



# Introducing non-discrimination policies and programmes as an extension of highway corridor testing amongst truck drivers: A union employer partnership

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## Background

In Kenya, the transport sector accounts for more than 30% of GDP. Long distance truck drivers and their assistants (loaders) are an integral part of the sector with their health affecting its profitability. Addressing HIV within this key population is a challenge with interventions looking at issues around transactional sex, multiple sex partners, and creation of opportunities for accessing services. Indeed, research has shown that in East Africa HIV prevalence for truckers is between 25% and 32%, which is in many cases more than double the national averages (kmcc.org.ug).

Implementation of a transport corridor testing programme in 2015 reached over 5 000 truck drivers and sex workers and identified the need to address structural problems (lack of HIV policies, and conditions of service) that were making drivers more vulnerable to exposure to HIV, STIs and other conditions. It also recognised the need to engage the companies that employed the drivers to promote support at workplace level and contribute to a sustainable response.



## Description

A partnership between the Swedish Workplace HIV and AIDS Programme (SWHAP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE), the Kenya Long Distance Truck Drivers and Allied Workers Union (KLDTDWU) and the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU-K) engaged companies in Nairobi to develop HIV and wellness policies to improve working conditions for the drivers. The SWHAP model (which encourages close cooperation between management and employees for sustainable results) and the ILO's HIV and AIDS Recommendation (No.200) were used as guides for the process.



"Compensation against discrimination based on HIV status is high. It is important for the employers to know how to address this. Policies are important they enable certainties in terms of decision making."  
 Isaac Kiema, Kenya Federation of Employers



"The KLDTDWU is no longer just offering roadside testing, but going into companies to provide a supportive environment for positive workers, and prevention interventions for those that are negative."  
 Helen Mugutu, International Labour Organization



"Before the project many employers saw us as their rivals. We have now developed a better way of relating."  
 Nicholas Mbugua, Kenya Long Distance Truck Drivers and Allied Workers Union



## Results

Through the partnership comprehensive workplace programmes were developed for 10 companies. This included; management sensitisation for buy-in and support; selection and training of programme steering committees and peer educators; baseline KABP surveys; HIV and NCD awareness raising and testing for employees; and the development and dissemination of HIV policies promoting non-discrimination - upholding the rights of positive employees.

Additionally, the mentorship programme:

- ▶ Catalysed networking and dialogue between the Employers' Organisation and the Union in line with protection of trucker's rights. The dialogue paved the way for unionisation of workers at some workplaces.
- ▶ Created forums for discussions on how unions and employer organisations can work together to address other industrial relations issues beyond the Kenyan borders – the Secretary General of KLDTDWU is Chair of a regional truck drivers' association.



Capacity to address HIV & AIDS built within **10** companies - reaching **1 810** employees



**10** HIV & AIDS policies promoting non-discrimination & providing protection of rights for positive employees disseminated



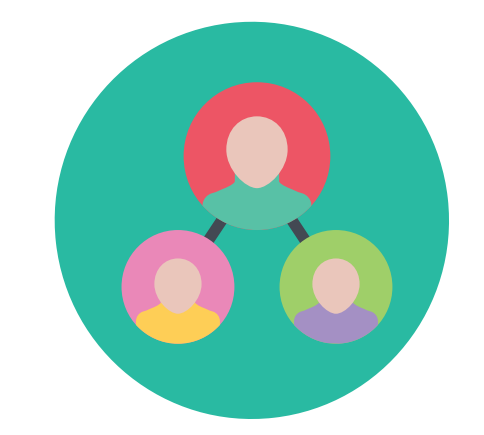
**1 620** Employees reached with information on HIV & wellness



**1 018** Employees established their HIV status



**90** Management representatives sensitised on business benefits of workplace HIV & AIDS programmes



**27** Peer Educators trained to create opportunities for discussions on health-related issues in the workplace & communities

## Lessons Learnt

- ▶ Unions have a vital role to play in advocacy for non-discrimination policies at the workplace.
- ▶ Partnerships with stakeholders extended the reach of HIV interventions to more workplaces and provided structures for follow-up services.
- ▶ HIV and AIDS workplace programmes are a useful marketing tool for employers' organisations and unions.
- ▶ The HIV and AIDS policy development process provided an entry point to engage transport companies on labour laws (for example sexual harassment) contributing to the overall decent work agenda.
- ▶ Union employer mentorship programmes can assist in the uptake of HIV and Wellness Programmes in SMEs which face resource constraints – 70% of the companies in the programme had less than 250 employees.
- ▶ The approach can cascade the SWHAP model, with more companies establishing workplace HIV and AIDS programmes with potential for a sector based network.

## Conclusions/ Next Steps

Expanding highway testing services into comprehensive workplace programmes with policies can provide protection against discrimination for long distance truck drivers, and provide necessary structures to follow-up the uptake of treatment care and support services. Replication of the programme is taking place in a further 10 companies in Mombasa where the union has most of its members.



The Swedish Workplace HIV and AIDS Programme (SWHAP) is a joint initiative by the International Council of Swedish Industry (NIR) and the Swedish Industrial and Metalworkers' Union (IF Metall). It is a long-term strategy to contribute to the establishment and/or support of HIV and Wellness programmes at workplaces in sub-Saharan Africa. SWHAP is an example of how management, employees and trade unions can contribute to a successful intervention that saves lives and secures future markets. Since 2004, this programme has been helping companies invest in workplace programmes that reverse the negative impact of HIV and AIDS. SWHAP provides support for HIV and Wellness workplace programmes in over 360 workplaces in Botswana, DRC, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The programme is cofunded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, and by the companies that participate in the programme.

www.swhap.org



Contact: SWHAP Secretariat - info@swhap.org or Country Coordinators - www.swhap.org/about/coordinators

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