

guidelines for **trade unions**

Using the ILO Code
of Practice and
training manual



Workers and the families, workplaces and communities that depend on them are bearing the brunt of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

But as those most directly affected, workers and their organizations are among the best able to respond effectively.

Why is AIDS an issue for trade unions?

Because workers - and the families, workplaces and communities that depend on them - are bearing the brunt of the epidemic.

AIDS is concentrated among adults of working age: of the 40 million people estimated to be infected today, 80% are adults and at least 26 million are workers in their productive prime (15-49 years).

Workers are losing their health, their income, their rights and their lives to this disease.

The HIV epidemic threatens the capacity of trade unions

- to organize and represent the interests of their members
- to promote decent wages
- to ensure fair working conditions
- to protect the rights of their members
- to maintain a corps of experienced leaders and organisers
- to participate in social dialogue on national issues affecting employment, the labour market and human resources, and even to survive ...

But as those most directly affected, workers and their organizations are among the best able to respond effectively.

“We are committed to working with our members to educate, involve and mobilize them to take on this challenge ... They must not sit back and wait for others to do it or for others to lead. Our efforts, of course, are only part of the solution to this global crisis and must be a powerful force for change. It is, literally, a matter of life and death.”

Guy Ryder, General Secretary, ICFTU

“Two out of three people living with HIV/AIDS go to work every day - it makes the workplace a vital entry point for tackling HIV/AIDS.”

*Juan Somavia,
Director-General, ILO*

Of the 25-strong executive committee of the Kenya Central Organisation of Trade Unions in 1986, five are still alive today - most of the deaths were from AIDS.

What can trade unions do?

Nationally and internationally, trade unions are able to:

- mobilize extensive networks of members and contacts;
- negotiate workplace agreements/policies with employers and help ensure implementation;
- make use of experience in education and training;
- and build on their influence in the community and with government.

From 'Fighting HIV/AIDS together: a programme for future engagement' - Joint statement by the General Secretaries of the International Organisation of Employers and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, April 2003, ILO, Geneva:

"The IOE and the ICFTU jointly recognize the direct impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on the world of work. [We] hereby call on [our] affiliates and their member enterprises and trade unions, wherever located, to give the issue highest priority, ... and to work together to generate and maintain the momentum necessary for successful interventions."

Unions and employers increasingly agree that it is in their common interest to take action against AIDS. Many employers' and workers' organizations are already active in the fight against AIDS. Much experience has been gained and materials developed that can be drawn on. So it's a good idea to make contact with other unions and useful partners and find out what is already being done, and what could be done collaboratively.

HIV/AIDS is a global threat, though the links between AIDS and poverty mean that trade unions in high-income countries may not give it such high priority as those in parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America. But the response to AIDS needs to be global if it is to be effective - there's no room for complacency or denial. Unions in every part of the world have members affected by the disease, as well as a long-standing commitment to international solidarity.

In addition, some unions are setting up solidarity programmes with sister unions in countries that are more severely affected, while unions in low-income countries are helping extend workplace programmes to the local community.

Five steps to action for all trade unions

1. Agree a policy for the union on HIV/AIDS, including appointing a responsible officer/committee and establishing a time-bound action plan
2. Guide and support members in negotiating a policy at their workplaces to ensure protection of rights and education for prevention, as well as access to care, treatment and statutory benefits
3. Include HIV/AIDS on the agenda of union meetings and in the union's training programme, and strengthen health education in general - especially for women and young members
4. Increase the capacity of members to implement workplace programmes that take into account the different needs of men and women - include the training of trainers and of peer educators
5. Lobby the government to recognize AIDS as a critical labour and development issue, with the aim of
 - increasing the funds they give to fight it (whether as overseas aid or the national budget),
 - including the social partners in national planning, and
 - bringing down the prices of drugs (through action on intellectual property rights and patents).

How can trade unions develop policies and programmes?

The ILO has produced a package to encourage and support action at the workplace:

a Code of Practice + training manual



The ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work and the training manual are available in hard copy and CD-ROM, as well as Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) which can be downloaded from the ILO/AIDS website.

The ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work sets out fundamental principles for policy development and practical guidelines for concrete responses in the following key areas:

- prevention of HIV/AIDS
- management and mitigation of the impact of HIV/AIDS in the world of work
- care and support of workers infected and affected by HIV/AIDS
- elimination of stigma and discrimination on the basis of HIV status.

The nine sections cover the objectives, use and scope of the Code; key principles; rights and responsibilities of each of the tripartite partners; prevention through information and education, training programmes; testing; and care and support.

