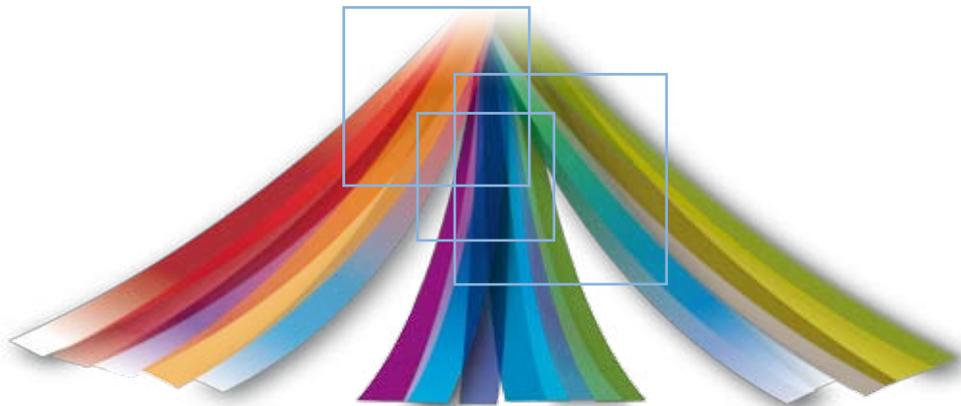


GLOBAL JOBS PACT POLICY BRIEFS



International
Labour
Organization



INCOME GENERATION AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH AND AFFECTED BY HIV AND AIDS

1. Executive summary

The global financial and economic crisis threatens to reverse the gains made in HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support programmes in many middle and low income countries. The world also faces the prospect of prolonged unemployment, deepening poverty and inequality; conditions which could increase the vulnerability of workers to HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB). Job losses, declining earnings, reductions in remittances and large falls in economic activity due to the current global financial crisis affects households' ability to pay for health care and to ensure food security. Nutrition is essential when people living with HIV (PLHIV) are on antiretroviral treatment (ART).¹

Studies reveal that the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV and AIDS is hindering access of PLHIV and affected communities to work and treatment. Stigma, discrimination and income inequality are among the most fundamental drivers of the pandemic. Loss of livelihoods may lead to increased risk of exposure to HIV infection. Income generation and livelihood support programmes for PLHIV and affected communities should not be implemented as standalone or vertical programmes. They should be integrated into government employment schemes, civil society initiatives and private sector programmes. Such programmes will help PLHIV, affected families and communities to lead a productive life, continue treatment, get adequate nutrition and take care of their families. The Global Jobs Pact (GJP) addresses the social and employment impacts of the international financial and economic crisis. This Pact calls for workplace programmes on HIV/AIDS as part of an effective crisis response and advocates for a social protection

floor, to facilitate access to basic social services and income transfers for the poorest.² The new ILO Recommendation on HIV and AIDS and the world of work specifically refers to the importance of income generation, social protection and nutrition support in the context of HIV and AIDS.

Member States should;

Adopt national policies and workplace programmes on HIV and AIDS and TB, based on the new international labour standard on HIV and AIDS and the world of work (Recommendation No.200);

Initiate income generation activities and livelihood support programmes for PLHIV and affected communities, under the GJP in the formal and informal economies;

Explore and develop insurance products with adequate social protection for PLHIV. Efforts should be made to make social protection products HIV sensitive;

Integrate HIV and AIDS components and livelihood programmes into Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs).

¹ "The Global Economic Crisis and HIV Prevention and Treatment Programmes : Vulnerabilities and Impact", June 2009, p. 14. http://data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2009/jc1734_econ_crisis_hiv_response_en.pdf

² Message by Juan Somavia Director-General of the International Labour Office on the occasion of World AIDS Day, 1 December 2009 : <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/dgo/speeches/somavia/2009/aidsday.pdf>

The Global Jobs Pact policy brief series is intended to inform readers of the relevance of the ILO's technical areas of work in addressing economic downturns as well as assisting in sustainable economic recoveries. Each brief is an invitation to the reader to contact the ILO for additional information and support.

