



Dear readers,

Welcome to the second issue of our newsletter covering the activities and achievements of the Sida-funded programme on HIV/AIDS prevention and impact mitigation in the world of work in Sub-Saharan Africa.

This issue reports on various aspects of the work being undertaken in the informal economy, and also features the transport sector, including an interview with a sex worker working along the trucking routes in Zimbabwe.



NEWS

BETTER LEGAL COMPLIANCE

Jane Hodges, former senior labour law specialist in ILO/DIALOGUE responsible for the Better Legal Compliance component of the Sida programme, has taken up a new position as Director of the Gender Bureau at ILO headquarters. The newsletter team takes this opportunity to thank Jane for her invaluable contributions to the programme and her outstanding achievements in terms of building awareness and capacity on HIV/AIDS among court officials, judges, and magistrates. Thank you Jane!

We would also like to take the opportunity to welcome Moussa Oumarou, who will be in charge for the interim of the activities under the Better Legal Compliance component in DIALOGUE.



COOPERATIVES AND THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

In this edition we report on the activities that have taken place in Benin, Cameroon and Ethiopia during the period August – October.

period August – October.



Benin

Reports of results in Benin:

A baseline survey of the cooperatives took place in Benin at the inception of the programme - a second survey has now been carried out to monitor progress.

The follow-up evaluation identified and documented attitudes and practices in terms of accessing HIV/AIDS services at the level of cooperative apex organisations. The information is currently being processed to assess gaps and further training needs of members and the institutions working with cooperatives for the purposes of HIV/AIDS strategy and programme development.

The data will also permit assessment of current HIV/AIDS knowledge, attitudes and practices of cooperative members. It is anticipated that a follow-up workshop will be held to address the training needs of cooperative members.

Advocacy is high on the programme agenda in Benin and as the Chamber of Commerce of Industry is currently developing a strategy for the informal economy, we are in partnership with the European Union, advocating for better inclusion of the informal economy and related HIV/AIDS issues in the strategy.

Moucharafou Idohou



Cameroon

Trade union support for activities in the informal economy, with a focus on gender

The programme component in Cameroon has been strengthened by the involvement of trade union organizations in the response to HIV/AIDS through cooperatives and in the informal economy.

The coordinator of the Trade Union Network AIDS Committee held a training session for 35 leaders of Association Nationale des Exploitants à la Sauvette du Cameroun (ANESCAM) [the national association for street vendors in Cameroon] on 6 August 2008. Nineteen women and 16 men participated. The training covered HIV/AIDS information and awareness, and included discussion of factors that increase women's vulnerability to HIV.



Ruth Ekouth moderating the session

Participants expressed the view that women's vulnerability to HIV is linked to their level of poverty and other external factors such as pressure from men who supply them with market goods. Some female participants reported that: *"most women 'Bayam Sella' [road side vendors] spend their nights at the market in the open, and with little financial or material means. In this condition, they are left "at the mercy" of the first man who courts them regardless of all prudence around occasional sexual relations."*

Another woman said: *"Sometimes we do not have enough money to buy the goods from our suppliers. This is why some of us then give in to sexual pressure from the suppliers to ensure a regular supply of goods. What else can we do to make sure we and our families survive?"*



Workshop participants

Conclusion

Group discussions revealed that HIV/AIDS programmes aiming at reducing women's vulnerability to HIV may benefit from targeting a wider audience, also including the men who interact with the women working in the informal economy. The discussions also showed that the level of knowledge on HIV transmission and prevention was limited among participants. At the end of the training, 432 condoms were distributed together with HIV/AIDS awareness materials.

The programme's partnership in Cameroon with the Trade Union Network and ANESCAM has led to a better understanding of the root causes of gender-specific vulnerabilities in the informal economy and will help further strengthen our HIV/AIDS responses.

*Joseph Kemmegne
Ruth Ekouth,
Présidente du Comité
Inter-Syndical de lutte
contre le Sida*



Cameroon

HIV/AIDS activities in cooperatives and informal economy organizations

Mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS in routine cooperative activities is a priority of the programme component in Cameroon. A workshop held for 22 cooperative leaders examined the following issues:

- What approach should be used to ensure full integration of HIV/AIDS in routine activities?
- Who should be responsible for HIV/AIDS activities in the cooperative structure?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of cooperative members?

The participants reviewed the structures of their cooperatives and analysed the various job descriptions of the employees in order to identify the workers best placed to implement HIV/AIDS activities. Specific roles and responsibilities for the selected implementer employees were highlighted. Finally, each cooperative leader designed a strategy specific for their own cooperatives' response to HIV/AIDS.



