

*Statement of
Commitment
of Indian
Employers'
Organizations
on addressing
TB and HIV
in the World
of Work*



International
Labour
Organization



*Statement of Commitment
of Indian Employers' Organizations
on addressing TB and HIV in
the World of Work*

Copyright © International Labour Organization 2019
First published 2019

Publications of the International Labour Office enjoy copyright under Protocol 2 of the Universal Copyright Convention. Nevertheless, short excerpts from them may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to ILO Publications (Rights and Licensing), International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland, or by email: rights@ilo.org. The International Labour Office welcomes such as applications.

Libraries, institutions and other users registered with a reproduction rights organization may make copies in accordance with the licences issued to them for this purpose. Visit www.ifrro.org to find the reproduction rights organization in your country.

ISBN: 978-92-2-133175-9 (print)
978-92-2-133176-6 (web pdf)

The designations employed in ILO publications, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the International Labour Office concerning the legal status of any country, area or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Office of the opinions expressed in them.

Reference to names of firms and commercial products and processes does not imply their endorsement by the International Labour Office, and any failure to mention a particular firm, commercial product or process is not a sign of disapproval.

Information on ILO publications and digital products can be found at: www.ilo.org/publns.

Printed in India

Statement of Commitment of Indian Employers' Organizations on addressing TB and HIV in the World of Work

We, the employers' organizations of India, recognize that:

- Tuberculosis (TB) and HIV/AIDS have emerged as a major threat to the world of work. More than 90 percent of TB and HIV infections in India have been reported from the most productive age group of 15-49 years.
- Most TB and HIV deaths in India occur among young adults in the economically productive age group, with high economic and social costs.
- TB and HIV/AIDS can adversely affect employees and pose a serious threat to enterprise performance due to increased absenteeism, disruption of operations and increased expenditure on employee treatment, replacement and associated costs.
- Development of workplace policy and programmes dealing with TB and HIV/AIDS is the

rights thing to do. It protects workers and it also makes business sense.

- Businesses are key institutions in contributing to the development of the national social fabric. Businesses cannot separate their interest from those of the societies in which they function. Businesses are directly exposed to societal dynamics and need to contribute in addressing the need of people who are directly or indirectly affected by TB and HIV/AIDS.

- Ending TB and AIDS by 2030 is a global commitment under sustainable Development Goal 3, which calls for wide-ranging partnerships beyond the health sector.

- India stands committed to the goal of “achieving a rapid decline in burden of TB, morbidity and mortality while working towards elimination of TB in India by 2025; and to the goal of ‘ending the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030. The National TB control programme as well as the National AIDS Control programme, being run by the Ministry of Health envisage a multi-sectoral response with the engagement of the private sector/ employers, enterprises and trade unions in achieving these goals.

Therefore, we commit to provide leadership and take concrete steps to collectively advocate for greater response to TB and HIV/AIDS from the world of work in partnership with the Indian government at central and state level, trade unions, ILO, UNAIDS, WHO, international agencies and other relevant stakeholders, including the informal economy sectors.

We endorse the guidelines provided by the National HIV and TB policies; the National Policy on HIV and AIDS and the world of work; and the draft National Policy Framework on TB and HIV/AIDS in the world of work.

We encourage our member companies to effectively use these guidelines in developing policy and programmes on TB and HIV/AIDS at their workplaces.

We pledge to undertake sincere efforts to develop our response following the key principles which are:

■ **Recognition of TB and HIV/AIDS as workplace issues**

TB and HIV/AIDS are workplace issues, not only because they affect the workforce, but also because the workplace can play a vital role in limiting the spread and effects of the epidemics.

■ **Non-discrimination**

There should be no discrimination or stigmatization of employees – on the basis of TB and on real or perceived HIV status and /or because of the sexual orientation of an employee.

■ **Gender equality**

More equal gender relations and the empowerment of women are vital to successfully preventing the spread of HIV and TB and enabling women to cope with TB and HIV/AIDS.

