



PSUFASA NEWSLETTER

STOP AIDS. KEEP THE PROMISE.

FEBRUARY 2011

Spotlight!

South Africa In-Country Seminar

SOUTH AFRICA IN-COUNTRY SEMINAR.

ROUND-UP OF SEMINARS.....

EVALUATION: HIV/AIDS PROJECT.....

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The In-country seminar in South Africa was held under the theme **“Strengthening the public sector trade unions’ voice, dialogue and partnerships in implementing and monitoring policies and platforms for engagement on HIV and AIDS.”** Eight public sector trade unions affiliated to the PSI attended the seminar.

The specific objectives of the seminar were, among others, to:-

- * Assess the impact of existing social dialogue platforms on issues of HIV and AIDS and the role of labour;
- * Examine the impact of the Employee, Health and Wellness Programme in the public sector;
- * Evaluate the role of labour in the implementation of the National Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS;
- * Strengthen partnerships, networking, joint programming and campaigns among public sector trade unions in the area of HIV and AIDS.

The Chief Director in the South African Department of Public Service & Administration, Dr. Siphon Senabe presented the keynote address highlighting the country’s HIV and AIDS profile, policy frameworks and mitigation strategies.

Dr. Senabe noted the key trends of the epidemic since 2002. He indicated that the epidemic had stabilised with about 11% of children and 16% of adults between the ages of 15-49 living with HIV. In his discussion it was clear that women are more affected than men with women’s prevalence rate at 15% and men at 10%.

He also highlighted the evolution of the Employee Health and Wellness Programme (EHWP) in the public service as one of the strategies adopted to ensure a healthy and productive public service.

After discussing the policy frameworks, he called upon trade unions to participate in the review processes of the

National Strategic Plan for 2012-2017. He further recommended to unions to take appropriate measures to understand adult sexuality, prevention behaviours and revisit the creation of bi-partite committees at the workplace.

The seminar was also attended by the Director of the Employee Health and Wellness Programme, Ms. Dawn Joseph, ILO HIV/AIDS technical specialist, Mrs Evelyn Serima, Deputy Chairperson of SANAC, Mark Heywood, Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council, Tshwaranang Legal Advice Centre and the Labour Research Services.

Below: Dr. Senabe, Chief Director - DPSA



Left: Participants attending the South Africa In-country seminar

Circulate widely please!

Editorial comment



Dear Readers,

We hope you all enjoyed your holidays and are back with renewed efforts to make 2011 a year of progress in terms of fighting against HIV and AIDS at the workplace.

Although the DFID funding is coming to an end in March 2011, this should not distract our attention and commitment to deal with the scourge of AIDS mostly affecting our sub-region.

Instead, together we need to re-strategise on how best we can advance the current determination to fight HIV and AIDS. There is work to be done and a resource mobilisation and sustainability strategy has to be found. It is our hope that union activists

who will be attending the 2nd regional seminar on HIV and AIDS on the 15th and 16th of February 2011 will come up with concrete plans to carry the work forward.

It is our responsibility to plan, mobilise the necessary support and implement the plans as it is us, our colleagues, families and friends being infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

On behalf of UNISON and PSI we would like to acknowledge the support towards the project during the implementation process. In this regard we would like to thank the UK Department for International Development (DFID)

for the financial resources which made the implementation of the project possible.

We also thank the participating unions for their dedication and vision to ensure a healthy and productive public sector workforce through the implementation of prevention, treatment, care and support programmes. Many thanks also to unions and individuals that contributed to this newsletter!

Lastly, we wish to thank key stakeholders such as; the ILO, government departments, AIDS commissions, civil society organisations for the support in various forms. **Thank You!**

Employee Health and Wellness Programme: Some lessons from South Africa

During the in-country seminar in South Africa, the Chief Director of the Employee, Health and Wellness Programme (EHWP) in the Gauteng Department of Health and Social Development shared in detail the strategic priorities of the programme.

Overall objective

The overall purpose of the Integrated EHWP is to promote and ensure sustained safety, health and well-being of employees in the public service.

