THE ILO CREATES GLOBAL PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS AND THE WORLD OF WORK (ILO/AIDS)

Recognising the growing impact of HIV/AIDS on the world of work – undermining incomes and livelihoods, cutting the labour force, reducing productivity and profitability – the 88th session of the International Labour Conference (June 2000) passed a resolution asking the Director-General to increase the capacity of the Office to respond to HIV/AIDS. The new programme was formally established in November 2000, but even before that date steps were already being taken to mainstream HIV/AIDS in all major programmes and units of the ILO. An Inter-Departmental Task Force has been put in place to coordinate this process and promote communications between ILO/AIDS and other sectors of the Office.

THE ILO LAUNCHES CODE OF PRACTICE ON AIDS

At the request of the ILO Governing Body and in response to the needs expressed by many constituents, the first major task undertaken by the new programme was the production of international guidelines to inform workplace practice and national policy-making in the face of HIV/AIDS. The ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work was approved by consensus in May 2001 at a tripartite meeting of experts from all regions, and formally launched at the UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS), New York, June 2001. The implementation phase has started, on the one hand through establishing structures and developing projects in the field (see page 2) and on the other through a meeting of ILO/AIDS focal points and other partners to develop training materials for the application of the code (Turin, November 2001). The code has been translated into the following languages to date: Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Russian, Thai, Urdu.

THE ILO JOINS UNAIDS

Already in active collaboration with UNAIDS in the field, on 25 October 2001 the ILO became the eighth cosponsor of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Director-General Juan Somavia said, “HIV/AIDS affects everyone today but has an especially profound impact on workers and their families, enterprises and employers, and national economies.” “The ILO brings to UNAIDS its understanding and expertise in the world of work. We know the workplace is a key location for HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmes,” said Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS.

RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS

In order to improve understanding of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the world of work, and provide a sound basis for planning operational activities at all levels, the ILO/AIDS programme has embarked on action-oriented research on key conceptual, methodological and policy issues. Current research areas include:

- Labour market and employment implications of HIV/AIDS
- Links between HIV/AIDS and poverty
- Legal and policy framework for national strategic planning and workplace programmes to combat HIV/AIDS
• Gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS in the world of work
• Integrating HIV/AIDS concerns into employment and macro-economic framework planning
• Database for measurement and analysis of the impacts of HIV/AIDS in the world of work

TRAINING

Training is an integral part of the ILO/AIDS strategy for dissemination of information and exchange of experience on good workplace practice in HIV prevention and management. The Programme designs and implements training to strengthen the capacity of ILO’s tripartite constituents in strategic planning and policy development at national and workplace levels. One example of this is the distance learning programme developed with the National School of Public Health and the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, leading to a diploma in HIV/AIDS management in the workplace.

ILO/AIDS IN THE FIELD

The ILO Programme has carried out missions and initiated country-level activities in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean to support the efforts of governments and their social partners to combat the epidemic at national, sectoral and workplace levels. AIDS focal points are in the process of being appointed in area offices and multidisciplinary advisory teams (MDTs). Activities include the following:

AFRICA
  • **Advisory services for governments** on integrating HIV/AIDS into labour legislation, and/or on extending national AIDS programmes to include the world of work, have been requested in Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia. Support has been given in preparing the Guidelines on the national Code of Good Practice in Republic of South Africa

  • **Projects with the social partners** – most of them including training in the application of the code of practice - and the initiation of **workplace programmes** on HIV/AIDS are taking place in Cote d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Republic of South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia

  • **ILO code of practice presented** to King Mswati III of Swaziland, August 2001, and launched by Mr. Assane Diop (Executive Director, Social Protection) to tripartite constituents in Dakar, Senegal, October 2001

  • **National tripartite workshops** on implementing the code of practice in Mozambique, November 2001; Tanzania, December 2001

  • **Fact-finding missions** carried out in: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo; and **status assessment studies** undertaken in: Republic of South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Namibia

ASIA
  • **Advisory services for governments** in Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Thailand

  • **Projects with the social partners and workplace programmes** in Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Thailand

  • Joint **ILO/Thai Ministry of Labour national seminar** on HIV/AIDS, Bangkok, September 2001

  • **Fact-finding missions** carried out in: Cambodia, India; mission being arranged in China within the framework of the Joint ILO/China Commission
EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA
• Tripartite conference on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, in the Russian Federation for 12 CIS countries, December 2001
• Fact-finding mission carried out in: Russian Federation

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
• Projects with the social partners and workplace programmes in Argentina, Brazil, and the Caribbean
• ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS presented at International Conference for People Living with HIV/AIDS, Port of Spain, October 2001
• Tripartite consultation on implementing the code of practice in the Caribbean, Port of Spain, December 2001
• One day national bipartite workshop on HIV/AIDS and the world of work in Mexico, November 2001
• Fact-finding mission carried out in: Trinidad and Tobago

GLOBAL, SUB-REGIONAL AND REGIONAL MEETINGS

GLOBAL

REGIONAL

SUB-REGIONAL

WORLD AIDS DAY IN...

BRASILIA
• ILO Brasilia’s AIDS events will include the official launch of the Portuguese translation of the ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS

DOUALA
• The last day of an ILO tripartite seminar on reinforcing national capacity to eliminate discrimination against workers living with HIV/AIDS
NEW YORK
• Tony Keenan, General Secretary of the Independent Education Union in Victoria, Australia, and worker representative at the Meeting of Experts on HIV/AIDS, to represent the ILO at UN World AIDS Day event

ROSARIO
• Asociación Trabajadores del Estado de Argentina and ILO Buenos Aires to hold a workshop on the ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, involving local government, schools and workers.

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