More briefs can be found and downloaded at <http://www.ilo.org/jobspact>



2. Description of the policy challenges

Impact of economic crisis

The financial crisis is adversely affecting external aid, domestic funding support and ART programmes. Reduced funding for HIV as a result of the economic crisis can have a devastating effect on the lives of people affected by HIV and AIDS. First, it can affect access to treatment for 5 million PLHIV on ART and the 7 million who are in need of treatment³. There should be no compromise on the achievement of the goals of Universal Access to HIV prevention, treatment care and support and the HIV-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) especially MDG 6. HIV/AIDS Workplace programmes are also impacted because, in efforts to prioritise, countries and national HIV coordinating authorities are allocating resources away from workplaces and focussing on Most at Risk Populations (MARPs) and other programmatic areas. 71 % and 78 % of respondents from Employers' and Workers' organizations respectively in the 10 countries stated that resources for HIV and AIDS workplace programmes would be affected by the financial crisis within the next 12 months⁴.

The current global job crisis has resulted in a high number of returning migrant workers. PLHIV among migrant populations need special attention as they are least covered through existing social protection schemes.

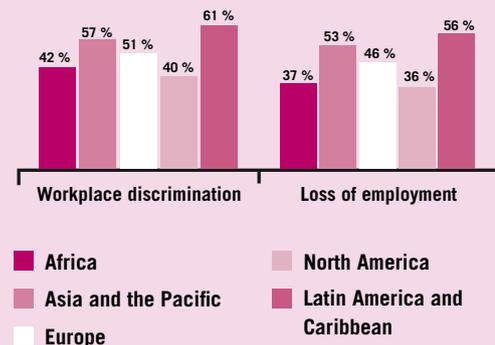
HIV-related stigma and discrimination in the world of work

Globally, PLHIV are experiencing human rights violations. Findings from pilot studies in Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia show that the most common right violated is the right to work, with work being terminated or denied based on the HIV positive status of the person.⁵ According to a recent survey presented by the NGO Delegation in 2010 to the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board in June 2010, from 1556 people surveyed, more than 40 % of respondents experienced workplace discrimination and up to 56 % across all regions noted the loss of employment⁶ This calls for urgent and effective implementation of policies and legislations.

Punitive laws

Several countries have laws that impede effective implementation of HIV programmes particularly amongst men who have sex with men, injecting drug users and sex workers.

Chart 4 : Employment Discrimination



Source : <http://unaidspcbngo.org>

Over 50 countries have travel restrictions on movement of PLHIV. Thousands of migrant workers, fit to work, are denied jobs in receiving countries and are deported because of their HIV status. Advocacy and action are needed at the global, regional and national levels.

Sustainable income generation and livelihood support options

Small pilot projects in a few countries have been undertaken to support a small number of PLHIV but very often these have not been scaled up. While it is necessary to continue advocacy for employment opportunities for PLHIV, as long as they are fit to work, it is also necessary to ensure that PLHIV benefit from opportunities of vocational training, business development or self-employment opportunities. They should

³ Ibid 1, page 22.

⁴ "Impact of the financial crisis on the world of work and HIV and AIDS services", ILO study undertaken in January 2010 in 10 countries of the Sub Saharan Africa : Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

⁵ The Global Network of People living with HIV (GNP+) documents these violations through the Human Rights Count. <http://www.gnpplus.net/news-and-events/aids2010/news-releases/1644-human-rights-count>

⁶ Global survey Results, 2010 NGO Delegation Consultation. Stigma and Discrimination : Hindering Effective HIV Responses. http://unaidspcbngo.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/2010-NGO-Delegation-Consultation_Global-Survey-Results.pdf



be made part of the existing employment and livelihood support programmes of governments, NGOs and private sector.

Gender inequality

The effects of gender inequality leave women and girls more at risk to HIV and AIDS. The crisis is having differential employment and social impacts from a gender perspective.

However, in many developing countries, women are often in more precarious employment conditions. Treatment failure for HIV positive pregnant women is likely to lead to increased numbers of newborns with HIV. In HIV affected households, women often face the double burden of caring for their ailing husbands and earning to take care of the family. Enhancing vocational skills and providing them with easily accessible employment/livelihood support is a major challenge and an opportunity that needs to be addressed.

3. Policy options to address the challenges

Protecting rights and ensuring non- discrimination in the world of work

The Recommendation No.200 is the first human rights instrument to focus on HIV and AIDS in the world of work. This new international labour standard sets a new milestone in the international labour response to the pandemic and the protection of human rights at work. It calls on governments to strengthen efforts to achieve social justice and to combat discrimination and stigmatization with regard to HIV and AIDS in all aspects of work.