Delivery strategy

The programme is meant to be delivered through sustainable employee wellness centres to be set up in all the provinces.

Deliverables

HIV and AIDS

- ◆ Preventive measures including health seeking behaviour.
- ◆ Provision of counselling and testing.

- ◆ Treatment and care.
- ◆ Establishment of support mechanisms.
- ◆ Reduction of stigma and discrimination.
- ◆ Pre-retirement planning services.
- ◆ Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV and AIDS.
- ◆ Access to justice for unfairly discriminated employees.

Key challenges

Whilst there are positive aspects of the programme there are also challenges which other countries can learn from and avoid in future. Some of the challenges of the programme include:-

- Absence of designated coordinators in all health facilities to implement the programme.
- Limited marketing and implementation of the programme in all government departments.

- Limited role of trade unions in the implementation of the programme and training activities related to the programme.
- Failure to integrate effectively other OHS issues such as TB and STIs.
- Absence of monitoring and evaluation tools.
- Failure to target all workers in the public service.

In spite of the challenges highlighted above the concept of the EHWP is noble and if well implemented and resourced would certainly reduce the negative impact of HIV and AIDS at the workplace.

If the concept also marketed well the desired result of a healthy and productive public service is achievable.

Article adapted from presentation made by Ms. Joseph - 2010



Ms. Dawn Joseph: Chief Director - HRD & Employee, Health Wellness Programme - Gauteng DOH

Swaziland In-country seminar

Mbambane, Swaziland:

November 2010 - The Swaziland in-country seminar was held on the 15th and 16th of November 2010. Union activists representing the two PSI affiliates in Swaziland, namely; the Swaziland Nurses Association and the Swaziland National Association of Civil Servants attended the seminar.

Like other in-country seminars the objectives were to;

- ◆ Share skills, information, experiences, projects and programmes on HIV and AIDS in the workplace
- ◆ Highlight and strengthen occupational health and safety responsibilities at the workplace.
- ◆ Strengthen networking amongst trade unions, NGOs and government departments.

Dr. Cleo Sibanda presented the key issues affecting Swaziland in relation to HIV and AIDS. He profiled the following key points:-

- * High HIV general prevalence rate between 22-26%.
- * High age specific HIV prevalence rate.
- * High gender specific HIV prevalence rate.



Participants - Swaziland seminar

- * Higher HIV prevalence among the working population than among the unemployed.
- * Higher prevalence rate among urbanites than rural dwellers.

He further discussed the legal and policy frameworks that have been put in place to mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS in Swaziland. However, he indicated that the major challenge is that the legal and policy frameworks are outdated and are not adequately implemented. He also recommended to social partners to work together and coordinate the HIV and AIDS response.

The seminar was also attended by representatives from the Ministry of Health, the International Labour Organisation and the Swaziland Aids Support Organisation (SASO)



Dr. Cleo Sibanda - Department of Labour

In conclusion union representatives developed action plans for implementation up to June 2011. Some of the plans include shop-stewards training and study circles.

Inspiring responses to HIV and AIDS in Swaziland

Swaziland Aids Support Organisation (SASO)

The organisation believes that the Greater Involvement of People Living with or affected by HIV and AIDS is central to the fight against stigma and discrimination. However, the responsibility is not theirs alone, all individuals and all sectors of society must accept the moral obligation to fight stigma and to promote openness, acceptance and solidarity!

By Vusi Matsebula, SASO, 2010.

Ministry of Health

HIV and AIDS has declared war on Swaziland. If the country is to survive it has to declare war on HIV and behave like a country at war. It should no longer be business as usual for every citizen and for all sections of society: civil, public and private.

By Muhle Dlamini - Ministry of Health, Swaziland National Aids Programme, 2010.

Establishment of the Public Sector HIV/AIDS Coordinating Committee

In order to ensure the coordination of all HIV and AIDS policies, programmes and activities on HIV and AIDS, social partners in Swaziland established the Public Sector HIV/AIDS Coordinating Committee. The Committee is a tripartite plus structure composed of representatives of trade unions, the employer (various relevant government departments) and key intergovernmental.