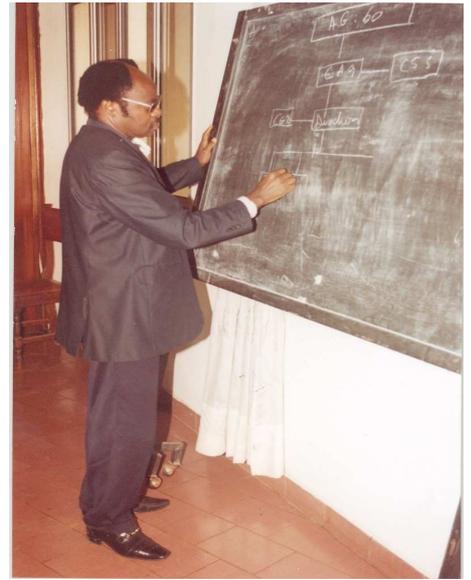
A leader from SOS women's cooperative explaining the organizational structure and the job descriptions of workers.

Strategies

The graph as shown on the next page (Figure 1) sets out a sample strategy of how to mainstream HIV/AIDS activities in a micro-finance cooperative. There are three levels of responsibility and functions in the HIV/AIDS response with regards to this specific cooperative:

1. Designation of a focal point who will coordinate the HIV/AIDS response in the cooperative.
2. Formation of an HIV/AIDS committee to serve as a steering group and provide specific guidance on policy, strategy and implementation, and to monitor the progress of the initiative.

3. The training of peer educators who will help raise HIV awareness and manage the referral of workers to social and care services as necessary.



The manager of CAPLABAM (coffee cooperative) is designing the HIV/AIDS structure for the cooperative.

One important issue highlighted was the need to ensure a balance between current job descriptions and duties and the new HIV/AIDS responsibilities. Thus it was concluded that:

- The cooperative manager, who ensures the daily management of the cooperative, is also well placed to coordinate the HIV/AIDS activities as the focal point.
- Employees who are already involved in education and promotion of cooperative services in the community, are well placed to be peer educators.

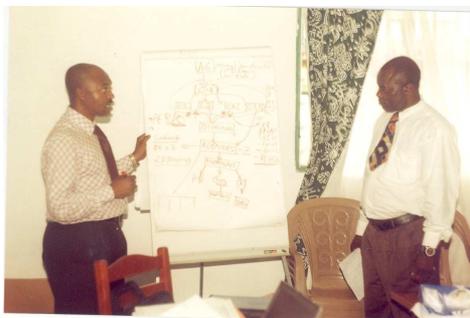


Joseph Kemmegne is discussing the organizational structure of the Women's Rural Development Cooperative (CEDER) with the President of the Board of Directors.

The process of choosing employees and describing their roles and responsibilities was done in a way to enable the cooperatives to integrate HIV/AIDS activities as smoothly as possible, and ensure successful coordination implementation, monitoring and reporting of the activities, the development of networks and collaboration with other organizations.

The exercise enhanced the participants' capacity to organize and respond to HIV/AIDS in cooperatives.

Joseph Kemmegne



Joseph Kemmegne discussing the organizational analysis with the General Manager of COOPEC-FIMAC.

