



Photo: Ole Bernt Freshaug



Photo: Trond Topstad

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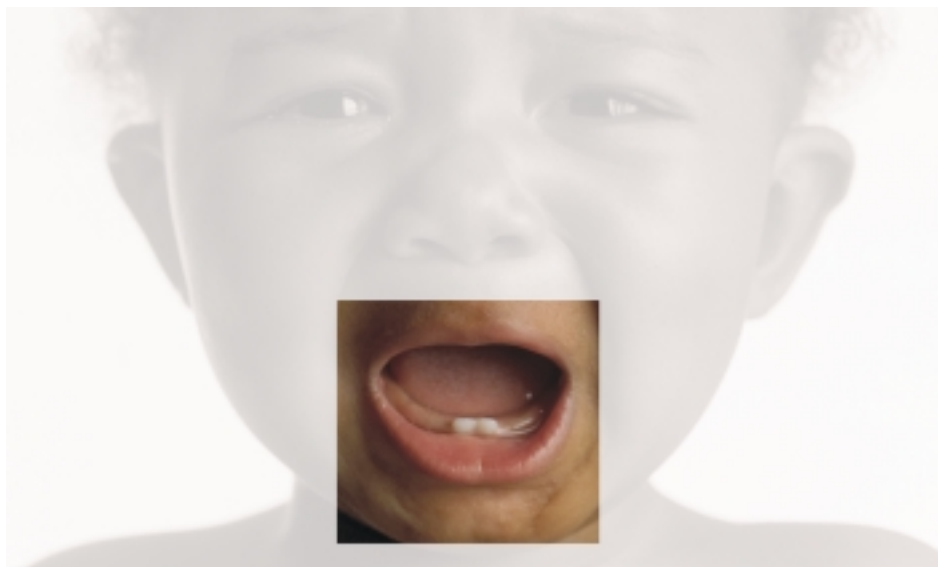
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This red ribbon is the international symbol of solidarity with persons living with HIV/AIDS.



Increasingly, companies recognize that fighting AIDS is in their interest -- that doing so combines good business with doing good.

Kofi Annan
UN Secretary-General

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Preface

Tove Strand, Director General NORAD

The vast majority of the more than 40 million people in the world living with HIV live in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the infection is also spreading rapidly in Asia and several former Soviet republics.

Each day approx. 14,000 people become infected with HIV, and of these, 95% live in a developing country. Nearly half are in between 15-24 years. This group usually has important responsibilities both at home and in the community, and is absolutely crucial with regard to productivity and reproduction. An illness that primarily strikes this age group will therefore have serious repercussions.

Although the epidemic has been known for a long time, it was not until recently that the authorities in individual countries and the international community have really mobilised to deal with HIV/AIDS. In the autumn of 2000 it was decided that these efforts would be intensified at NORAD, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, as well, and addressing HIV/AIDS is now a high-priority area.

All sectors of society are affected in the countries hardest hit. The health sector is losing personnel. Schools are losing teachers. Food production is falling. Government administration and companies are losing sorely needed expertise. The loss of key personnel will have dire consequences in African countries severely lacking in skilled labour. In addition, family patterns are changing dramatically.

Addressing AIDS requires breadth, diversity and collaboration across sectors. Novel, untraditional partnerships are needed. This is the key to NORAD's commitment. It is especially important to bring about effective co-operation between the authorities, the private sector, local communities and organisations.

Many companies have understood the seriousness and have actively joined the fight against the epidemic. Their efforts involve preventive measures as well as support and care for those already infected. A number of good results from these efforts have been reported. It helps!

Whether a leader is in charge of a nation, an institution, a company or a voluntary organisation, putting HIV/AIDS high on the agenda is a leader's responsibility. It has been proven again and again that leadership is absolutely essential in fighting the epidemic.

With this book, NORAD wishes to help Norwegian companies with activities in developing countries obtain practical assistance and ideas for getting down to work in this crucial task and refining their efforts. Some have already got started: their work is used as examples in this book. Others can learn from them and become part of the broad alliance for fighting against one of the major threats that poor countries face today.



Photo: Ole Bernt Frøshaug

"Norwegian business leaders have to be more concerned on how their companies can impact positively to fight HIV/AIDS in countries, both in South and East."

Karl Glad, NHO



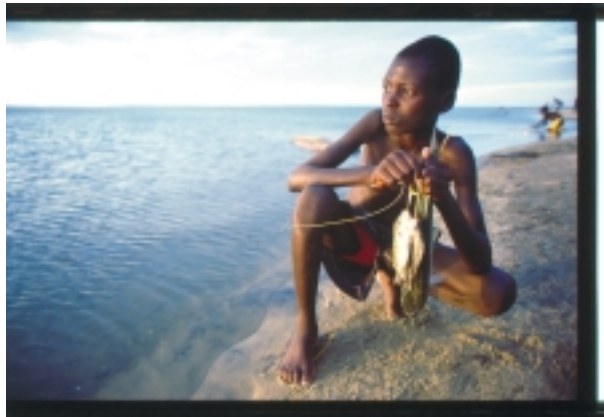


Photo: Trygve Belstad



Photos: Ole Bernt Freshaug



In brief

This is a summary prepared for those of you who feel that you do not have time to read the entire resource pack right this minute. Hopefully it will work to whet your appetite for the main course, which is served from page 30 onwards.

Do you hold a managerial position in a business enterprise with activities in a country where HIV/AIDS is on the increase or has already obtained a considerable foothold? In that case, you have some pressing challenges to deal with. And in that case, this resource pack is for you.

In countries with a high prevalence of HIV the AIDS epidemic can hit business enterprises hard:

- When illness and death rates among the employees of a company rise, its operating costs increase. Expenses for health services, insurance, recruitment and training go up, while productivity goes down. Employees not in good health perform less well. There is more absenteeism.
- Besides the higher costs, the company may see that its revenue base is affected. If high disease and death rates strike an entire society, wealth creation is reduced. Reduced purchasing power means a shrinking demand for goods and services. As the local market is impoverished, fewer and fewer resources are available for production and investment, and economic growth stagnates. The World Bank estimates that the GNP of countries in which 10% of the population is infected with HIV can fall by 20-30%.

More than 40 million people worldwide are living with HIV. The vast majority of these – 28 million – live in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the HIV/AIDS epidemic is also spreading quickly in Asia and in several former Soviet republics.

The situation can appear bleak.

But luckily it is not hopeless. Not at all. Again and again it has been proven that making an effort helps. More and more companies all over the world are now implementing successful measures against HIV/AIDS. They are involved on behalf of their employees. And their shareholders.

The reason is that a workplace programme focusing on HIV/AIDS can make a difference for the individual employee and the company alike:

- As an employer you have a genuine opportunity to improve the lives of your employees and their families in a world with AIDS. You can actively help to prevent more people from becoming infected with HIV, and you can ensure that it is easier to live with HIV for those already infected.
- Measures against HIV/AIDS can also yield considerable gains for the company itself. A relatively healthy workforce is an important prerequisite for both productivity and profitability. And much can be saved by preventing absenteeism and deaths and avoiding the need for new recruitment and training. This resource pack is meant to prompt specific action. That is why it contains specific recommendations for, and concrete examples of, how business enterprises can work to meet the challenges posed by HIV and AIDS. It describes eight specific measures your company can implement:

1. Place HIV/AIDS on the agenda

It is a manager's task to place HIV/AIDS high on the company's agenda. The day you say, "All right, ladies and gentlemen, now we are going to work on AIDS," you have set an important process into motion. Perhaps you think that getting started is the hard part, since this may involve a new way of working. You can do it. And it may well be a betrayal of your responsibilities as a manager to do nothing.

2. Formulate an HIV/AIDS policy

Since HIV is bound up with prejudice and stigmatisation, management needs to clarify a few important principles. If employees fear sanctions, discrimination and stigmatisation in the event they prove to be HIV-positive, it will be difficult to get anywhere with HIV/AIDS efforts. This is just one reason an AIDS policy is needed. It should formulate the attitudes the company has towards HIV and AIDS. It is important to lay down the principle that all employees are to be treated with respect and dignity, and that this respect and dignity does not cease if an employee has a virus in his or her body. Formulating an AIDS policy ought to be part of a larger effort to understand what HIV and AIDS means to the individual – and to the company. It is also a part of a planning process in which participants discuss the specific actions to be taken in the workplace.



3. Make sure you have an effective information campaign

Information and educational activities are a cornerstone of any workplace HIV prevention measures. Of course, although knowledge alone is not sufficient to bring about behavioural changes (see page 44), information campaigns are still necessary. The information should be practical and concrete and set out in a manner that promotes behaviour that reduces the risk of infection and urges people to protect themselves. An effective information campaign imparts correct and crucial knowledge in a way that is tailored to the target group. It demolishes misconceptions and myths and conveys constructive attitudes. Above all, it makes the target group active participants rather than passive listeners.