■ **Healthy work environment**

The work environment should be healthy and safe, and adapted to the state of health and capabilities of employees.

■ **Social dialogue**

A successful TB and HIV/AIDS workplace policy and programme requires cooperation and trust between employers, employees and governments.

■ **Confidentiality**

Access to personal data relating to a worker's HIV and TB status should be bound by the rules of confidentiality.

■ Continuing the employment relationship

TB and HIV infection should not be the causes for termination of employment. Persons with TB and HIV-related illnesses should be able to work for as long as medically fit to work.

"I could beat TB because I had job security. The support of the employer has a big impact. In BEST, benefits like paid leave, free medication and hospitalisation, and thoughtful colleagues bring great comfort."

- Preeti Sawant
BEST, Mumbai, India



■ Prevention

Both HIV and TB are preventable. Prevention should be the primary focus and prevention strategies should be focus on behaviour change, knowledge, treatment and the creation of a non-discriminatory environment.

■ Treatment, care and support

All employees are entitled to health services and to benefits from statutory and occupational schemes. Government of India provides free treatment for

HIV/AIDS (Anti-Retroviral Treatment) as well as for TB. Employers' support is key in ensuring treatment adherence, both for TB as well as for HIV and AIDS. Social protection should also be extended to people living with HIV and TB patients.

On our part, we commit ourselves to the following:

- Collaborate with the national TB and AIDS control programmes and facilitate partnership with our members to strengthen the multi-sectoral response to TB and HIV/AIDS in India. Undertake advocacy with our member enterprises in partnership with national programmes, all relevant development partners, the International Labour Organization, WHO and UNAIDS. Wherever possible, TB and HIV/AIDS will be included in the agenda of our meetings.
- Facilitate technical support – policy advice, training, communication and advocacy, building partnership with the health sector- for our member companies and other affiliates to help them start/strengthen their response to TB and HIV/AIDS in their workplaces.
- Collaborate with trade unions, civil society organizations, other Indian apex/state bodies of trade and industry associations, networks of

People Living with HIV and TB, and other relevant partners.

- Facilitate technical support for our members from relevant agencies should they wish to integrate TB and HIV/AIDS in their welfare and/or Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives.
- Develop and disseminate best practices on TB and HIV/AIDS workplace programmes.
- Set up an annual award to recognize the enterprises that provide exemplary leadership and implement result-oriented TB and HIV/AIDS programmes. We shall seek partnership with national programme and international organizations such as the ILO to develop a sound criterion for such an award, which will form the basis for selection of enterprises for the award.
- Participate in key national/state level committees on TB and HIV/AIDS in India and at the international level to present our views and generate support for expanding the workplace interventions in India.
- Undertake collaborative efforts in preparing and submitting proposals for workplace initiatives to national and international funding agencies, including the Global Fund on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. We will seek technical

help from ILO, UNAIDS, NACO and other relevant agencies in this regard.

- Advocate for increased domestic funding for TB and HIV in India; including efforts in mobilizing resources from the private sector.
- Create an internal focal point in our organizations for TB and HIV/AIDS and develop a mechanism to plan and review our yearly activities on TB and HIV/AIDS.

Signed by:



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rohit Relan', is shown within a light gray rectangular box.

Mr Rohit Relan
President,
All India Organisation
of Employers (AIOE)



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B. K. Goenka', is shown within a light gray rectangular box.



Mr B. K. Goenka
President,
The Associated Chambers of
Commerce and Industry in
India (ASSOCHAM)



Confederation of Indian Industry

Mr Chandrajit Banerjee

Director General,
Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)



Mr Vineet Kaul

President,
Employers' Federation of India (EFI)



Mr Sandip Somany

President,
Federation of Indian Chambers of
Commerce and Industry (FICCI)



Mr Jitendra Gupta

National President,
Laghu Udyog Bharati



Dr U. D. Choubey

Director General,
Standing Conference of
Public Enterprises (SCOPE)

A guidance note for enterprises

1. Formulating a TB and HIV workplace policy

A TB and HIV workplace policy is necessary as it provides the framework for direct action at the workplace and demonstrates the support and commitment of management. It should be developed in a participatory manner with the active involvement of senior management and representatives of workers. This process enhances trust, transparency, accountability, ownership, commitment as well as sustainability of the workplace programme.