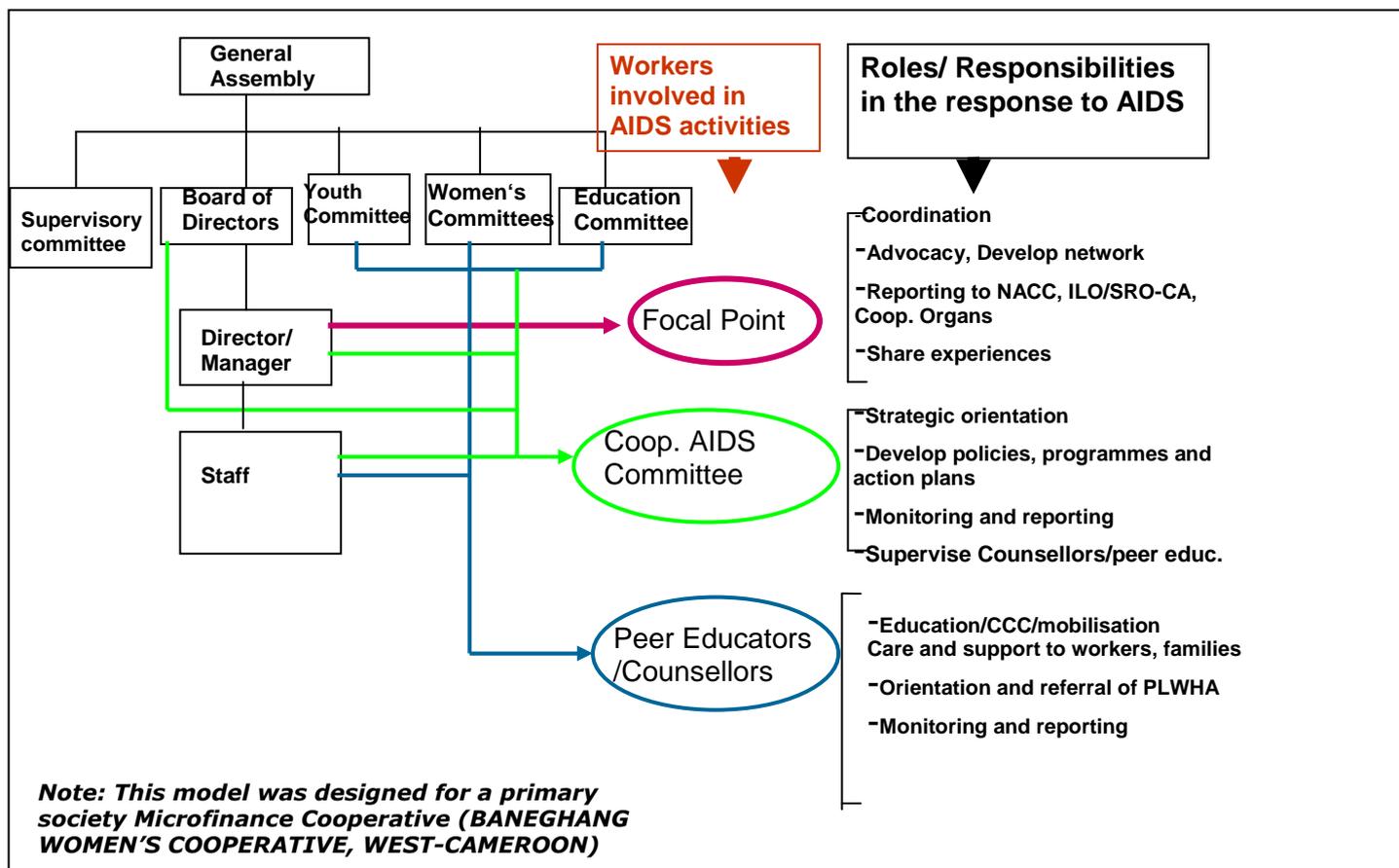


Figure 1: A sample model of integrating HIV/AIDS in Cooperatives



Ethiopia

Eskeदार Nadew provides an up-date on the activities in Ethiopia:

Recent activities

The peer educators' manual has been translated into Afan Oromo and an additional 1000 copies of the *HIV/AIDS Handbook for Entrepreneurs* and the *Start and improve your business (SYB)* manual will be printed in the near future. Furthermore, a training of trainers' workshop on SYB bringing together 35 participants took place 11 August – 5 September.



The participants at the training of trainers' workshop.

A workshop on leadership awareness-raising took place 20 – 24 October, targeting cooperative board members.

Planned activities

A training of trainers on SYB is planned for 3 – 4 November 2008 and will bring together 20 participants from micro and small enterprise development agencies from around the country.

Eskeदार further reports that the commitment of the cooperative members to respond to HIV/AIDS in their organisations is still very evident and there are emerging possibilities of building the capacity of more peer educators through training.

Eskeदार Nadew



TRANSPORT SECTOR

The transport sector recognizes many risk factors and vulnerabilities related to the transmission and impact of HIV/AIDS. These are mainly due to the basic working conditions in the sector, which requires employees to travel long distances and spend long periods away from their families. This problem is further compounded by the lengthy delays at border posts along their trade routes because of complex clearance procedures, and the non-harmonization of regulations and formalities between countries.

The road sub-sector is very diverse in its operations and the HIV/AIDS response needs to be tailored to this diversity. For this reason a "corridor approach" has been taken by the transport sector component of the Sida programme, and cross-border initiatives are taking place. This approach offers both technical and financial support to truckers, border posts officials and communities along a selected number of road transport corridors across borders. The estimated number of beneficiaries is almost 27 000 people, and includes drivers and their assistants, sex workers, vendors and traders, health workers and the general community along the transport corridors.