The Code was drafted in consultation with constituents in all regions, reviewed and revised by a tripartite group of experts, and adopted by the ILO Governing Body in June 2001. It can be used to introduce social dialogue on HIV/AIDS and as the basis for negotiations; it includes a checklist for planning and implementing workplace action.

Implementing the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS: an education and training manual has been produced to complement the Code. It provides technical information, case studies, learning activities, model training courses, and samples of legislation, policies and collective agreements. It covers the roles of government and the social partners, human rights and legal issues, workplace

policies, programmes for prevention and care, the gender dimension, and reaching out to the informal economy. Each module of the manual follows the same pattern: it presents information on key issues that help explain and expand on what is covered by the Code, includes useful reference material such as sample policies, and has a section of learning activities ready to photocopy - a number specifically targeted to employers and employers' organizations.

The first section is a guide to the manual - it includes tips for trainers plus eight sample programmes for workshops or courses (lasting two or three days) and four components (lasting two or three hours) that you can slot into other courses. Please read it!

The Code and manual together provide information to help deal with your members' questions and give guidance for action. The following pages show where to find some of the answers you may be looking for.



1. Basic information about HIV/AIDS

Impact of the disease and how it is transmitted

How does the epidemic affect workers and their organizations?

See in the Code of Practice

Section 5.3 Rights & responsibilities of workers and their organisations
Appendix I Basic facts about the epidemic and its implications

See in the manual

Module 1 **The epidemic and its impact on the world of work**
pages 9 - 14: The impact of HIV/AIDS on the world of work
Learning activities 2, 4, 5 and 6

Module 2 **HIV/AIDS and human rights**
pages 4 - 6: The ILO, HIV/AIDS and human rights; page 17: Testimonies of stigma and discrimination
Learning activities 2, 5 and 6

How is HIV transmitted and what are the risks of infection at the workplace?

See in the Code of Practice

Appendix I Basic facts about the epidemic and its implications

See in the manual

Module 1 **The epidemic and its impact on the world of work**
pages 2 - 4: Facts about HIV/AIDS
Learning activities 1 and 2

Module 6 **Workplace programmes for HIV/AIDS prevention**
page 1: Introduction; pages 7 - 8: Risk assessment and management
Learning activities 3, 7 and 10

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is transmitted through body fluids, typically during unprotected sex, infected blood transfusions, contaminated hypodermic needles and from an infected mother to her unborn child. It is not transmitted through casual contact with an infected person such as shaking hands or hugging, sharing toilets and washing facilities, or through coughing and sneezing.

Once infected, a person can live healthily and work effectively for many years, without presenting a threat to other workers. Stigma and discrimination encourage fear and denial, drive the disease 'underground', and hinder prevention programmes.

2. Creating understanding, stimulating action

Advocacy with governments

How do we persuade the government that national policy should include the world of work and dialogue with the social partners?

See in the Code of Practice

Section 4 **Key principles**
Section 5.1 **Rights and responsibilities of governments**

See in the manual

Module 1 **The epidemic and its impact on the world of work**
pages 7 and 8: AIDS, poverty and development

Module 2 **HIV/AIDS and human rights**
page 1: Introduction; pages 4 - 6: The ILO, HIV/AIDS and human rights

Module 3 **Workplace action through social dialogue and the role of employers, workers and their organizations**
page 1: Introduction; pages 3 - 7: Workplace policies and programmes on HIV/AIDS;

Module 4 **A legal and policy framework: the role of government**
pages 1 and 2: Introduction; pages 3 - 4: The macro-economic impact of AIDS; page 10: Mobilizing resources

Advocacy with employers

How do we work together with employers to respond to HIV/AIDS at the workplace?

See in the Code of Practice

Section 4 **Key principles**
Section 5.2 **Rights and responsibilities of employers and their organizations**
Sections 7 **Training**
Section 9 **Care and support**

See in the manual

Module 1 **The epidemic and its impact on the world of work**
pages 9 - 11: The impact of HIV/AIDS on the world of work
Learning activities 3 and 4

Module 2 **HIV/AIDS and human rights**
page 9: action by the social partners on discrimination; page 11: on confidentiality; pages 14 - 16: on testing

Module 3 **Workplace action through social dialogue and the role of employers, workers and their organizations**
pages 3 - 4: Workplace policies and programmes on HIV/AIDS; pages 8 - 9: Employers and their organizations; page 11: Alliances
Learning activities 1 and 2

The impact of HIV/AIDS on business has repercussions for the labour force and the national economy.

