



Winner of SWHAP Achievement Award 2011 - Category for Most Comprehensive Programme

The Board of Swedish Workplace HIV and AIDS Programme (SWHAP) is proud to announce the winner of the SWHAP Achievement Award 2011 in the category for most comprehensive programme. For the first time, the award goes to Raffia Bags in recognition of its successful and sustainable workplace programme on HIV and AIDS.

Raffia Bags, owned by Swedfund, has over several years implemented a successful programme responding to HIV and AIDS at its workplace which has gradually expanded from internal activities to external outreach. The programme has supported those employees that are HIV positive and prevented more from acquiring the virus. Due to concerted efforts as well as high participation of all staff, a profound impact has been achieved. Over 90% of employees consistently attend VCT sessions and Raffia has even formed a post-test club for all that know their status. Raffia has extended their VCT programme to spouses and has given serious attention to gender issues, through sessions with workers on "healthy images of manhood". The company has demonstrated excellent monitoring of the programme at the VCT uptake and at impact on absenteeism as well as liaising with the treatment service provider for quality assurance of those under the programme and in monitoring of opportunistic infections.

During the last 12 months, the company supported one of their biggest customers, Athi River Mining, to set up a structured programme on HIV/AIDS. Employing about 900 workers, the company is close to four times the size of Raffia Bags. This is an excellent example of how even a relatively small company can create a wider impact through inspiring and mentoring others.

The Peer educators have proactively reached out to the community by physically being involved in awareness creation among the community schools and churches as well as raising awareness among neighbouring companies. They have even linked-up infected staff with local support groups and community health workers.

The success of the programme is premised on workers-management collaboration where the steering committee and Peer Educators are actively involved in driving the programme.

The SWHAP Achievement Award has been given out since 2008. In 2011 the four categories for the award are Most Comprehensive Workplace Programme; Best Progress in Workplace Programming; Peer Educator Achievement Award; and Most Innovative Intervention. The assessment for the Most Comprehensive Programme Award was carried out through an extensive questionnaire of 17 questions and 68 benchmarks. For more information on the award, please contact info@swhap.org. For more information on Swedish Workplace HIV and AIDS Programme, please visit www.swhap.org.