is needed in this type of programme, either through a cost-sharing agreement, gradual hand-over, or other forms of exit depending on the expected level of commitment and ownership of the tripartite constituents.

8. It is also more difficult to work in low prevalence countries given that HIV/AIDS may not be the top political priority. Also, obtaining relevant and appropriate commitment from the tripartite constituents, particularly from the private sector, is difficult as prejudice and stigma appear to be more present than in higher prevalence countries.