

# HIV/AIDS & Tourism

at  
TOI Annual General Meeting  
11 November 2010  
London

**S. Mohammad Afsar**

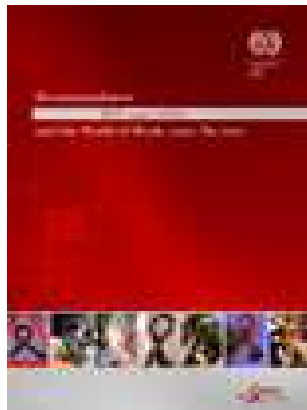
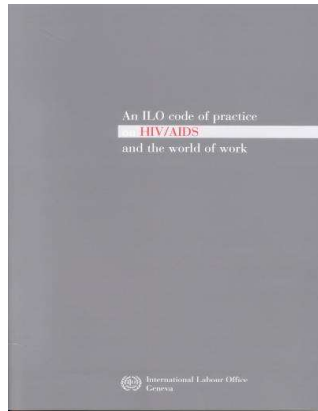
Senior Technical Specialist

ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, Geneva





# ILO: A tripartite UN agency



- Provides policy advice and technical assistance.
- ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS.
- Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work, 2010 (no.200) – the first international Labour standard on HIV & AIDS and the world of work.
- Guidelines for HIV and AIDS in the tourism sector.
- Collaboration with UNWTO to expand programme in tourism sector.





## Why should we discuss HIV/AIDS?

- Affects the most productive age group.
- Difficult to know the magnitude of the problem.
- HIV infection can be prevented.
- Key challenges in prevention:
  - HIV infection goes unnoticed for years.
  - Primarily spreads through sexual contact & discussion about sexual matters is not easy.
  - Stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS.





# Progression from HIV infection to AIDS

Normal Healthy Individual



Gets infected with HIV



**WINDOW PERIOD (3-12 weeks or even 6 months)**

(Antibodies to HIV not yet developed, test does not capture the real status but person can infect others)



**HIV Positive**

(Development of antibodies, can be detected in test)  
No exclusive symptoms (mild fever or flu like features in some cases)



May take up to **10 to 12 years to reach the stage of AIDS**, the period can be prolonged through available treatment





## What have we learnt about HIV/AIDS ?

- People with HIV infection can live a long productive life.
- HIV positive people pose no risk to their co-workers.
- Invisible nature of HIV infection keeps many in the stage of denial.
- HIV prevention programmes work and cost less, if initiated early.
- Fighting Stigma and discrimination is the key to success.
- HIV response can not be left to the health sector alone.



## HIV/AIDS: An overview

- Globally, an estimated 33.4 million people are living with HIV.
- Around 40% infections among young people.
- 2.7 million new infections, 2.0 million deaths due to AIDS in 2008.
- HIV prevalence continues to rise in Eastern Europe, Central Asia.
- Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the most heavily affected region.
- Resurgence of epidemic in men who have sex with men.
- AIDS one of the leading causes of premature mortality globally.