In collaboration with local transport authorities a series of prevention and impact mitigation activities are taking place. These include on the one hand efforts to harmonize laws and regulations and on the other, awareness-raising and capacity-building with truckers, sex workers, vendors, health workers and communities at major truck stops and border posts. Care and support services are also included, with the aim of improving health services and access to treatment.

Colly Masuku



Zimbabwe

Here we feature an interview from the roadside – a testimony from a sex worker in a border town in Zimbabwe.

Many studies have shown the links between the transport sector and sex work, including the ILO's study in 2005 under the first phase of the Sida programme: 'A rapid assessment of cross border regulations and formalities in Southern Africa'.

At a recent capacity-building workshop [for beneficiaries of the programme] in Zimbabwe, one of the sex workers who took part gave an extensive interview to help the programme understand her situation and develop tailored and appropriate activities with and for sex workers. The interview brings home the fact that truckers and sex workers are exposed to high levels of risk in terms of HIV, but even more important it shows that sex workers want to be engaged in reducing the spread and impact of the epidemic.

She is 17 years old, calls herself Lynda, and earns her living through sex. She was 10 when a relative asked for sex in exchange for some money. She says she sold sex from then on and now targets the truckers passing through the border town where she lives. Below is an extract from the interview between the *facilitator* (F) and Lynda (L) in October 2008.



Picture: ILO

F: *Have you ever thought about HIV infection?*

L: Every day. Each time I get a client I say to myself, "Oh God, I hope this one doesn't give me the AIDS."

F: *So, do you use protection then?*

L: Sometimes. You see, these truckers determine whether we use protection or not. When they don't want to use a condom, they offer you more money. Sometimes too much and you can't say no, you just can't refuse so much money - after all that is why I'm in the business.

F: *Have you ever thought of being tested for HIV?*

L: I am already dead. So there is no need for me to get tested. I have gone through a lot now, and when I look back at some of the encounters that I've had, I tell myself that I am as good as dead. So, an HIV test - no, no, no!

F: *Who are your clients?*

L: We have sex with almost every category of persons here in this town ranging from immigration officials, ZIMRA, the police, army personnel, truckers and passers-by. But the truckers of course, are our best customers. We grade them [clients]

into categories: there are the people who do not like to pay for services and they are difficult because they are poor and have very little to offer. Then we have our "good friends" and these guys always love unprotected sex and they are willing to pay very well for it. They don't care about money and are not afraid of getting infected with HIV. Then there is another special class of clients because they have so much money to give away, and so many groceries and other goodies. They will even send you groceries when they get back home, just to say thank you for the wonderful service and even some groceries for your parents too. I have no child of my own, but I tell them my children need this and that and then they give me.

F: *Have you ever been pregnant?*

L: Yes. It was a difficult time. I was so confused. I didn't know what to do.

F: *In your opinion, who should we target with an HIV and AIDS project in this border town?*

L: Everyone. Because when it comes to sex everyone is having sex here in one way or the other and for one reason or the other. For instance, when I stop a trucker and I want to go to Harare, I ask him how much he is prepared to pay me to go to Harare, but sometimes I am disappointed that some other woman - maybe a vendor - has already negotiated with him before me. Some of these women [cross-border traders] negotiate to pay the trucker through sex, you know. So when it comes to HIV initiatives, I would say target everyone. You see, the mistake that you people make is to think that HIV is for sex workers and yet we have sex with literally every grade of person especially here in this town, no one is innocent.

F: *Thank you for your time and for opening up to enlighten us on these crucial issues in the world of work.*

L: Thank you also for inviting me to this hotel. I never imagined that one day I could pass through the gate of this hotel without someone harassing me about what I want here. I am also willing to be a focal person for an HIV/AIDS programme for my peers, because I would like them to learn as well what I have learnt here today. It was quite useful.

Colly Masuku

CIARIS

A distance learning course on “Strategic approaches to fight HIV/AIDS and social exclusion and promote decent work” is starting in November. The course objective is to develop knowledge about the concepts and strategies for responding to HIV/AIDS in the context of social exclusion, and also to help facilitate networking among SADC countries.

The training follows an approach that is used to manage projects on social exclusion and it also provides the participants with a methodology to enhance effectiveness during project implementation.

This course will take place on the CIARIS platform (www.ciaris.org) for selected participants in nine countries: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.