Interview with Wezi Zione Kumwenda

Name: Wezi Zione.

Surname: Kumwenda.

Union: Water Employees Trade Union of Malawi.

Position in Union: Assistant HIV/AIDS Coordinator.

No. Of years in union work
6 (six) years.

What are the current challenges facing your union in fighting HIV and AIDS?

The challenges facing our union are stigma and discrimination. A lot of people are failing to come out more about their status for fear of being discriminated.

What are the successes of your union?

Our union successfully came up with a booklet on nutrition with the assistance of funds from the PSI/UNISON project. This booklet is assisting our members with information on the type of food to eat in order to cope with the disease.

If you can be given a mandate to change policies what can be your union approach to HIV and AIDS?

A clearly written policy would be my priority as the union does not have a written policy on HIV/AIDS.

How is your union fighting stigma and discrimination?

By conducting awareness campaigns. But the union has a challenge to reach out to all members due to limited resources.

What would you like to see changing in your union about the strategies to educate your members about the pandemic?

I would like to see more HIV/AIDS issues mainstreamed in all the activities of Water Utilities.

What lessons have you learnt from other unions on mobilizing workers against AIDS?

I have learnt that when members are mobilised to fight against HIV/AIDS, awareness is increased and members become knowledgeable of the pandemic and hence they are able to deal with HIV and AIDS issues in their own spaces.

Why is gender equality important within the union

in the fight against HIV and AIDS?

Gender equality is important because both men and women are affected and infected.

Kindly identify persons in your union whom you believe have played an important role in leading the struggle against HIV and AIDS and why?

The General Secretary, Ms. Olivia Kunje and the Coordinator Mr. Moses Nkosi are always there to champion issues of HIV/AIDS in union meetings and structures.

What is your message about HIV and AIDS to workers within your union and the country in general?

Union leaders must ensure that HIV and AIDS is mainstreamed in all the structures, programmes and activities of the union!

Wezi Zione Kumwenda was the Assistant HIV and AIDS Coordinator for the Water Employees Trade Union of Malawi. At the time of publication she had left the organisation and is now working for another organisation.

“Staff turnover has been one of the challenges trade unions have to deal with in the implementation process of HIV and AIDS programmes and activities, hence the need for continuous and systematic training” - **Cde. Olivia Kunje, General Secretary (WETUM), Malawi**

More on in-country seminars

Norman Mampane, Johannesburg, South Africa - The South African in-country seminar came a few days before the World Aids Day commemorations the world over. Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region hardest hit by HIV accounting for 67% of all people living with the virus worldwide, with 71% of AIDS related deaths and 91% of all new infections amongst children [UNAIDS Report, 2010]

South Africa has the largest number of people infected with HIV throughout the world with 5,7 million people aged between 15-49 living with HIV.

The seminar came at an opportune time as the workplace is an ideal entry point for implementing policies to break the stigma attached to the virus and to ensure the delivery of treatment, care and support programmes and activities.

The social dialogue frameworks at the workplace are key to ensure that legislation, policies and programmes are developed to address the impact of HIV and

AIDS at the workplace. Although the government has put in place laws, policies and programmes, implementation remains a challenge.

Among other steps that should be taken to ensure implementation is the strengthening of the justice delivery system to deal with violations of rights people living with HIV and AIDS.

Some of the key issues unanimously agreed for attention by the union activists to form part of the Action Plan for 2011 include:

- * Enhancing collaboration with all key players, including health workers, government and trade unions;
- * Lobbying for support to ensure sustainable trade union programmes on HIV and AIDS;
- * Engaging vigorously with employers to implement the Employee Wellness Programmes and OHS Plans;
- * Continuous training of counselors at the workplace to deal with



Comrade Norman Mampane - National Spokesperson, Police Officers Civil Rights Union (POPCRU)

stigma and discrimination.