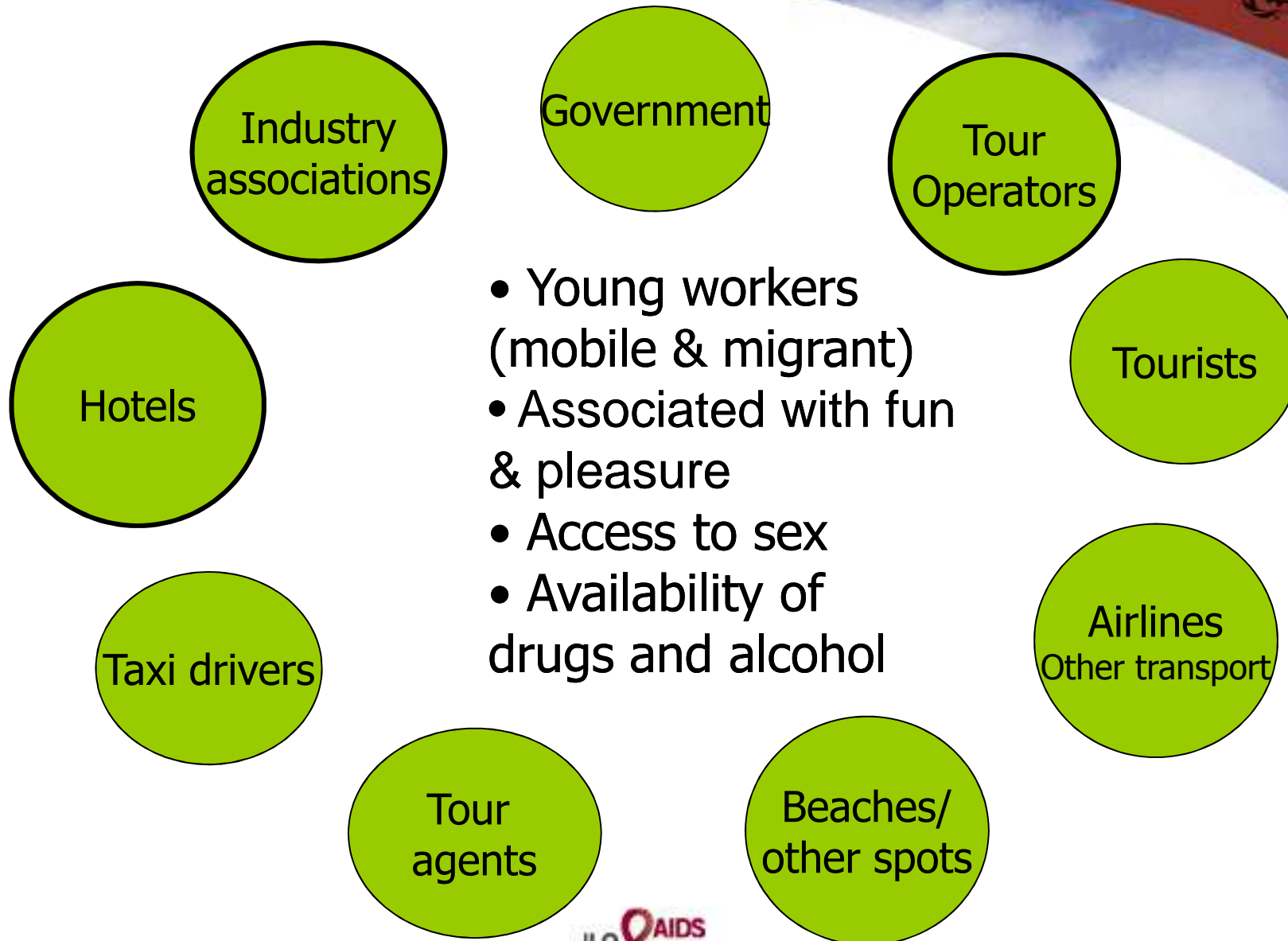
## Tourism & Employment

- Tourism is among the **lead sectors** for creation of jobs.
- In 2009 the sector's global economy created (directly and indirectly) more than **235 million jobs**, equivalent to about 8% of the global workforce.
- **Women** account for **60 to 70%** of the sector's labour force.
- Half of the sectors' workers are aged **25** or below.

Source: "Developments and challenges in the hospitality and tourism sector".  
Issues paper for discussion at the ILO Global Dialogue Forum for the Hotels, Catering, Tourism Sector  
(23–24 November 2010).



## Tourism sector: A huge inter-connected network







## **Some good examples of action on HIV and AIDS in the tourism sector**





## Serena Hotels, Kenya

- One of the largest international hotel chains in East Africa (total 2,360 employees): 8 hotels and lodges in Kenya (1,080 staff), 5 in Tanzania, and 1 in Uganda, Zanzibar and Rwanda.
- Lost 35 employees to AIDS between 1998 and 2002.
- Having paid death benefits, *equivalent to 5 years of salary for each of the 35 deceased employees*, insurance provider cancelled its medical policy with the company.





## HIV programme of Serena Hotels

- Began in 2002 for workplace and community.
- Transformed into a comprehensive wellness programme in 2007.
- 120 employees trained as peer educators.
- Treatment programme in partnership with NGOs and Government (*51 employees and 6 dependants on ART as of June 2007*).



