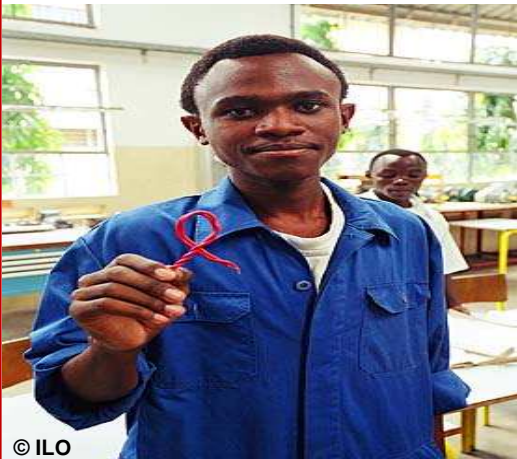


# Programme on HIV and AIDS



International  
Labour  
Organization

## The Challenge



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People with HIV often suffer from stigma and discrimination. At the workplace, people with HIV often are denied basic employment rights, receive little or no social protection including health insurance coverage for HIV-related illnesses, and discriminated against by their employers and co-employees.

HIV incidence rate in the Philippines is pegged at less than one per cent. This relatively low incidence masks an alarming increase in the number of new HIV infections from only one per day in 2006 to five per day in 2010 to at least one new case every three hours in 2012. According to the UNAIDS Global Report 2010, Philippines is one of only seven countries worldwide that has recorded more than 25 per cent increase in new HIV cases reported between 2000 and 2009. With this current rate of increase in new infections, the country is unlikely to achieve its MDG 6 targets by 2015.

Young men and women between 20 and 39 years old accounted for 86 per cent of new cases reported in 2011. Despite the existence of national laws, policies, and guidelines on HIV and AIDS, prevention interventions remain limited, and

the potential of the workplace as a gateway to universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services has yet to be fully explored. The situation is aggravated by compulsory HIV testing among both locally-employed and overseas Filipino workers, which is often followed by a refusal of employment if a worker is found to be positive for HIV.

Certainly, this situation undermines the attainment of Decent Work for All. This, in essence, affects fundamental employment rights, violates principles of nondiscrimination, and aggravates poverty situation especially at the household level.

## The Response

The ILO mobilizes governments, employers' and workers' organizations through its tripartite structure to create jobs, protect the rights of workers, oppose discrimination, and improve social protection and occupational safety and health. The HIV and AIDS Programme also consciously involves stakeholders other than the ILO's tripartite partners, such as local government units, non-government organizations, HIV positive communities, and other private institutions, particularly those who have existing programmes on HIV, to optimize use of resources and improve the uptake and sustainability of HIV interventions introduced by the Country Office for the Philippines (CO-Manila).

CO-Manila's HIV and AIDS Programme strives to introduce industry-specific HIV interventions, while also integrating HIV concerns with other occupational health issues often experienced by workers. In 2012, ILO started Project CHANGE. CHANGE stands for cigarette smoking, HIV and AIDS, alcohol and drugs, nasal and lung ailments and TB, good nutrition and breastfeeding, and exercise. Project CHANGE was initially developed and implemented for the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry. Project CHANGE was funded by the UN Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), and implemented together with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Health (DOH), Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPAP), Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The ILO and its partners are working to implement Project CHANGE in major cities in the Philippines. A three-year programme to promote occupational safety and health promotion is underway. Key industries generating the most number of employment opportunities, such as manufacturing, transport and logistics, and maritime and ship-building, are being targeted under this new programme.

Presently, the ILO serves as the Secretariat of the "Global Partnership on HIV and Mobile Workers in the Maritime Sector" (GP). The GP is an initiative among seven international organizations and global networks dedicated to decreasing the vulnerability of seafarers to HIV: the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare (ICSW), the ILO, the International Maritime Health Association (IMHA), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Shipping Federation (ISF), the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), and UNAIDS. The GP seeks to provide HIV and AIDS information and services along the route of migration between the Philippines and Durban in South Africa. The primary beneficiaries are Filipino seafarers. Towards the goals of the GP, ILO is working with national partners to advocate for greater stakeholder ownership of project goals.

The Programme underscores the goal of the ILO to support the Philippine Government in providing decent work to its people under the conditions of human dignity and freedom.

## Key Statistics

- The Philippines has an HIV incidence rate of less than one per cent, with a concentrated epidemic being observed among some key populations at higher risk.
- From 1984 to September 2012, 10,830 HIV cases have been reported, 72 per cent of which were registered only in the past five years.
- Among the total number of HIV cases recorded since 1984, 92 per cent were infected through sexual contact (heterosexual, 22 per cent; homosexual, 42 per cent; bisexual, 26 per cent). Beginning in 2007, there was an evident shift from predominantly heterosexual transmission to bisexual and homosexual transmissions.
- In 2000, only one case every three days was reported; in 2009 and 2010, two and five cases were registered every day, respectively; in 2012, there is at least one new case reported every three hours.

## Objectives

The ILO CO-Manila Programme on HIV and AIDS aims to contribute to the national HIV response by:

- promoting adoption of ILO Recommendation 200 as a labour standard;
- informing ILO's tripartite partners (government, employers, and workers) of the threat HIV and AIDS poses on workers' health and productivity, enterprise viability, and national economy;
- advocating for wider acceptance of HIV and AIDS as a workplace issue, and implementation of workplace policies and programmes on HIV and AIDS; and,
- supporting the creation of workplaces where people with HIV can remain productive, protected from stigma and discrimination, and receive adequate social protection coverage.

## Relevant ILO Conventions and Recommendations

- Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work, 2010 (No. 200)
- Convention on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958 (C. 111)

## Achievements

- The ILO has provided technical inputs in drafting national policies and guidelines that involve HIV and AIDS, including Department of Labor and Employment Order No. 102-10 which mandates all private institutions to set up workplace policies and programmes on HIV and AIDS.
- Through Project CHANGE, ILO and its partners have achieved some straightforward milestones: eight business process outsourcing (BPO) companies were trained on drafting workplace policies and implementing programmes on HIV and AIDS and other health domains covered by the project; more than 70 peer educators and 20 trainers have been trained to handle employee learning sessions on occupational health promotion; and, monitoring, learning and communication tools were developed, including e-learning modules for management and workers, manuals, fact sheets, and posters. An estimated 76,000 employees were reached indirectly by the Project through the trained company focal points. The enterprise partners provided counterpart resources amounting to an estimated 20 per cent of total project cost. Project CHANGE continues to enjoy the interest of BPO players while also capturing interests from other sectors, including business groups, local government units, and civil society.
- Information and communication materials have also been developed for Filipino seafarers through the Global Partnership on HIV and Mobile Workers in the Maritime Sector.



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