4. Offer HIV testing and counselling

Voluntary HIV testing, accompanied by a personal counselling session, is one of the most effective strategies there is for bringing about behavioural changes. Something happens to a person who decides to take an HIV test. Research shows that a high percentage of HIV positive and HIV negative persons change their sexual behaviour after receiving their test results, and that this leads to a reduction in new infections with HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. All companies intending to implement a workplace HIV/AIDS programme should therefore arrange for their employees to have access to voluntary HIV testing.

5. Make sure that sexually transmitted infections are treated

Having a sexually transmitted infection (STI) increases the risk of being infected with HIV. Early diagnosis and treatment of STIs are therefore an effective means of preventing HIV infection. In some studies, the rate of new infections was cut nearly in half after the introduction of treatment programmes for STIs. Ensure that your employees are offered health services that focus adequately on sexually transmitted infections!

6. Make sure that condoms are available

Once someone decides to have safer sex, it is crucial that he or she be able to carry out this decision. Improved availability of condoms is therefore an obvious ingredient in all workplace programmes.

7. Provide care and other measures for HIV-positive persons and persons with AIDS

By taking simple steps a company's health service can better prevent and treat tuberculosis (common among persons with HIV) and some of the other infections that occur in AIDS patients. The health service can also be involved in measures to improve the nutritional state of people with HIV. Such measures are documented

to have a positive impact on both illness and death rates. AIDS drugs are becoming cheaper, and a growing number of companies are helping their HIV-positive employees to get treatment with antiretroviral drugs. Such drugs enable employees living with HIV to be actively employed longer, reduce absenteeism and provide benefits in the form of higher productivity. In addition, it is likely that treatment programmes encourage more individuals to get tested for HIV, which in turn is an effective infection-preventing measure.

8. Avoid having your company's activities increase the burden of AIDS in the local community

Industrial development may have ramifications for the HIV situation in a local community. Especially projects utilising a mobile labour force are often associated with an increased spread of infection. Construction workers, transport workers and others who travel a lot are at risk. So are the people living in the local communities that the mobile labour force interacts with. For the company to be able to discover and address the consequences of industrial development of this type, it needs to have routines for putting HIV/AIDS assessments on the agenda when new projects are planned. The easiest way to ensure this is by performing health impact assessments of all new measures the company is initiating.



Photo: Trygve Bølstad



Photo: Trond Topstad

It is a question of good economic sense. By protecting their employees from HIV and caring for those who are infected, businesses minimize the loss of skilled workers and managers, and boost their long-term productivity.

Peter Piot
Director General, UNAIDS



Photos: Morten Hval



- It's not business as usual anymore. Business must take a leadership role in getting on with the job of dealing with HIV/AIDS. Our management expertise is vital in ensuring the successful implementation of projects at community level.

Brian Brink
Assistant Director General, AngloAmerican Ltd.



Photo: Per Kr. Lunden



Why this resource pack?

The purpose of this resource pack is to prompt specific action. That is why it contains specific recommendations for, and concrete examples of, how business enterprises can work to meet the challenges posed by HIV and AIDS.

This pack is primarily aimed at companies with activities in countries where the HIV/AIDS epidemic is on the increase or has already reached considerable proportions.

In such countries there are good reasons for HIV/AIDS to be a key topic for everyone in management positions in companies. This resource pack has been prepared with managers on all levels in mind:

- The company's top management and board of directors depend on having up-to-date knowledge to be able to reach sensible decisions in markets where AIDS is an important external factor.
- The company's management needs expertise in HIV in order to understand how HIV can impact operations, and the kind of strategies that are necessary in respect of the epidemic.
- Anyone responsible for personnel management will play a key role when the company implements specific HIV/AIDS measures.
- Those working in the area of health, safety and the environment (HSE) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are obvious resource persons for the organisation's HIV/AIDS efforts.

It is also relevant to reflect over the fact that proper AIDS measures often yield goodwill, which can be utilised for marketing purposes.

This pack may therefore be relevant for persons working in marketing and sales too.

To make it easy to navigate through the material, this pack is divided into sections. If you feel you need more basic knowledge of HIV and AIDS, we have included a fact section at the back. Also included is a section on overseas posting and official travel. This is aimed especially at the company's Norwegian (or other country's) employees.

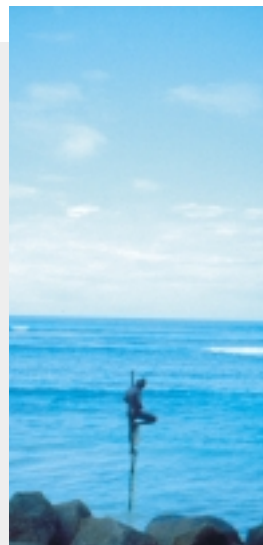


Photo: Trond Topstad

This resource pack has been developed by Kåre Moen and Anne Skjelmerud of the Centre for Health and Social Development (HeSo) in Oslo, Norway, at the request of, and in collaboration with, the Department for Civil Society and Private Sector Development at NORAD, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation. Several Norwegian companies with activities abroad were consulted in the process, and some companies, as well as the Norwegian Confederation of Business and Industry (NHO), sat as members of an advisory group for this work.



Photo: Trond Topstad

- There can be no excuse for a South African corporation not to be at the forefront of the battle against HIV/AIDS by making anti-retroviral drugs available to your staff.

Nelson Mandela

Former President of the Republic of South Africa



Photo: Per Kr. Lunden



Photo: Ole Bernt Freshaug



Photo: Morten Hvaal

25 million children are going to be orphaned by AIDS within the year 2010

UNAIDS

AIDS and Private Sector

The AIDS epidemic can affect business enterprises both directly and indirectly. When high illness and death rates affect a society, its wealth creation and purchasing power are reduced.

When high illness and death rates affect a company, productivity falls while operating costs rise. Reduced purchasing power results in a shrinking demand for goods and services.

Macroeconomic consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic

Because the AIDS epidemic hits the productive age groups so hard, the impact of the epidemic will be felt in all sectors. The World Bank estimates that the GNP of countries where 10% of the population is infected with HIV can be reduced by 20-30 percent.

In countries with a high prevalence of HIV, many economically active individuals will be completely or partly absent from productive activity due to their own illness or because they have to care for sick family members. Their income level plunges, purchasing power diminishes and savings rate falls. As the local market is impoverished, economic growth slows. Fewer resources are available for production and investment.

It is difficult to calculate exactly the macroeconomic consequences of the AIDS epidemic, because its influences are so numerous and its impacts are both direct and indirect. For example, an impaired education and health system will sooner or later hobble business sector productivity, and a disabled business sector will be a blow to the public sector when tax receipts decline. In agriculture one can see that production methods are becoming more rudimentary and that incomes are falling.

Consequences for individual companies

If a large number of employees in the prime of life become seriously ill or die, this is reflected on the bottom line.

The consequences for companies are that their costs rise, partly due to direct financial outlays and partly as a result of reduced productivity:



Type of cost	Definition	Examples
Direct costs	Direct financial outlays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company's health service • Pension funds and insurance • Expenses related to deaths and funerals • Recruitment costs • Training costs • Costs of HIV-prevention efforts
Indirect costs	Reduced productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absenteeism due to illness • Absenteeism due to attending the funerals of others • Reduced productivity while ill • Time spent by management and administration
System costs	Burdens and wear and tear on the company as a system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burden on the culture/morale when so many are ill and have problems • Constant interruptions of work routines • Problems with employee discipline • The company's reputation and goodwill

In addition to higher costs, companies may see their revenues fall if their customers' finances are weakened because of the AIDS epidemic.

It can be difficult to calculate exactly the eventual magnitude of the economic consequences of the AIDS epidemic for an individual company and the extent to which the epidemic may affect the company's bottom line. This will depend, among other things, on what HIV/AIDS measures the company implements, and at what point in time these measures are launched. It is crucial that companies amass knowledge and develop an understanding of the potential socio-economic consequences of HIV/AIDS for their own organisations and their own industries.

Above all, companies should look at the expected long-term consequences, so that they can formulate alternative strategies. Companies whose sales are in a market severely hit by the epidemic must consider whether sales and earnings may decline and, if necessary, develop strategies for confronting and counteracting this.



Photos: Ole Bernt Freshaug

The evidence is overwhelming that we either pay a relatively small amount to contain HIV/AIDS now, or pay much more, with much lower prospects of success, in the future.

Peter Piot
Director General, UNAIDS





Photo: Morten Hvaal





Photo: Trond Topstad

I should like to issue three challenges to business, both in industrialized countries, and in the developing world:



First, embrace your workforce and their families, by working to end prejudice and discrimination against those affected by AIDS. Allow people with HIV to continue working, and so to remain useful members of society.