## Serena Hotels (cont.)



### Key results:

- Reduced mortality: **35** employees had died of AIDS from 1998 to 2002; only **8** employees died from 2002 to June 2007.
- Reduction in life insurance premium: Premium payment reduced by approx. 90,000 USD due to reduced death claims.
- Reduced absenteeism.
- More knowledgeable, motivated and health conscious workforce.
- Fewer new HIV infections.
- Improved corporate image.



[1] <http://gametlibrary.worldbank.org>

# Accor



- **A global player, operates in nearly 100 countries with 150000 employees.**
- Global HIV/AIDS workplace programme started in Africa in 2002.
- Signed the Declaration of Commitment drawn by the Global Business Coalition (GBC) on AIDS in 2006.
- Led the working group of GBC for companies in the tourism sector.
- Developed multimedia/educational HIV/AIDS & malaria tools for the staff and travellers.



[2] <http://www.gbcimpact.org>



## Accor (cont.....)

- A truly global programme covering Africa, Asia, Europe, United States, Canada and Americas.
- Programme includes staff training and awareness, and access to health care.
- Guest awareness components included.
- Established partnerships: in Senegal (Employers association for the hotel industry, Cameroon (National Anti-AIDS Committee), Cambodia (ILO).

<http://www.accor.com>





## Goa, India

- ILO conducted surveys in the tourism in partnership with Goa AIDS Society , Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) and Travel And Tourism Association of Goa (TTAG).
- TTAG developed policy on HIV and AIDS, applicable to 300 member hotels.
- TTAG, with the help of ILO, developed a programme for 15 hotels.
- Peer educators were trained in hotels and partnership with local NGO and Goa AIDS Society established.





## Key lessons

- HIV/AIDS is reducing labour productivity in the tourism sector.
- HIV/AIDS is increasing labour costs in tourism.
- It makes economic sense to provide treatment to employees in the sector.
- Working in the sector puts young adults at the risk of infection.
- Tourism sector offers an opportunity to target a high risk group.
- Timely prevention efforts hold the key.
- Management commitment is the key to success.