Following the guidelines of the national policies and taking inspiration from the ILO Recommendation on HIV and AIDS and the world of work (No. 200); and the ILO's guidelines Tuberculosis: Guidelines for Workplace control activities, enterprises can develop their policy.

The workplace TB and HIV policy should be integrated in a broader policy (e.g. health, wellness or occupational safety and health policy) or agreement, or an exclusive statement of commitment. The policy should be developed through an internal committee, involving workers and their representatives; and should encompass the following principles:

- Recognition of TB and HIV as workplace issues
- Non discrimination
- Healthy work environment

- Social dialogue
- Gender equality
- Confidentiality
- Continuation of employment and reasonable accommodation
- Prevention
- Treatment, care and support.

The purpose of a policy is to ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the implementation and integration of TB prevention, treatment and care activities with related HIV workplace programmes among employees, their families as well as the communities in which the business is situated.

Benefits of a workplace policy on TB and HIV

- Supports early detection and treatment of employees and keeps them healthy and productive
- Supports employees affected by HIV and TB to understand what support and care they will receive, assures non-discrimination, their employment protection status, so that they are more likely to come forward for appropriate treatment;
- Ensures consistency with appropriate national policies and legislation;
- Makes an explicit commitment to corporate action;
- Establishes and protects the rights of those affected.
- States a standard of behaviour for all employees (whether infected or not);

- Provides guidance to supervisors, managers, unions, human resource and occupational health professionals;
- Helps to control the spread of TB and HIV; and assists an enterprise in planning for TB and HIV care and control.

2. Management commitment:

- Commitment by the management to provide sustainable resource and staff time for TB and HIV prevention, treatment and care in the workplace.
- Development and implementation of clear workplace policy on TB and HIV.
- Implementation of administrative and environmental infection control measures to minimize the risk of transmission of infection in the workplace.

3. Behaviour Change Communication

Awareness and educational campaigns to create awareness on HIV and TB, address negative attitudes towards people with TB and HIV and increase awareness among the employees about TB and TB/ HIV co-infections;

4. Early detection

Promotion of voluntary counselling and testing for HIV and detection of TB. This requires partnership with the nearby health facilities or strengthening health facilities within the enterprises, if they exist. Ensuring access to good quality diagnostic

services, particularly sputum smear microscopy to ensure early detection of infectious cases, thereby preventing the further spread of TB.

5. Treatment and treatment adherence

Systems should be in place for providing anti-retroviral treatment (ART) for those who turn out to be HIV positive, with due respect for confidentiality and non-discrimination. For TB patients, Direct observation of standardized short course chemotherapy by a healthcare worker or treatment supporter to ensure a cure and prevent the emergence of drug resistance should be arranged. Partnership with the nearest ART centres and DOTS programme of health department need to be ensured.

Employers support can be key in ensuring treatment adherence. Counselling, leave provision, nutrition, and psychosocial support for employees who have TB and HIV need to be ensured.

Efforts should also be made to link up with the government social protection schemes so that employees, particularly the contractual workers may avail the benefits.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

Systematic monitoring and standardized reporting on implementation of policy and programme through internal committees. Assessment of the impact on awareness, testing and treatment measures.

*Statement of Commitment of Indian Employers' Organizations on
addressing TB and HIV in the World of Work*

**ISBN: 978-92-2-133175-9 (print)
978-92-2-133176-6 (web pdf)**

**International Labour Organization
DWT for South Asia and Country Office for India
India Habitat Centre
Core 4B, 3rd Floor, Lodhi Road
New Delhi-110 003, India
Ph: +91-11 4750-9200; Fax: +91-11 2460-2111
Email: delhi@ilo.org
Website: ww.ilo.org/india**

March 2019