Some examples of costs (training manual Module 1, page 7):

- One major transport company with 11,500 workers in Zimbabwe found that 3,400 of them were HIV-positive in 1996. Costs for the company related to HIV/AIDS amounted to more than \$1 million or 20% of company profits.
- A number of firms in the US report annual costs of between US\$ 3,500 and US\$6,000 for each worker with HIV/AIDS.
- A Thai government study has calculated that the direct and indirect cost of HIV/AIDS to the nation was US\$ 1.2 billion in 2000.

3. Policies and programmes

A union strategy on HIV/AIDS

What are the main points to include in a policy and workplan for the union?

See in the Code of Practice

Section 4 **Key principles**
 Section 5.3 **Rights and responsibilities of workers and their organizations**
 Section 6 **Prevention through information and education**
 Section 7 **Training**

See in the manual

Module 2 **HIV/AIDS and human rights**
pages 4 - 6: The ILO, HIV/AIDS and human rights

Module 3 **Workplace action through social dialogue and the role of employers, workers and their organizations**
pages 3 - 5: Workplace policies and programmes on HIV/AIDS;
pages 8 - 10: Advocacy and leadership
Learning activities 3 and 4

Module 5 **The gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS and the world of work**
pages 3 and 4: How does gender inequality spread HIV/AIDS?; pages 5 and 6: Men and masculinity
Learning activities 1, 2, 4, and 8

A workplace policy on HIV/AIDS

What should be covered in a workplace policy or agreement?

See in the Code of Practice

Section 4 **Key principles**
 Section 5.2 and 5.3 **Rights and responsibilities**
 Appendix III **checklist**

See in the manual

Module 2 **HIV/AIDS and human rights**
pages 4 - 6: The ILO, HIV/AIDS and human rights; pages 7 - 10: The right to non-discrimination; pages 10 - 12: The right to privacy; pages 13 - 16: Testing; page 17 - testimonies of stigma and discrimination; page 18: Ravi's story
Learning activities 3, 5, 7 and 9

Module 3 **Workplace action through social dialogue and the role of employers, workers and their organizations**
pages 3 - 7: Workplace policies and programmes on HIV/AIDS
Learning activities 5, 6 and 7

Module 4 **A legal and policy framework: the role of government**
pages 11 - 13: Legislation on HIV/AIDS

Module 5 **The gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS and the world of work**
pages 7 - 10: Gender issues in the workplace
Learning activity 3

Companies large and small, international and local, emphasize the cost-effectiveness of workplace action against HIV/AIDS. Prevention programmes are widespread, with an increasing number of employers offering care and treatment. Many companies understand that trust and social dialogue are essential for effective action, and have declared 'zero tolerance' for discrimination at the workplace.

The Ford Motor Company in South Africa was one of the first multinationals to implement a workplace policy developed in full cooperation with the trade unions: "Companies have a moral obligation to employees, a financial responsibility to shareholders, and a responsibility to the community, to act now against HIV/AIDS."

3. Policies and programmes

A workplace programme on HIV/AIDS

What should be included in a workplace programme to reduce the spread of HIV and the impact of AIDS?

See in the Code of Practice

Section 6 Prevention through information and education
Section 7 Training
Section 9 Care and support

See in the manual

Module 5 **The gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS and the world of work**

pages 11 - 14: Working towards gender equality

Learning activities 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8

Module 6 **Workplace programmes for HIV/AIDS prevention**

page 6 - 9: Prevention at the workplace; page 10: Gender-specific programmes

pages 11 - 14: Peer educators; page 15: Protecting young people; pages 18 - 20: Case studies

Learning activities 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 13

Module 7 **Care and support**

pages 4 - 11: Care and support in the workplace; pages 15 - 16: Case studies

Learning activities 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8

Extending workplace action

How can we make links with workers' families, the local community and workers in the informal economy?

See in the Code of Practice

Section 5 General rights and responsibilities
Section 6 Prevention through information and education
Section 9 Care and support

See in the manual

Module 6 **Workplace programmes for HIV/AIDS prevention**

page 15: Protecting young people; page 16: Mother to child transmission;

Learning activities 4, 8, 10 and 11

Module 7 **Care and support**

pages 12 and 13: Care and support for orphans; page 14: Social protection

Learning activities 6, 8 and 9

Module 8 **HIV/AIDS and the informal economy**

pages 8 - 10: Applying the Code; pages 14 and 15: Reaching out to the informal economy

Learning activities 1, 2, 5 and 7

ILOAIDS

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The ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the world of work

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