Second, do everything you can to protect the communities where you work, by preventing the spread of HIV in your workplaces and beyond. You can do this by spreading AIDS awareness and by distributing condoms.

And third, look to the global picture: realize the implications of this world epidemic, and join in the effort to combat it. Join forces with the many organizations, governmental and non-governmental, which are in the forefront of the fight for survival. The struggle against AIDS is a moral imperative -- who could deny it? Happily, it is also a commercial imperative. It makes good business sense.

Kofi Annan
UN Secretary-General



Photos: Ole Bernt Freshaug

Why should your company take up the challenge?

A strategically correct investment at just the right time is the recipe for anyone who is interested in creating value.

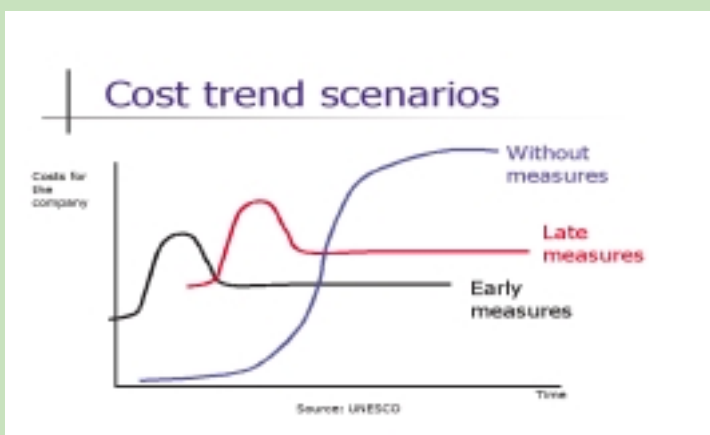
This is no surprise: so it is with regard to HIV/AIDS. Farsighted companies who implement sensible HIV/AIDS measures at an early stage will win by doing so. Those who close their eyes will later be left holding the bag.

Early measures pay off

UNESCO has developed a model that demonstrates that it pays to introduce HIV/AIDS measures as early as possible. This model assesses the total costs connected with three different strategies:

- The company implements measures at an early phase in the epidemic, before AIDS is high on the local agenda.
- The company implements measures at a late phase in the epidemic, when everyone is concerned with the problems because they are so visible.
- The company takes no action.

As illustrated in the figure below, the total costs are clearly lowest in companies that are proactive and respond to the challenges at an early stage.



The company's actions and attitudes form its image

38-39

By focusing on HIV/AIDS, you can give your company a more human face.

Many of the companies who have distinguished themselves as active players in addressing AIDS have seen that the result is favourable attention that reinforces itself, both inside and outside of the organisation.

At a workplace where many employees are affected by HIV/AIDS, the employees appreciate it if their employer cares and is involved. This applies to those who are “merely” worried about their own infection status as well as to those who already know they are infected or have friends and family members who are ill.

If the company signals its openness on the topic and takes a firm stand against discrimination, fewer people will fear getting tested. Voluntary testing is actually one of the most important interventions for preventing new infections with HIV (see page 59).

Companies that create the perception that everyone is part of a common effort against a pressing social problem will improve their working environments. This reinforces the team spirit, something that may later favourably impact productivity and profitability.

By getting involved, most companies have much to gain in public opinion as well. Consumers, other businesses, the media, voluntary organisations and the authorities all notice companies that make an effort in an area generally perceived as important. Favourable mention of a socially responsible company is, of course, good advertising.

In Norway, Veidekke ASA has received a lot of favourable press and attention for its health, safety and environmental efforts in a subsidiary in East Africa. HIV/AIDS measures are a large part of this commitment.

The Norplan Group has received similar favourable publicity because it has led the way regarding health impact assessments and HIV prevention measures in connection with infrastructure development projects in developing countries.

Some multinational corporations have actively used their commitment to HIV/AIDS in their advertising. Benetton, to name one, has had positive experience with this.

“Our campaigns are not only a way of communicating, but an expression of our own time. They have worked well in many ways – and have been noticed in the clutter of impressions passing by,” said Luciano Benetto

The company's activities can lead to an increased risk of infection

Many companies subject their employees, their employees' families and the surrounding communities to an increased risk of HIV infection.

This applies especially to activities based on migration, which lead to families being split up over long periods. Mining, transport and construction work are natural examples of business activities presenting a special risk.

Around mining communities, which are often migration-based workplaces predominated by men, an industry usually sprouts up of bars and more or less open prostitution. Such a culture of drinking and prostitution increases the risk of infection for the workforce, the women who sell sex and the surrounding local community.

In line with the principle accepted in connection with pollution ("polluter pays"), companies should realise that if they impose an increased risk on a local community, they should be involved in taking responsibility for measures counteracting the spread of infection.

A responsible attitude in this regard means that the company, as part of its ongoing HIV/AIDS analysis and response, considers whether it has activities that may be linked to an increased risk of HIV infection.

Objections you may have heard

Initiating workplace AIDS programmes may challenge the organisation.

Before one actually gets started, getting an HIV/AIDS programme off the ground may appear rather daunting. In many organisations there will also initially be a certain amount of internal scepticism towards company involvement. Some will feel embarrassed when the focus is on a topic that is invariably linked to sex and sexuality. Others will have more or less relevant objections to workplace HIV/AIDS interventions. It is important to listen to these objections and discuss them thoroughly.

Here are some common objections, with comments:



Objections

“Workplace HIV/AIDS measures may stigmatise employees, who may think that we are engaging in a witch-hunt against them. This can have a negative impact on the working environment.”

“HIV/AIDS measures can give us a bad reputation among our customers and business partners. They will probably not like the fact that we are addressing sensitive, intimate subjects that belong in the private sphere.”

“Getting a programme off the ground is difficult and we do not have the expertise to do this. Maybe we’ll just make a bad situation worse.”

“Gains from implementing HIV/AIDS measures are uncertain, and in any case, are long in coming. Any measures cost money and may hurt our competitiveness.”

“It won’t do any good.”

Comments

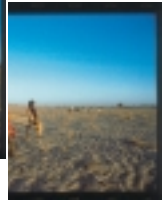
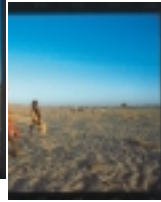
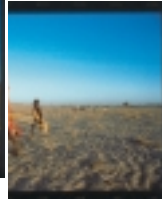
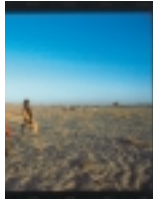
Silence and the absence of positive measures are actually what provide the most fertile soil for negative attitudes and stigmatisation. A company management that has not seized on a problem affecting many of the employees can be perceived as distant and indifferent.

Companies that distinguish themselves by implementing proper HIV/AIDS measures generally garner a lot of goodwill and favourable press.

Implementing proper, useful HIV/AIDS measures in a workplace is not an impossible task. The company can also benefit from the experiences of many other companies.

HIV/AIDS measures can reduce both long and short-term absenteeism due to illness, thereby reducing costs connected with increased illness rates. According to UNESCO, a company’s total costs related to the HIV/AIDS epidemic will be lower the earlier they commence.

There are many examples showing that implementing HIV/AIDS measures actually helps. It is also an important and right thing to do.



Photos: Trygve Bolstad



Foto: Ole Bernt Frøshaug



Photo: Per Kr. Lunden



Foto: Ole Bernt Frøshaug

How can companies work to address AIDS?

A workplace programme that focuses on HIV/AIDS can mean a lot – both for the individual employee and for the company!

As an employer you have a genuine opportunity to give your employees and their families better odds in a world with AIDS. You can contribute to fewer people becoming infected with HIV, and you can ensure that it is easier for those already infected to live with HIV.

But HIV/AIDS measures can also yield considerable gains for the company itself. A relatively healthy workforce is necessary for both productivity and profitability. Substantial savings can be realised in preventing absenteeism and deaths and in avoiding new recruitment and training.

Information is not enough!

It has not been shown that information alone prevents HIV.

Perhaps you are thinking that an HIV/AIDS programme consists primarily of a package of informational measures. Even though correct information is necessary for changing behaviour, it has not been proven that information alone leads to behavioural changes that prevent HIV.

Behavioural change is a complex and complicated process. This applies not least to changing sexual behaviour. To begin to practise safer sex, a person first needs to identify with the problem (“HIV actually involves me”), build up a motivation to change, and feel confident that change is possible.

However, good intentions are not always enough. Actual behavioural change arises more easily in an environment that provides direct and indirect assistance and support in the change process. In addition, we are strongly influenced by the attitudes and actions of peers and role models.

Using a combination of various measures, you and your company can help bring about behavioural change in your employees. Information must be a part of the package, but it is not enough.

Everyone should be involved

44-45

Being an active participant is very different from being a passive receiver of information.