The call by trade union activists to come up with a detailed action plan and to ensure its implementation was long overdue. HIV and AIDS is a trade union issue as many skilled workers who more often than not are 'bread winners' are dying due to AIDS.

Forward with the struggle to defeat the scourge of HIV/AIDS!

Key outcomes - South Africa

Policy and collective bargaining

Having discussed the key challenges around policy issues the activists agreed on the following actions:-

1. Review all policies to be in line with international and regional policy developments.
2. Review the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council Resolution of 2001 (to be tabled as an agenda item).
3. Develop of a simplified handbook of updated policies.
4. Training of shop-stewards on legal and policy issues.
5. Awareness raising on policy issues.
6. Campaigns on policy issues.

Campaigns and consciousness raising

Key campaign issues agreed upon by the union activists were around:

- Greater involvement of people living with HIV and AIDS (create a support group).
- Greater involvement of young workers.
- Addressing gender based violence and sexual harassment.
- Accessibility of preventive measures such as femdoms.
- Encouraging members to participate in the HTC campaign.
- Outreach campaigns to rural areas.

Organizational building and strengthening

After discussing the key organisational challenges within the public sector union activists agreed to:

- Set up a joint public sector trade union task team on HIV and AIDS.
- Revisit public sector trade union representation at SANAC level.
- Lobby union leadership to employ full time coordinators to deal with OHS, HIV and AIDS and other health issues.
- Mobilise resources for servicing membership through training and campaigns.
- Make use of PSI website.

Reflecting on support to project activities

Support from the International Labour Organisation (ILO)



Mrs. Evelyn Serima - ILO HIV/AIDS Technical Specialist - Lesotho stakeholders' seminar

Since 2009 the ILO has been readily available to give the necessary technical support to the project secretariat during the implementation of the project activities.

In September, 2009 the Director of the ILO Pretoria office, Mr. Vic van Vuuren gave a key note speech during the 1st sub-regional seminar on HIV and AIDS and pledged the support of the ILO in achieving the outcomes of the project.

In 2010, the HIV and AIDS technical specialists, Mrs. Evelyn Serima and Mr. Simphiwe Mabhele worked hard to ensure not only a process of sharing information and technical expertise on developments at the international

and regional level but also through guiding trade union programmes and activities in line with these developments.

Mrs. Serima facilitated during the South Africa in-country seminar and the Lesotho stakeholders seminar. She will also be facilitating during the 2nd regional seminar on HIV and AIDS to be held on the 15th and 16th of February, 2011 in Johannesburg. She will facilitate on the role of public sector trade unions in implementing the new ILO Recommendation and Resolution concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work.

**On behalf of PSI and UNISON
many thanks to the ILO for the support!**

Support from National Aids Councils/Commissions

Throughout the project the National Aids Commissions in all the countries were very supportive during project implementation. The process of understanding the national policies, their implementation and some of the implementation challenges would not have been

possible without the involvement of the Councils and Commissions.

The interaction opened doors for trade unions to engage with policy makers both at the formulation or review stage and also find their role in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation process. **Thank you!**

Support from government ministries, departments and Civil Society Organisations



Representative from the Aids Unit in Mauritius

The project secretariat also acknowledges the support towards the project from different government ministries and departments. In some countries like Zimbabwe, Mauritius and Angola the Ministers responsible for Health and Labour attended in-country seminars and recognised the important role of trade unions in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

Such support created unique opportunities for trade unions in the public sector to highlight the key challenges at the workplace and outline

the kind of support needed from the government.

The government departments also used this process to identify HIV and AIDS focal persons within the unions and involve them in various government processes in responding to HIV and AIDS. For example the representative from the Aids Unit in Mauritius invited all the HIV focal persons during the in-country seminar to assist in the delivery of the HIV counseling and testing programmes at the workplace.

We also learnt a lot from Civil Society Organisations. **We thank you all!**

WAD 2010 in Lesotho: Stakeholders' seminar on HIV/AIDS

The stakeholders' seminar in Lesotho was held on the 1st and 2nd of December 2010. Unlike in other country seminars where PSI affiliates organised and attended the seminars, in Lesotho the seminar was coordinated by PSI affiliate in South Africa, the Police and Prison Civil Rights Union (POPCRU). The approach was different because PSI does not have affiliates in Lesotho.