A technical workshop on tools development for cooperatives and support organizations was held at the Cooperative College of Kenya in Nairobi, 27 – 29 August. The overall objective of the workshop was to launch partnerships for joint tools development. The workshop brought together representatives of cooperative federations from Africa and Europe.



Workshop participants

A number of priority areas for tools development were identified during the workshop:

- Awareness, communication and advocacy tools for the general public to inform and change the perception of cooperatives.
- Technical and pedagogical auditing tools for external and internal auditing.
- Pedagogical tools (combined with on-the-job training) to enhance the capacity of cooperative promoters.

HIV/AIDS, gender and youth were mentioned as cross-cutting issues which

should be included in the development of tools for cooperatives.



Tanzania

The programme component in Tanzania gets off to a flying start:

Official launch

The programme in Tanzania was officially launched at a well-attended ceremony on 1 August 2008. The Tanzania AIDS Commission (TACAIDS), representatives of other government institutions, workers' organizations, the Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives, UN agencies, and associations of people living with HIV were present and some key issues were raised. The launch meeting aimed to ensure:

- Knowledge and understanding of the programme's aims and activities;
- How HIV/AIDS is covered in Tanzania's Decent Work Country Programme (2006-2010);
- Up-to-date information on the epidemical trends in Tanzania.

Field visit

The programme is being implemented in three regions: Kilimanjaro, the coastal region and Iringa. Potential beneficiaries among cooperatives, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and Small and Medium Business Enterprises (SMEs) in these regions were visited in August, and a number of fruitful meetings were held.

The programme also met government authorities and potential cooperative partners to learn about existing responses, to solicit their views on the programme's approach and to establish their willingness to participate as programme partners. A number of useful points merged in the course of consultations:

- The government authorities in all regions were impressed by the scope of the programme and the approach, and felt it would be useful to the cooperatives.
- Few efforts have been made so far to address HIV/AIDS in cooperative institutions although some implement prevention and impact mitigation activities.

- The reaction within cooperatives to taking on HIV/AIDS responses was mixed: many officials understood the epidemic as a threat to the cooperative movement, but the barriers to action included:

- lack of capacity
- lack of motivation/concern (often resulting from lack of information)
- perception of HIV/AIDS as a social issue that is outside the remit of the cooperatives, who are geared to entrepreneurial activities
- fear of the complexities of responding to HIV/AIDS.

- Most of the Savings And Credit Co-operative's (SACCOs) raised concerns about stigmatization and discrimination of HIV positive members.
- SACCOs expressed the fear of lowering capital base if they disbursed significant amounts to members living with HIV, who might fail to service the loan.
- All cooperatives visited found the programme objectives very relevant to their activities, but were not comfortable to carry out activities without increased knowledge about HIV/AIDS.
- A majority of the cooperatives mentioned that training on prevention and awareness-raising is needed.
- The regional cooperative officers in the three regions acknowledged the importance of mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in routine cooperative operations.

Tulanoga Matimbwi



AGENDA

Meetings, workshops and training taking place:

- November ▶ National judges' training in Togo.
- December ▶ World AIDS Day activities in several countries
▶ Participation in the International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA), Senegal



THE PEOPLE

A list of people working on the Sida programme:

Transport sector (*Immediate objective 1: Increased knowledge on HIV/AIDS and more responsible attitudes to risk behaviours of men and women workers and their families help limit the spread of HIV/AIDS*)

MALAWI	Ms Kittie Gondwe
MOZAMBIQUE	Mr Alfredo Munguambe
SOUTH AFRICA	Mr Letsholo Mojanaga, Mr Joseph Ajakaye
ZIMBABWE	Mr Colly Masuku

Informal economy (*Immediate objective 2: Improved working conditions and status of affected women and men working in targeted informal settings*)

BENIN	Dr Moucharafou Idohou
CAMEROON	Mr Joseph Kemmegne
ETHIOPIA	Ms Eskedar Nadew
MOZAMBIQUE	Mr Paulo Romao
TANZANIA	Mr Philippe Vanhugneyem, MsTulanoga Matimbwi

Headquarter based personnel:

Mr Moussa Oumarou (DIALOGUE, *Immediate objective 3: Enhanced compliance with the legal and policy framework by ILO constituents*)
Ms Margherita Licata (ILO/AIDS, *Immediate objective 1, 2 & 3*)
Ms Julia Fäldt (ILO/AIDS, *Immediate objective 2 & 3*)

For further information, comments and recommendations on this newsletter please contact Julia Fäldt:

faldt@ilo.org