Something happens to people when they get involved and are allowed to play an active part. They think for themselves, develop opinions and become knowledgeable in a different, more involved way than when they read an article or hear a lecture, developing a sense of ownership over what they are doing.

You can exploit these mechanisms to make the HIV/AIDS measures in your company more effective. Do not allow your HIV/AIDS efforts to become a one-man-show! Involve employees at all levels in the planning, implementation and evaluation of activities.

Whom do you want to reach?

As an employer you obviously have a primary responsibility for your employees. But to achieve good results from your company's HIV/AIDS efforts, there are good reasons to make the target groups of these measures a bit broader.

Most HIV infections are acquired sexually. Thus, all HIV-preventive measures involve such topics as sex, sex habits, marriage and family life – and the employees' girlfriends/boyfriends, spouses and children ought to be a part of the target group.

In cultures dominated by men, women have traditionally little say also when it comes to sex. That is why they are especially at risk of infection. Many women experience being pressured into having sex with superiors or colleagues. This may be a difficult subject for the company to address, but using HIV prevention as an entry may make it easier.

Perhaps some of the new openness you and your company are going to build among your employees can be exported to their home situations. Perhaps you can help more couples to talk more about how they can protect themselves and each other. Perhaps you can prevent your employees from having to spend time, energy and resources in the future on caring for a family member with AIDS.

Long time horizon

To be effective, an HIV/AIDS programme in the workplace must be more than a well-intended all-out effort every once in a while.

Although measures need not be especially extensive or time-consuming on a daily basis, they ought to take the long view. A focus on HIV/AIDS ought to be a natural, integrated part of the way companies think and act, with regard to day-to-day operations, strategy, finance, personnel policy, marketing and social responsibility.

But it all has to start somewhere. A good place to begin is to send a clear message that the company intends to address HIV/AIDS as a topic and a challenge. Which specific measures will be implemented afterward can be discussed, evaluated and re-evaluated as time passes.

Find good partners

To implement adequate AIDS measures, companies need not reinvent the wheel. Nor need they obtain all imaginable expertise regarding HIV and AIDS. Co-operation and collaboration with others is the key.

In most countries there will be many players involved in HIV and AIDS efforts. Perhaps other companies have implemented measures that your company can learn from, or perhaps there are public services and non-governmental organisations your company can work with.

Some examples:

- A company has developed a programme to train peer educators. Your company might adopt and use the same programme.
- A youth organisation has written a play about HIV and AIDS. Your company might invite the theatre troupe, and after the performance, a discussion could be arranged between the actors and the audience.
- The national AIDS programme has printed up brochures, booklets and posters. Your company might request these materials and distribute them among your employees.

- A nearby clinic is keen on testing people for sexually transmitted infections and would like to inform your employees about this. Your company might agree to set aside time for an informational meeting.
- The local UNICEF office is supporting measures to prevent pregnant HIV-positive women from transmitting the virus to their babies. Your company might recommend these measures to the employees and their female partners.
- The local AIDS committee wants to establish a centre for HIV testing and counselling. This will cost money. Your company might help to finance it in exchange for your employees receiving free testing and follow-up.
- A centre for persons living with HIV has been started in the vicinity. Your company might establish a collaboration with the centre and make its services known to your employees.

In many countries, national AIDS commissions have been set up. They are often headed by the vice president or another high-ranking individual. As a rule, these commissions have representatives of various sectors of society as members, usually including representatives of companies or employer and employee organisations. Often there are also local AIDS committees, made up of those who are involved in local AIDS efforts. Participation in such a committee might enable your company to get an overview of, and influence over, efforts being made locally. It would also probably be a good place to make contacts with others who have expertise and resources that the company could benefit from.



Photo: Ole Bernt Frøshaug

Norsk Hydro's experiences from South Africa

Since July 2001, Norsk Hydro's wholly owned fertiliser subsidiary in South Africa, Kynoch Fertilizer Ltd., has been running an HIV/AIDS prevention project aimed at its employees. Its goals are to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, care for those who are infected, create an open atmosphere to eliminate the stigma and improve relations with the local community.

The following activities have been carried out:

- The project was launched on World AIDS Day in 2001, in a joint effort between Kynoch's management, a theatre troupe and the local health authorities.
- Kynoch has formulated an AIDS policy, developed with participation from the trade unions.
- Peer educators and HIV/AIDS counsellors have received training in collaboration with the local health authorities and an NGO called Life Line
- Condoms are available
- T-shirts, stickers and buttons have been produced and distributed

"The project was favourably received, both among the employees and in the local community," says Norsk Hydro's Camilla Nyhuus Christensen. "It has helped to create added trust in Hydro as an employer and commercial partner. South Africa is one of the countries hardest hit by HIV/AIDS, and for Hydro it makes sense to take this challenge seriously as part of the company's culture of corporate social responsibility," she emphasises.

- The epidemic affects social
and economic life in ways we have
never seen before.

Franklyn Lisk

Director General, ILO Global Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work



Photo: Morten Hval



Photo: Abir Abdullah/Drik





Photo: Per Kr. Lunden

- A few years ago it would have been unthinkable that a board of directors of a company would have considered treating HIV/AIDS. But now it's hitting the bottom line and there must be a good economic argument [for providing drugs]. It's a very important development, if not a breakthrough.

Peter Piot
Director General, UNAIDS



Photo: Morten Hvaal

Eight specific HIV/AIDS interventions

What measures should a company implement? And where should it begin?

On the following pages you will find eight specific measures your company should consider.

Every one of these measures is a crucial and effective tool in addressing AIDS. In combination they will constitute a powerful intervention package that have a high likelihood of yielding beneficial results.

Some of these measures are ordered chronologically, so that one should start with the first measures first. Farther down the list you will find measures that will depend on the company's situation and on local conditions and priorities.

1. Place HIV/AIDS on the agenda

The climate determines what we dare to talk about – and think about.

HIV is associated with sexuality, embarrassment, shame and stigma. That is why it may be a difficult subject to talk about. The negative associations may even make it difficult to think clearly about the relationship between HIV/AIDS, one's own sexuality and personal vulnerability.

But we can learn to talk and think about sensitive subjects, if the climate around us permits us to do so. As an employer you can help create a favourable climate by placing HIV/AIDS high on the agenda.

The day you say, "All right, ladies and gentlemen, now we are going to work on AIDS," you have set an important process into motion. Perhaps you think that beginning to talk about a subject of this nature is somewhat difficult. But you can do it. Might doing nothing be a betrayal of your responsibility as a manager?

Once the ice is broken, much has been accomplished. Openness is almost always contagious. Luckily.

2. Formulate an HIV/AIDS policy

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Since HIV is bound up with prejudice and stigmatisation, companies need to lay down a few important principles.

Fear is a dreadfully poor strategy for bringing about behavioural changes.

If employees are afraid of sanctions, discrimination and stigmatisation in the event they prove to be HIV-positive, it will be difficult to get anywhere with workplace HIV/AIDS efforts. It is important to make it clear that all employees are to be treated with respect and dignity, and that respect and dignity do not cease if an employee has a virus in his or her body.

An AIDS policy gives the company an opportunity to communicate its attitudes, how it wishes to work on HIV/AIDS and how it will treat employees who are living with HIV. Some important questions to answer may be:

- Will the company ask employees or job applicants about their HIV-status?
- Will the company dismiss an employee who discloses that he is HIV-positive?
- How will the company react to discrimination against, or harassment of, HIV-positive individuals?

Making the formulation of the company's AIDS policy into a participatory process can initiate valuable discussions among employees at all levels.

Language stigmatises

You may have read or heard AIDS referred to as “the terrible killer disease” or “this deadly epidemic”.

These are loaded formulations that communicate something other than the fact that AIDS is an illness with serious consequences for individuals and local communities. Instead they express hopelessness and a lack of empathy and consideration. When was the last time you heard anyone describe cancer as a “vicious, lethal plague”?

The answer is: never.

We never talk like that about or to someone with cancer. Instead, we inject empathy and hope in what we say – and in what we leave unsaid.

Cancer is a serious illness that in many cases can lead to an earlier death than an HIV infection. However, cancer is perceived as a “clean” and “innocent” disease. HIV, however, is associated with sex and pleasure, morals and moralising, sin and shame. The difference is enormous.

If you stigmatise with the language you use, you make it harder to live with HIV.

And you make it harder to prevent HIV infections. Voluntary HIV testing is one of the most effective HIV-prevention measures we know of. But who will take an HIV test if those around him condemn a positive test result?

Formulating an AIDS policy ought to be part of a larger effort to understand what HIV and AIDS means to the individual – and to the company. It is also part of a planning process in which participants discuss the specific actions to be taken in the workplace.

On page 68 you will find more material on how to work on an AIDS policy and what it should contain.

3. Make sure you have an effective information campaign

Of course, the information should communicate factual knowledge. But it is just as important for it to communicate proper attitudes.