However, representatives from public sector associations, the National Aids Council, the national labour centre - Lesotho Congress of Trade Unions (LECOTU) and the ILO representative, Mrs. Evelyn Serima attended the seminar.

Lesotho is the only country in the SADC region where the PSI and UNISON project on HIV and AIDS was not implemented. In spite of this

PSI and UNISON felt that the concept and objectives of the project had to be shared with unions in Lesotho as the working population is also infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Ms. Thembi Mngomezulu, the PSI sub-regional secretary for southern Africa shared with the unions the background, objectives, activities and some of the key outcomes of the project since 2008. She also discussed the important issues for consideration by the unions in Lesotho such as; collective bargaining, fighting stigma and discrimination, developing workplace policies, monitoring and evaluating the policy and legal framework and especially its implementation.

Ms. Mngomezulu called upon the unions in Lesotho to make use of the PSUFASA website to learn some of the best practices in terms



Ms. Thembi Mngomezulu - Sub-regional Secretary for Southern Africa, Public Services International (PSI) - stakeholders seminar in Lesotho

of responding to HIV and AIDS at the workplace in the sub-region. She also took the opportunity to read the World Aids Day message of support from UNISON.

HIV/AIDS project embraced by public sector associations in Lesotho



Mr. C. Majara, Senior Assistant Commissioner of Corrections - Legal

Representatives of the three public sector associations in Lesotho, namely; LCSSA, LEPSSA and LMPSSA attended the seminar. After learning about the project from the PSI, the associations embraced the project and undertook to

work on programmes and activities that will ensure prevention, treatment, care and support for workers in Lesotho.

The associations used the seminar as an opportunity to share some of the work they were doing in responding to HIV and AIDS. However, it was clear that more needs to be done as stigma and discrimination is still rife in Lesotho.

One union member who is still employed in the public sector shared his

experience living with HIV and AIDS. He informed the participants that his biggest challenge is stigma and discrimination from fellow workers and some family members.

He informed the meeting that although he has come to terms with his status it has taken long for society to accept and adequately support him. He recommended for more programmes to fight stigma and discrimination.



Evaluation: HIV/AIDS Project

On the 31st of March 2011 the DFID funded HIV and AIDS project will come to an end. The project has been implemented since April 2008. It is essential that any project be evaluated to assess how far it has achieved its objectives and what its impact has been, as well as draw lessons for future programming.

PSI and UNISON have already embarked on this process and contracted Ms. Susan Leather, formerly with the International Labour Organisation's Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work to conduct the evaluation.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to assess how far union capacity has been strengthened, with particular reference to the logframe, including:

- * Relevance of the project objectives and approach;
- * Good practices in promoting

rights and gender equality;

- * Efficiency of the project management, administration and resource delivery;
- * Union capacity to lobby with government and to provide services for members;
- * Impact of the project to workers, unions, governments and civil society organisations;
- * Sustainability, replicability, and lessons learned.

Mrs. Leather visited four countries to conduct field interviews, namely; Botswana, Malawi, South Africa and Zambia. Detailed questionnaires were sent to the other countries for completion by unions.

She will take advantage of the 2nd sub-regional seminar to be held on the 15th and 16th of February 2011 to conduct additional detailed interviews with union activists. She will also present her preliminary findings during the seminar.



From left: Irene (Water Board Human Resources Manager), Milward (WETUM peer educator) from WETUM and Susan Leather (Evaluator) during the evaluation process at Mponela in Malawi, 25th January 2011.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ 2nd Sub-regional seminar on HIV and AIDS - 15 and 16 February 2011.
- ◆ Evaluation of the PSI/UNISON HIV and AIDS project - Ongoing until May 2011.
- ◆ Negotiators' seminar on collective bargaining and HIV/AIDS - 17 and 18 March 2011.



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