## Cooperation proposal to tackle HIV and AIDS with tour operators initiative:

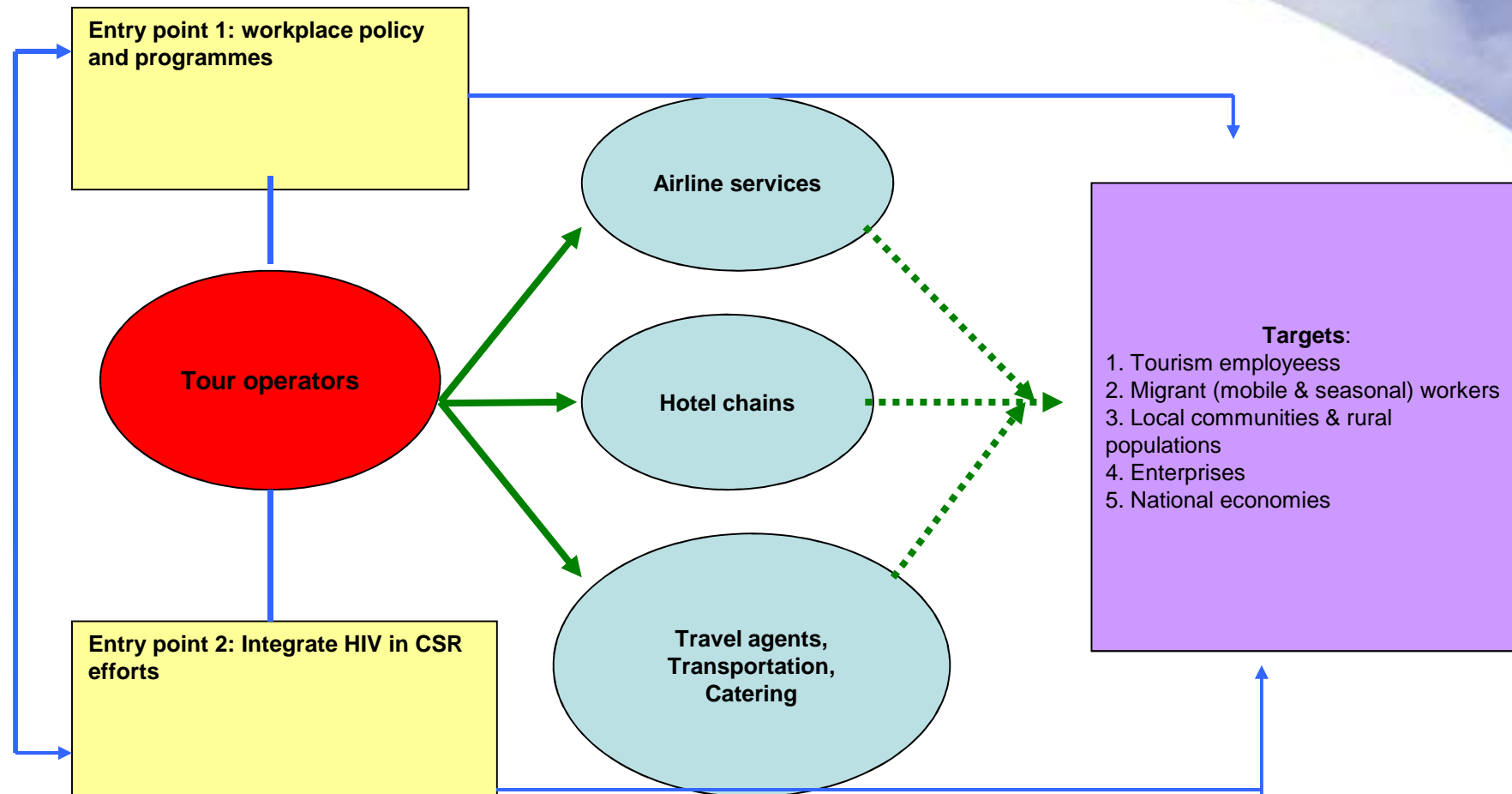
### Overall role:

- Undertake **advocacy** with TOI members.
- Facilitate **technical assistance** to TOI members to help them start /expand their HIV response.
- Reach out to **customers** of TOI members companies.





# Possible entry points of TOs





## Next steps:


- Share the concept note with UNWTO, TOI Board & its members along with the available ILO Guidelines and training modules on HIV and AIDS in Tourism sector.
- Provide technical assistance to TOI members, share communication & ILO training tools.
- Identify interested tour operators for the development & implementation of PPP.
- Provide HIV related technical information on the web-sites of UNWTO and TOI.
- Use next sport and forthcoming mega events to raise awareness about the pandemic.






## A message from a person living with HIV

**"If you take away our jobs,  
you will kill us faster than  
the HIV virus..."**



We can work. We pose no risk  
to our co-workers.  
Work is more than medicine to us.  
It keeps us going and enables us  
to bring home food and medicine."

Navin Kumar  
Living with HIV



Partnership of employers, workers and governments  
to prevent and control HIV/AIDS  
International Labour Office  
Geneva, Switzerland





## Relevant ILO standard and guidelines

- Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work, 2010 (No.200)
- Convention No. 172 on working conditions and Recommendation No. 179, 1991
- Guide for Social Dialogue in the Tourism industry, 2008.
- Reducing Poverty through Tourism, 2008 (Working Paper).
- Study review of socially responsible HR and labour relations practice in international hotel chains, 2008
- OSH Standards in Tourism and web based self assessment
- Guidelines on HIV/AIDS in tourism
- Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) project in South Africa
- Cooperation on Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSAs) (UNWTO)
- New developments and challenges in the hospitality and tourism sector, Issues paper for the Global Dialogue Forum , 23 – 24 November 2010, ILO Geneva





# Thank you

[afsar@ilo.org](mailto:afsar@ilo.org)

For further reference  
[www.ilo.org/aids](http://www.ilo.org/aids)  
[www.ilo.org/sector](http://www.ilo.org/sector)