Informational and educational activities are a cornerstone of any workplace HIV programme. It is true that although knowledge alone is not enough to bring about behavioural changes (see page 44), information campaigns are still absolutely necessary.

An effective information campaign communicates correct and relevant knowledge that is tailored to its target group. It demolishes misconceptions and myths and conveys constructive attitudes. Above all, it makes the target group active participants instead of passive listeners.

Among the topics that should be covered in an HIV information programme are:

- How HIV is spread and how it is not spread
- The difference between HIV and AIDS
- Condoms and condom use for men and women

- HIV testing and test results
- Living with HIV
- Self-care and treatment
- Sexuality, sex and couple relationships
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Stigmatisation and discrimination

Most people who have had some years of schooling behind them are painfully aware that not all attempts at conveying information are equally successful. Although providing a brief recipe for how to succeed in all situations is no easy matter, here are some tips worth noting:

- Nobody likes boring lectures! A long, drawn out meeting after work on Friday afternoon is not a particularly good idea..
- It is fun to learn by taking an active role! A discussion is generally more involving than a one-way presentation.
- Projects are exciting and challenging. Perhaps a group of employees might consider taking part in making a brochure, writing a play or producing a video about HIV/AIDS. (Do not forget to ensure the quality of the information.)
- We learn effectively from those we identify with. That is why, as a rule, peer education strategies work well. A peer educator may for example be an employee who has taken a course to learn about HIV/AIDS, and who later becomes a resource person among his co-workers. It is less embarrassing and threatening to talk to a peer about sensitive subjects.
- We like being entertained. That is why infotainment is usually so successful. This term implies integrating HIV/AIDS information with popular leisure activities, such as sports tournaments, music, dances, or contests.
- Something new or the same old thing? To some extent, information campaigns should vary over time, otherwise many will view them as rather predictable and somewhat boring. At the same time, it is important that key information is

repeated. Most of us tend to push aside information we are not enthusiastic about! It should also be remembered that the collective memory in a company may be rather short, especially if there is a constant turnover of employees.

- For many companies it will make sense to get external help to run information and training activities. Perhaps you might hire a resource person to head up the implementation of the HIV/AIDS programme in your company. Or you might work with a non-governmental organisation. Perhaps the solution is to hire the services of a consultant.

A contractor's experience

Last year, AS Noremco, the East African subsidiary of Veidekke ASA, carried out a pilot workplace HIV/AIDS project. The project was part of a comprehensive programme addressing health, safety and the environment issues. A varied assortment of informational activities occupied an important place in the HIV/AIDS intervention package:

- Once a week the employees gathered for a short “toolbox meeting” before the workday started. At these meetings health, safety and environment issues were discussed, including HIV/AIDS.
- At regular intervals the employees attended group seminars on HIV/AIDS.
- The employees' families were invited to family social events on Sunday afternoons. Among other things, HIV/AIDS was on the agenda.
- The company's “safer sex football competition” and “safer sex dance competition” have become extremely popular. A speaker addresses the crowd on the topic HIV/AIDS through a loudspeaker system.
- About thirty employees have been trained as peer educators.
- The company has made its own brochures on HIV/AIDS, and T-shirts, stickers, videos and a calendar focusing on HIV/AIDS.

4. Offer HIV testing and counselling

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Voluntary HIV testing, accompanied by a personal counselling session, is perhaps the most effective strategy available for changing risky behaviour.

Something happens to you when you decide to take an HIV test. Research shows that a high percentage of HIV positive as well as HIV negative persons change their sexual behaviour after receiving their test result. It is also documented that this results in a reduction in new infections with HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

Any company intending to implement a workplace HIV/AIDS programme should therefore arrange for its employees to have access to voluntary HIV testing. However, there are some important conditions to be met for these measures to be successful:

- HIV testing must be 100% voluntary. Any degree of compulsion will violate basic rules of respect for the individual, and will probably create so much fear that all the other HIV/AIDS measures will be in vain.
- HIV testing must ensure 100% confidentiality for those who do get tested. No one else may be able to find out about the test result, and the service should normally not be offered by personnel employed by the company itself (or working on the company's premises).
- HIV testing must be accompanied by a personal counselling session both before the test is taken and when the result is ready. The personnel providing the counselling need to have special training.

For most companies it will make sense to team up with a local service provider to make testing available to employees. Voluntary confidential counselling and testing (VCCT) centres are being set up in many countries, especially in Africa.

5. Make sure that sexually transmitted infections are treated

Having a sexually transmitted infection (STI) increases the risk of becoming infected with HIV.

This risk is especially high in sexually transmitted infections that cause genital sores.

Early diagnosis and treatment of STIs is an effective means of preventing HIV infections. In some studies, the rate of new infections was cut nearly in half after the introduction of treatment programmes for STIs. It is worth noting that many people, especially women, can have an STI without being aware of it.

Make sure that your company's clinical health services focus adequately on sexually transmitted infections! Consider whether the personnel who provide health services need courses and training in order to perform this task sufficiently.

6. Make sure that condoms are available

Once someone decides to have safer sex, it is crucial that his or her intended behaviour change be facilitated and supported.

Improved availability of condoms is therefore an important ingredient in any workplace programme.

Whether condoms should be free or not may be worth discussing. The crucial thing is that condoms are always readily available at work and, if possible, in places where the employees spend time outside of working hours.

Condoms are effective

Condoms provide a high degree of protection against HIV infection. How effectively condoms work has been studied by following couples who state that they use a condom every time they have sex – and where one partner is HIV-positive and the other HIV-negative. The risk that the HIV-negative partner will be infected is about one case per 100 person-years.

7. Provide care and other measures for persons living with HIV and AIDS

The world is unfair. Fewer than 4% of the planet's AIDS patients are receiving treatment with antiretroviral AIDS drugs.

However, the prices are coming down, and hopefully they will continue to fall in the future. An increasing number of companies are already helping their HIV-positive employees to get antiretroviral drugs. Perhaps this is also a possibility for your company too.

Without a doubt, antiretroviral drugs would considerably extend the time your employees can be actively employed. They will also reduce absenteeism and provide gains in the form of higher productivity. In addition, it is likely that they would encourage more people to go for voluntary HIV testing, which in itself is an effective prevention measure (see page 59).

AngloGold offers AIDS drugs to its employees in South Africa

The mining company AngloGold has had an HIV/AIDS programme for its employees in South Africa for many years. The programme, which in 2002 has a budget of USD 17 per employee, has included information campaigns, peer educator training, treatment of sexually transmitted infections, voluntary HIV testing and medical care services for employees living with HIV. Recently the company introduced a pilot project in which HIV-positive employees are offered treatment with antiretroviral AIDS drugs (“highly active antiretroviral therapy” or HAART). The company has estimated that the treatment will cost USD 244 per person per month. Just over half of the cost (54 %) goes for the drugs, 23 % goes for personnel, 16 % for laboratory tests and 7 % goes for overhead.

There are a number of practical and ethical questions that need to be answered before treatment with antiretroviral AIDS drugs possibly becomes a part of the package of measures in your company. One such a question is discussed below.

What if she quits?

AIDS patients who begin treatment should normally continue with the drugs for the rest of their lives. Discontinuing the treatment may have dire consequences for the individual. Employers wishing to offer their employees antiretroviral AIDS drugs must therefore decide what should happen at the termination of employment. Will the company continue to subsidize the treatment?

Even if financing AIDS drugs for the employees in your company is not yet on the agenda, there are several other things the company can do to support and assist those who are HIV-positive. Here are the most important measures:

- Focus on creating positive attitudes towards people with HIV. Broach the subject directly, and work on your own attitudes. Lead by example.
- By taking simple steps your company’s health service can be better at preventing and treating tuberculosis (common in those with HIV) and other opportunistic

infections in AIDS patients. Measures like these are documented to have a positive impact on both illness and death rates.

- The health service should also focus on the nutritional state of persons with HIV. Nutritional advice and dietary supplements can prevent weight-loss and slow the development of disease in persons living with HIV.

Consider whether the personnel who provide clinical health services to your employees need courses and training to better perform tasks of this kind.

8. Avoid having your company's activities increase the burden of AIDS in the local community

Imagine an industrial development project that is both well run and profitable. That appears to be a great benefit for the company, its employees and the society at large. In brief: imagine a project that is every company manager's dream.

But: imagine that the project has a hidden side that nobody notices right away. That is, a side that leads to increased HIV infection in a nearby local community. Scores of people become HIV-positive.

The consequence is that the project entails hidden social and economic costs. Though they are not likely to show up in the project's accounts, this does not mean they are no less real. Gradually as those infected fall ill, they will burden the finances of local households and an already weak and underfinanced social and health sector.

Perhaps there will be no one who will take final stock of the project. But if anyone did, it would show that the total benefits and gains from the showcase project were less than they otherwise might have been.