Members should promote the retention in work and recruitment of persons living with HIV. Members should consider extending support through periods of employment and unemployment, including where necessary income-generating opportunities for persons living with HIV or persons affected by HIV or AIDS. (p. 6) ⁷

Developing sustainable livelihood programmes for PLHIV

There are several factors to consider when designing livelihood initiatives for PLHIV. Families with affected women and children, especially orphans, need special support. Lessons can be drawn from interventions such as the following :

- Cooperatives : Integration of PLHIV in income generation programmes of cooperatives have been shown to be very beneficial for men and women affected by HIV.

New wave of cooperatives in Cameroon help HIV positive women gain economic independence

This project has helped more than 100 women to operate in a broad range of areas including commerce, tailoring, designing, rearing pigs and poultry, secretarial support and communication services. A revolving micro-credit fund scheme was set up in three microfinance institutions across the North-west Region in Bamenda, Kumbo and Wum. The training package contained business development, management procedures, AIDS support, counselling and stigma reduction components.

- Scaling up the business development component of HIV workplace programmes would benefit PLHIV and affected families and will empower them economically and make them contribute productively to society. Such programmes help to support networks of PLHIV, thus reducing stigma and increasing access to gainful employment and “business start-up” opportunities.

HIV/AIDS Prevention and Impact Mitigation in the World of Work in Sub-Saharan Africa, Ethiopia programme.

Following the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training, Abebech and her friends formed a group comprising 26 members, secured a plot of land in Yeka Sub-City, Addis Ababa and started a poultry project. Now they are managing the business effectively using the skills they gained from the SIYB training. Their lives have changed. Their children are going to school.



- Engagement of PLHIV in government employment schemes and programmes :
The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) ⁸, India aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas. NREGA guarantees hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household whose members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. In some states of India, PLHIV have been enrolled in the scheme.

Engaging private sector and developing public private partnerships

Poverty and access to health care are two key challenges facing PLHIV particularly during the economic crisis. Their efforts to improve their situation can be blocked by the lack of employment opportunities due to widespread stigma and discrimination, on the basis of gender and HIV

status. Capacity building to improve employment opportunities for PLHIV is a direct means to empower PLHIV and address their needs.

ILO supported a vocational training centre of the Nepal National Social Welfare Association and local enterprises to hire PLHIV or assist them to establish their own small businesses. Out of 80 PLHIV trained (61 % women), 70 have since been employed or set up their own business (62 % women). A Resource Centre for Employment and Entrepreneurship has been established and a sustainability plan developed in collaboration with local banks, the Chamber of Commerce and the AIDS Committee.

⁷ Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work (No.200).

⁸ Work and Employment Community Solution Exchange for the AIDS Community. Solution Exchange for the Work and Employment. Query : Livelihood Programmes to Empower PLHIV – Experiences. Compiled by Radhika Desai, Resource Person and M. K. Nabeel and Warisha Yunus, issue Date : 16 June 2010.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

Livelihood initiatives from different parts of the world demonstrate a wide range of models. The most successful among them are the family-centric and self-supporting models. However, they cannot be ready made solutions that suit all settings. They must be tailored to suit the specific needs of each setting. Livelihood initiatives for PLHIV need not be vertical programmes and exclusive, as they may not be sustainable in many settings. From the ILO's perspective, livelihood support programmes have to be integrated and mainstreamed in DWCPs as part of economic recovery. Dependence on external sources of income and undue delays in getting sanctioned grants could jeopardise good initiatives. Lack of coordination among stakeholders at different levels can also hamper the success of these initiatives. Establishing linkages with local self-governance institutions will further improve sustainability. Policy makers and Governments need to assess market opportunities, potential sources of financial support and capacity building facilities. Feasibility assessments must include PLHIV. Hence, there must be Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV from the planning stages.

Member States are encouraged to ;

Adopt national policies and workplace programmes on HIV/AIDS and TB based on the new Recommendation (No.200).

This will strengthen the national response to the pandemic, provide access to livelihoods and help eliminate violation of human rights due to stigma and discrimination ;

Initiate income generation activities and livelihood support programmes for PLHIV and affected communities under the GJP. This will help member States and social partners in expanding their programmes to involve PLHIV and affected families and also to halt the increase in unemployment ;

Advocate with insurance and microfinance companies to include PLHIV in insurance products to allow for adequate social protection for PLHIV. Insurance schemes must be made HIV-sensitive. Integration of PLHIV issues/needs into existing vocational training and livelihood support programmes of government, civil society and private sector needs to be explored as it is cost effective and sustainable ;

Priority should be given to livelihood issues and income generation activities for PLHIV as a part of their programmes and schemes by Governments, civil society and private sector. The ILO can provide technical assistance for DWCPs to involve PLHIV in economic recovery programmes.