This example is not unrealistic. Industrial development can have immediate ramifications for the HIV situation in a local community. In many instances the increased spread of infection is tied to the fact that people are on the move. Construction workers, transport workers and others who travel a lot are at risk. So are the people living in the local communities with which the mobile workforce interacts. Projects resulting in increased economic activity in an area often attract migrants. Many seek new opportunities when the economy is flourishing. Thus, a project can be the

cause of considerably greater migration than the size of the workforce would warrant. And the migrants are subject to a greater risk of infection.

For companies to be able to uncover and address such consequences of industrial development, they need to have routines for placing HIV/AIDS assessments on the agenda when projects are being planned. The easiest way to ensure this is by performing health impact assessments of all new projects the company is initiating.

The purpose of a health impact assessment is to determine the beneficial and detrimental consequences a given project or development measure may have on people's health. The size of a health impact assessment depends on the type and size of the project. As part of a health impact assessment, a plan should be drawn up with the purpose of maximising the beneficial – and minimising the detrimental – health impacts in the project's implementation phase. Even if the company should actively contribute to the analysis, it is often a good idea to obtain outside assistance for preparing a health impact assessment.

Health impact assessment

Systematic HIV prevention work yielded good results in connection with the construction of a hydroelectric power plant in Tanzania. Fewer sex partners, increased condom use and a lower prevalence of sexually transmitted infections were the outcome in the local communities surrounding the plant. Most gratifying of all: the number of HIV infections grew more slowly than in a comparable control area.

The Norwegian company NORPLAN was the primary consultant for the development. Although the construction site was in a remote location, during construction the population of the local community surged by 85% in a few short years. Such rapid population growth is always dramatic. However, this was anticipated in the health impact assessment done in the project's planning phase. In light of this, a preventive health project was implemented in tandem with the hydropower development project. Carried out jointly between the contractor and the local health authorities, the project received financial support from NORAD. In addition to HIV/AIDS, there was also a focus on other health issues, including malaria and environmental health.

This hydroelectric power project was a long-term and comprehensive one, but the principles used to analyse and prevent adverse health impacts are just as relevant in connection with small and medium-sized industrial development measures.



AIDS is a human rights issue. Access to HIV/AIDS treatment is key to realizing the fundamental human right to health.

Under international human rights law, states have an obligation to take positive legislative, budgetary and administrative measures that progressively advance the right to the highest attainable standard of health.

This commitment should be matched by resources, including from donors and the international community.

Mary Robinson
United Nations High Commissioner for
Human Rights



Photo: Ole Bernt Frøshaug



Photo: Ole Bernt Freshaug



Photo: Ole Bernt Frøshaug

Formulating an AIDS policy

An AIDS policy? It is one thing to have a few measures in the workplace, but an entire policy?

Because HIV and AIDS are bound up with so many taboos and so much discrimination, employees may be very sceptical if company management suddenly starts to talk about measures against AIDS.

Imagine the head of Sinzaba Productions telling the staff: “The management would like all employees to be tested for HIV. This will be voluntary, of course, but we know that HIV testing is such an important preventive tool, that we think that everyone should be tested. You will get time off work to take the test, the company will arrange transportation to the testing centre, and those who return with a receipt certifying that they have been tested will be rewarded with a bonus in the form of an extra day’s wages.”

How will the employees react? Some will say: “This is good: he cares about his employees, and I have also heard that it is important to be tested.” Others are less certain, and Peter receives a lot of support when he says: “I don’t think so. I think that he wants us to be tested and then will fire those who test positive. This is unacceptable.”

HIV is a sensitive subject, and proposals such as the one above are readily misunderstood, even if they are made with the best of intentions.

In working on an AIDS policy, the company’s management will gain new knowledge and awareness regarding HIV/AIDS and how it should be handled. This is in itself a useful process, and may also help to improve co-operation with the employees. Additionally, an AIDS strategy ought to spell out how the company will work and what rights and responsibilities employees and management have.

An AIDS policy should demonstrate to the employees and surrounding community the sort of attitudes the management has towards HIV and AIDS. It ought to make it clear that the employees’ rights will be respected and discrimination against people with HIV will not be tolerated. It should also make it clear that the company will not demand to know who is HIV-positive, but that the company intends to implement measures to assist its employees (or their families).

In devising an AIDS policy the company must think through a number of questions that are necessary to clarify. These may involve the kind of sick pay and welfare arrangements the company will have for its employees and their families, the kinds of measures the company is willing to implement and how the company intends to work together with the employees or with outside organisations and institutions.

Process and format

How a company works on an AIDS policy does matter. But an AIDS policy can vary in format, and it is to some degree a matter of taste and what otherwise suits an individual company.

Devising an AIDS policy should be part of a larger effort to understand what HIV and AIDS imply for the individual employee and for the company. It is also a part of a planning process in which the company discusses specifically what it will do in the workplace.

The company can decide to formulate a separate AIDS policy, or alternatively insert elements regarding AIDS into other company documents. An AIDS policy can be a part of the personnel policy, but it can also be part of the company's corporate social responsibility policy, in which the company accounts for what it wishes to contribute in helping to solve a significant social problem. A separate AIDS policy may be a useful document for presenting overall what the company stands for regarding AIDS.

An AIDS policy can have two facets:

The internal facet will deal with measures for the company's own employees and how the company will treat employees who may be infected.

The external facet may look at how the company relates to the surrounding community, and how it will help to limit the extent of the problems connected with AIDS in the society.

For a Norwegian company with activities in another country, the internal facet could again be divided in two: namely, with regard to local personnel and to Norwegian employees (or personnel from a third country).

The document may choose to state a number of overarching principles that the company will observe, or it may be a more detailed strategy that spells out the kind of approaches the company will take in this effort (see the next chapter).

On formulating an AIDS policy

An AIDS policy must be based on knowledge in several areas. Those formulating it must know something about the general AIDS situation in the area where the company operates. Then they need to know the best way to work on AIDS (so-called “best practices”)

Some of this you will find in the other chapters of this resource pack. You will also have to look at your company's own situation and at what its position and special challenges are.

Key elements

In respect of employees:

Starting point: observe basic human rights.

An absolutely essential basic attitude is to make it clear that the company does not accept discrimination against, and stigmatisation of, persons infected with HIV.

This is the basis of all AIDS work and a precondition for obtaining co-operation on this subject.

Additionally, an AIDS policy should state that no one will be forced to take an AIDS test, either to obtain or retain a job in the company.

Because many will not want full openness about their being infected with HIV, the policy should make it clear that the management and the health service will keep such information about the employees strictly confidential.

Gender perspective: women are often extra vulnerable.

It is crucial to try to ensure that employees do not become infected through their jobs. A sensitive subject to address is sexual harassment or even sexual assaults in the workplace. Many women have stated that they are more or less pressured to have sex with superiors or co-workers. The company ought to foster a culture that counteracts sexual harassment and respects female employees.

Special measures.

Employees should be protected against possibly coming into contact with other people's blood by having first-aid procedures that guard against infection via blood

or syringes. The company can also make it clear that it will carry out measures giving the employees information about HIV/AIDS as well as provide support for those who are infected. Such measures can be further specified in a strategy, or be subject to development in a collaboration between management and labour. These measures may be general in part, or tailored to special circumstances in the workplace.

Creative condoms

A transport company employing a large number of drivers realises that its employees belong to an HIV/AIDS risk group, and discusses measures to help them. One of the simple measures they implement is to put a packet of condoms in the vehicle every time the drivers go out on a job, and to put condoms in pay packets. In this way the drivers are reminded of the need to protect themselves and reminded that the company wants its employees to be healthy.

Here is how to proceed

It is important that the company has access to sufficient knowledge about AIDS and workplace HIV/AIDS programmes. On the basis of such knowledge, management and employees can discuss which attitudes should be reflected in the AIDS strategy and what specific measures to implement. A seminar or workshop can help to provide information on the local AIDS situation and “best practices” when it comes to workplace interventions.

Worker participation is crucial, and also a good way to start creating awareness and provide education.

Below are a few examples of AIDS policies that have been formulated by such diverse organisations as Norfund, NOREMCO and the Norwegian Football Federation.

Example: Norfund’s HIV/AIDS policy

HIV/AIDS has brought about an extensive global epidemic with serious potential implications for the productivity and profitability of businesses worldwide.

As an investment fund devoted to profitable business development in developing countries, Norfund expects HIV/AIDS issues to be considered as an integrated part of management thinking. Norfund wants to take a proactive role in the promotion

of AIDS prevention and care activities in the business environment.

Norfund wants to support its business partners in the development of strategies to understand, assess and respond to the economic and social impact of HIV/AIDS in their specific sector, organization and business operation.

Norfund expects that its business partners take HIV/AIDS in to consideration during planning and implementation of projects and operations.

Norfund expects that its business partners do not engage in or permit any policy or practice that discriminates against individuals on the basis of real or perceived HIV status.

Norfund recommends that its business partners initiate and support programs to inform, educate and train employees about HIV/AIDS, and offers to assist in this regard.

Norfund recommends that its business partners pay special attention to females and HIV/AIDS because women often are more vulnerable to HIV infection than men due to biological, socio-cultural and economic reasons.

Norfund recommends its business partners to participate in local, national and international partnerships in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Eksempel: Key principles for NOREMCO's workplace HIV/AIDS project

As a company and an employer, NOREMCO is dedicated to the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases, and to the promotion of health for all its employees.

Therefore, NOREMCO wishes to comply with relevant occupational health and safety legal requirements, and the company requires all its employees to hold occupational health and safety as a prime responsibility.

As a company focusing on high quality performance, NOREMCO wants to keep its workforce skilled and healthy. This is the main reason why the company now wishes to undertake a pilot project focusing on HIV/AIDS, malaria and occupational health and safety.

The health status of an individual is the result of a complex combination of inheritance, external environmental factors and personal choices. NOREMCO sees it as a professional responsibility to establish safe and healthy work environments. In addition, the company wants to promote individual choices that may lead to a long and healthy life to the degree possible. HIV/AIDS is now a common health problem in Tanzania, and NOREMCO wishes to contribute to the prevention of further spread of the epidemic and to help to provide care and support for persons living with HIV.

As a company responding to the challenges of the HIV epidemic, NOREMCO wants to promote a situation where the workers and their family members have access to accurate and up-to-date information about HIV and how it spreads.

The company also wishes to be an active promoter of healthy behaviour, including healthy sexual behaviour, among the workforce. Female employees and dependants are of special concern since women often are more vulnerable to HIV infection than men due to biological, socio-cultural and economic reasons.

For both male and female employees, NOREMCO wants to facilitate the availability of condoms, and to promote early diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.

NOREMCO has adopted a policy of non-discrimination of workers on the basis of known or perceived HIV status. It respects the rules of confidentiality as set out in ILO's Code of Practice on the Protection of Workers' Personal Data. This means that the company will not ask applicants or workers to disclose HIV-related personal information, nor will co-workers be obliged to reveal such information about their fellow employees.

The company will however promote anonymous and voluntary HIV testing among its employees for their own information and benefit. Such voluntary testing will not take place in the workplace, but in appropriate, independent test centres.

HIV testing is not required from job applicants or persons employed by the company, and employment or retrenchment decisions will never be made on the basis of an individuals' perceived or real HIV status. When a worker with a HIV-related condition becomes ill, he has the same rights, and access to the same benefits, as any other employed worker with a long-term illness.

Example: AIDS strategy for the Norwegian Football Federation

The Norwegian Football Federation (NFF) acknowledges that the global AIDS epidemic affects football organisations on all levels.

Most individuals infected with HIV are young people, who are also the main target group of NFF's activities. NFF seeks to use football actively as a method to curb the spread and harmful effects of the epidemic and will include a focus on AIDS in all its international development work.

- NFF's efforts relating to AIDS have the following primary goal: NFF will contribute to the prevention of HIV infection and help those who are infected receive support and assistance.
- NFF will use football's arenas for efforts to prevent HIV by ensuring that its members receive information about HIV and AIDS.
- Information about AIDS shall be provided in such a way that it does not add to stigmas and discrimination against those who are infected.
- NFF will work to foster openness and safety regarding HIV/AIDS among its members and supporters. NFF will do what it can to enable members affected by HIV to be accepted and get access to the necessary support and care.
- NFF will work to make football clubs safe areas for youth. NFF will have zero tolerance for sexual assault and sexual exploitation. NFF will work to foster equality between men and women in the organisation and for women to obtain positions of leadership.
- In its international involvement, NFF will help to draw attention to drug abuse and poverty-related problems that make people especially vulnerable to HIV and AIDS.
- NFF will co-operate with partners nationally and internationally in HIV and AIDS work, both within sport and in society at large.
- NFF wishes to use the international sports network and the position that sport has to bring HIV and AIDS into focus.



Photo: Ole Bernt Frøshaug



Business can play a critical role, by providing a venue for HIV education, and by giving leadership within the wider community.

Increasingly, business leaders recognize that their responsibility and their interest - lie not only in how their actions affect their shareholders, but in their impact on the societies in which they operate, and on the planet as a whole. The spread of AIDS is partly a tragic by-product of globalization. At least we now see the beginnings of a global response.

Kofi Annan
UN Secretary-General



Photo: Ole Bernt Frøshaug

The role of NORAD

HIV/AIDS

Economic development has a great potential for helping to address HIV/AIDS. Through workplace routines and training, marketing and influence in the local community, business can have a major impact on the way people deal with the epidemic.

NORAD, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, has a support scheme for HIV/AIDS prevention measures targeting companies that establish themselves, or that have long-term operations, in developing countries. This support scheme is intended to help prevent and curb the spread of the epidemic and its adverse effects on society. Grants are available for interventions that comply with national and international strategies, with particular emphasis on the improvement of competence in the area of workplace HIV/AIDS interventions and on strengthening the position of women. Measures for which support is being applied for should be formulated in close collaboration with professional expertise, in order to develop approaches and implement activities that are as relevant and focused as possible with regard to the circumstances in each individual company.

Grants normally go to specific measures carried out within the plans of the individual applicant company and may be used for designing and implementing measures in the workplace for informing about HIV/AIDS and taking actions that can prevent it. Measures focusing on the local community, for example in connection with major infrastructure development projects, are also eligible for support.

Companies should normally apply when implementing a new measure. The application should be sent to the Department for Civil Society and Private Sector Development at NORAD. NORAD can defray up to 80% of the costs associated with workplace-related intervention programmes.



Photo: Trond Topstad





Photos: Per Kr. Lunden



Photo: Per Kr. Lunden



Photo: Morten Hvaal



Basic facts

What are HIV and AIDS?

HIV is short for human immunodeficiency virus. Over 40 million people in the world are living with HIV. Nearly 30 million of them live in Africa.

HIV breaks down the body's immunological defences, making one more susceptible to various illnesses.

HIV can be found in blood, semen, other bodily fluids and vaginal secretions. The virus can be passed on during sexual intercourse without a condom, through sharing of syringes or needles, and from mother to child during pregnancy and birth and through breast-feeding. The virus can also be passed on through the transfusion of blood and blood products and through transplants.

About 80 per cent of HIV infections occur as a result sexual contact, and on a worldwide basis, infection through heterosexual sex is the most common.

HIV is never passed on through normal social contact. If you practise safer sex, your risk of becoming infected through sex is also slight.

No way

HIV is not transmitted through ordinary social contact, such as:

- by shaking hands or otherwise touching one another
- by hugging and kissing
- via toilet seats, eating utensils, water or food
- via insects

HIV attacks the white blood cells, which play a key role in the body's immunological defences. When there are fewer white blood cells, the body's ability to fight infection and some types of cancer is reduced. It takes many years from the time a person is infected until their immunological defences are so weakened that they develop AIDS.

What are the symptoms of HIV/AIDS?

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During long periods the infection may be completely unnoticeable, whereas during other periods it can produce symptoms and illnesses.

Acute HIV infection

Half of those infected with HIV get a flu-like illness 2-6 weeks after being infected. The most common symptoms are fever, difficulty in swallowing and swollen lymph nodes. This is called an acute HIV infection.

Asymptomatic HIV infection

After that, most people have no symptoms for several years. However, some people develop enlarged lymph glands many places in their bodies.

Symptomatic HIV infection

Later, usually after many years, a person living with HIV can lose weight and suffer from fever, night sweats, fatigue, enlarged lymph nodes, diarrhoea, oral fungal infections, shingles and increasing bouts of herpes outbreaks. The HIV infection has become symptomatic.

AIDS

AIDS means that the body's defences have collapsed to such an extent that the person living with HIV has little resistance against serious infections and some cancers.

Who is most at risk of becoming infected?

Globally, heterosexual contact is the most common avenue of infection, whereas in Norway infection between men who have sex with men and through the sharing of needles, has predominated. However, more and more of those infected in Norway have been infected heterosexually, not least after a stay abroad.

Even though most people are infected sexually, the risk of being infected in that way is not the same in all situations.

Since HIV has to enter the bloodstream to infect a person, the risk of infection will rise if one partner has sores or tears, or his or her mucous membranes are compromised. Many sexually transmitted infections can result in genital sores, which increases the risk of infection considerably.

Women have a greater biological risk of being infected than men, and the risk is even greater in young girls who are not fully developed.

Some of the geographical differences found in the number of people infected around the world may be explained in part by the fact that there are several strains of HIV in the world, and that some of these strains appear to be more virulent and infectious than others. Not surprisingly, it appears that the strain predominating in sub-Saharan Africa is especially virulent and well adapted to being spread heterosexually.

Social and cultural circumstances can also be conducive to an increased risk of infection:

- In all cultures, there are standards and perceptions regarding how sexuality is supposed to function. If there is a widespread belief that a man is not a real man unless he has many sex partners or unless he has sex several times a day, his risk of infection will rise, especially if this man works on a construction site and is away from his wife for an extended period.
- In some countries, sexual intercourse is a part of traditional rituals. One example is that when a person dies, the surviving spouse must have sex with a relative of the deceased to be purified from the spirit of the deceased. Such practices doubtless help to spread HIV.
- In some places one finds the tragic belief that virgins have special power and that having sex with a virgin can cure a person of HIV.
- The lack of information and knowledge is key with regard to infection. People may have heard of AIDS but may not have an adequate understanding of what HIV is and how the virus is transmitted. A typical misconception is that a physically strong person, or a person who looks healthy, cannot be infected. UNAIDS estimates that 90% of those who are infected do not know that they are, and that they are not aware that they should take precautions to avoid infecting others.
- Many are also unsure of how to protect themselves. Condoms are not always

familiar objects, they can be difficult to obtain and some people are unsure about how to use them.

- People in some occupations are more at risk than others. Occupations involving mobility or migration are at particularly high risk.
- In many cases, women have less of a say over their sexual lives than men do. Where men enjoy a position of power over women, this power can be used to control women's sexual lives and force women to have sex in situations against their wishes. It is often impossible for a woman to suggest that the man use a condom. This is something women experience both from their spouses or partners, and at work. They can feel forced to have sex with a male superior in order to be promoted or gain access to other benefits

Early in the epidemic, persons with good educations and positions were seen to be more at risk than others of becoming infected, because such persons had access to numerous sex partners. Having numerous partners is often viewed as a benefit for persons in high positions. Already in 1990 a bank director in an African country said that if his middle managers continued to die of AIDS at the same rate as they had thus far, in a few years he would not be able to run the bank. Gradually this picture has changed. Well-educated persons are also those who most easily have access to information and knowledge and thus can most easily change their behaviour. In many countries the epidemic has changed its character, with new infections occurring more and more among poor people who do not have access to the necessary knowledge and the opportunity to change their behaviour.

HIV test

It can take up to three months after infection before an HIV test shows positive.

A person who is afraid he or she has been infected with HIV can take an HIV test.

The most widely used testing method involves the demonstration of antibodies against HIV in a blood sample. Such antibodies are formed after the virus enters the bloodstream. The test is usually positive after 3-4 weeks, but in some cases it can take longer (up to three months). Thus, to be certain of a negative test result, more than three months must have passed from the time a person suspects he or she was infected.

Some service providers offer same-day HIV test-results. In other places, the blood sample must be sent to a laboratory for analysis. In this case it usually takes a week or more before one obtains the test result.

HIV testing should be voluntary, and it should be possible for those being tested to remain anonymous. Regardless of whether the test is anonymous or not, all information relating to an HIV test shall be treated confidentially. Counselling both before and after taking the test should also be offered.

Living with HIV

To keep their bodies' immunological defences as strong as possible, it is important for persons living with HIV to keep themselves fit and take care of their health

It is a good idea to:

- Make sure one gets proper nutrition and dietary supplements, if necessary
- Get exercise or engage in sports
- Have a positive outlook
- Treat all illnesses immediately
- Take special medications, if necessary

The problems experienced by persons living with HIV

People living with HIV will gradually notice that they can easily fall ill, not least with infectious diseases. As the body's immunological defences weaken, it will also take longer to get over various illnesses.

In addition to the physical ailments, people living with HIV often experience other problems. Many are subject to discrimination and exclusion in their social milieus and perhaps even in their own families. Most people are fearful for the future, both for themselves and for others in the family, especially their children. Many end up in financial difficulties, because their incomes fall and because of increased expenses in connection with the illness.

“When crossing borders, it is easy to cross the line”, say many who have spent long periods abroad, either living in a foreign country or travelling there on business. Since it is easier to make random sexual contacts while away or travelling, it may be that people do not think such contacts through with equal care.

A few years ago, an article in the Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten reported that Norwegian foreign aid workers, men in particular, had to be considered a risk group for HIV infection. The figures from the public health authorities confirmed this. Why is this so?

Many men find that they are the target of open sexual offers while abroad, often to a much greater degree than they experience at home. They are perceived as rich and attractive, and in many countries women believe that white men are good husbands and are worth pursuing and catching.

Combine this with the fact these men go out to restaurants and bars rather frequently. They meet a lot of people and want to relax and enjoy themselves, and even if they did not plan to do so in advance, they can end up in bed with someone.

Perhaps they do not realise that they are being propositioned before it is too late to withdraw.

Or they want to sample some of the exciting experiences a foreign culture has to offer, and when the women are beautiful and sensuous and when they offer themselves, then “why not?”

Is this, then, an employer’s responsibility? Is the company to play chaperone? Most business managers do not like to preach sexual morality to trusted employees. And it is probably not the company’s place to do so. At the same time, a company that sends out personnel should prepare these employees for the reality that will confront them and get them to think through what might easily happen. It is important for the company to prevent its employees from becoming infected with HIV.

What should companies do?

Companies should broach the subject of HIV/AIDS in the preparations for sending people abroad and ensure that the employees in question have undergone training in respect of AIDS. Although the greatest risk for infection is through sexual intercourse, there are also other avenues of infection. Since in poor countries, blood transfusions may be more risky than at home, it is important to prevent serious accidents that require blood transfusions. Because the virus can be passed on through syringes, it may be prudent to take along one's own syringes and needles if for some reason one should need an injection.

Companies can discuss whether everyone travelling should be equipped with a small first-aid kit. Although we will not specify here its entire contents, it should at least contain plasters (band-aids) and compresses, disposable gloves, syringes and needles.

We also recommend that companies equip those travelling with condoms. These should perhaps be accompanied with a slip of paper stating that the condoms are an expression of the company's concern for its employees' health and that the company wants employees to be prepared for any eventuality. They are not meant as a recommendation for any activity. Besides, there will be plenty of local co-workers and others they will meet who will gladly receive the condoms as a gift.

Companies should:

- Educate their employees about HIV/AIDS and how to handle "risk situations" abroad.
- Equip their employees with first-aid kits that contain, among other things:
 - Plasters (band-aids) and compresses
 - Disposable gloves
 - Disposable syringes
- Give employees condoms before departure



Photo: Ole Bernt Frøshaug



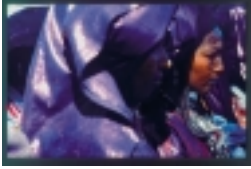
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Photo: Trond Topstad



Photo: Trygve Bolstad

Speaking openly about the epidemic is the first step to winning the fight against it. Silence is death. People need to know that they can be tested without shame; that if they are infected, they will be treated; that if they fall ill, they can live safe from discrimination.

Kofi Annan
UN Secretary-General



Resources

Organisations

NORAD — the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
<http://www.norad.no>

UNAIDS — the UN AIDS programme
<http://www.unaids.org>

ILO — the UN labour organisation
<http://www.ilo.org/aids>

Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS
<http://www.businessfightsaids.org/>

Global Health Initiative
<http://www.weforum.org/globalhealth>

WHO — the World Health Organization
http://www.who.int/HIV_AIDS/

The World Bank
<http://www.worldbank.org/aids>

Useful documents

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The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

Hiv/aids og utvikling — Norges standpunkt

<http://odin.dep.no/ud/norsk/publ/veiledninger/032001-120005/index-dok000-b-n-a.html>

International Labor Organization:

ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work.

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/trav/aids/code/codemain.htm>

International Organisation of Employers:

Employers Handbook on HIV/AIDS - A guide for Action.

http://www.ioe-emp.org/ioe_emp/pdf/HIV-AIDS.pdf

UNAIDS, Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS and The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum:

The business reponse to HIV/AIDS: Impact and lessons learned

<http://www.unaids.org/publications/documents/sectors/workplace/businessresponse2001.pdf>





Photo: Trond Topstad



Photo: Morten Hvaal

Common abbreviations

Below is a list of common abbreviations usually used in connection with HIV and AIDS.

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ARV/ART	Antiretroviral (therapy)
GNP+	Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS
HAART	Highly active antiretroviral therapy
HBC	Home based care
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICW	International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS
IEC	Information, Education, Communication
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
NACP	National AIDS Control Programme
NAS	National AIDS Secretariat
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PHC	Primary Health Care
PWA	Persons living with HIV/AIDS
PLWA	Persons living with HIV/AIDS
SOI	Seksuelt overført infeksjon
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease

TB	Tuberculosis
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children s Fund
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
WHO	World Health Organisation





Photo: Ole Bemt Freshaug

