

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2008

SWHAP Granted 48M SEK in Funding

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has granted the Swedish Workplace HIV and AIDS Programme 48M SEK in further funding for the next four year phase of the programme. The SWHAP is looking forward to utilize the positive results from the first four years to enhance the efforts at workplaces already engaged in the programme as well as to expand the activities to additional countries throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.

SWHAP Regional Conference 2008

On 6 November, over 120 workplace representatives from seven countries together with invited guests conferred on this year's main theme - *reaching sustainability in the workplace programmes*.

As part of the program, the delegates identified key challenges to the capability of HIV and AIDS workplace programmes to maintain momentum in spite of the various obstacles that impede workplace programmes. The conference was concluded by defining a number of recommendations for workplace programmes to achieve sustainability and increase effectiveness.

Business Combating HIV and AIDS

On the occasion of the World's AIDS Day, the SWHAP hosted the event *Business Combating HIV and AIDS* in Stockholm the 1 December, aimed at facilitating corporate and union responses to HIV and AIDS at the workplace level. Over 110 business leaders, investors and representatives from trade unions, organisations and government agencies as well as workplaces in Sub-Saharan Africa and the diplomatic corps took part in the event.

The keynote speaker of the event was the former President of Botswana and Chairperson of the National AIDS Council, HE Mr Festus Mogae. He was joined by presentations by the Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation, Ms Gunilla Carlsson; the SKF Group President and CEO, Mr Tom Johnstone; the General Secretary of the International Metalworkers' Federation, Mr Marcello Malentacchi; the President of the Swedish Trade Union Confederation, Ms Wanja Lundby-Wedin; the Professor of International Health at Karolinska Institutet, Mr Hans Rosling; and the SWHAP Champion of Amazon Motors in Kenya, Ms Christine Mwai.



HE the former president of Botswana Mr Festus Mogae, the Swedish Minister of International Development Cooperation Ms. Gunilla Carlsson and the MD of Sandvik Zimbabwe Mr Fred Knott at the SWHAP conference.

SWHAP 2008 Achievement Award

The newly instituted SWHAP Achievement Award was granted to Sandvik Zimbabwe for its outstanding achievements in realising an effective workplace programme. Through its programme, 95 per cent of the employees have been tested and an environment for combating stigma has been created. Despite severe financial distress in an unstable political setting, the company has sustained and prioritised its allocation of funding to the HIV and AIDS interventions. Without reliable access to ARVs, Sandvik has devoted financial and human resources to directly import and pay for non-subsidised ARVs. The award was handed over by the Swedish Minister of International Development Cooperation at the Business Combating HIV and AIDS conference in Stockholm.

SWHAP East Africa Conference

SWHAP held an East Africa regional conference between 16 and 17 October in Nairobi, Kenya, in cooperation with the Kenya HIV/AIDS Business Council. The conference attracted about 90 HR Managers and HIV and AIDS coordinators from SWHAP companies and from the coalition membership. The theme for the conference was HIV and AIDS workplace programming in the wake of a changing epidemic. Among the key issues addressed was Gender Mainstreaming in the workplace Programmes on HIV and AIDS. The National AIDS Control Council took part in the conference and applauded the SWHAP initiative in supporting comprehensive workplace programmes.

The International Council of Swedish Industry (NIR) and the Swedish Industrial and Metalworkers' Union (IF Metall) have jointly decided to initiate and implement a long-term programme to support and contribute to the establishment of HIV and Aids programmes at Swedish-related workplaces, through projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Swedish Workplace HIV and Aids Programme (SWHAP) is financially supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). However, Sida is not responsible for the content of this newsletter.

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2008

Swedish Minister Visits Sandvik

During October, the Minister of Trade and Industry from Sweden, Dr Ewa Björling, visited Sandvik South Africa to gain firsthand information about Sandvik's Workplace Wellness Programme for employees.

Dr Björling wished to gather information about what is done at Sandvik to encourage the majority of the HIV negative employees to remain negative, while providing a caring and supportive environment for those employees living with HIV and/or AIDS.

Stakeholders Meeting in Zambia

The Swedish Workplace HIV/AIDS Programme and Kitwe District AIDS Task Force (DATF) organized a one-day workshop in Zambia on 2 October. The theme of the workshop was "Championing Response to HIV and AIDS at the Workplace".

The meeting attracted participants from different sectors with the objectives of sharing experiences of the SWHAP, DATF and the National AIDS Council.

VCT Uptake on the Increase

Sanitas, popularly known as the "green diamonds" of Botswana, had their first VCT session in June this year. The VCT as well as the pre-test counselling was offered by Careworks for the Sanitas employees. 84 of the 87 employees at Sanitas tested for HIV and got to know their status. Such a high initial uptake has been subscribed to the open and tolerant culture and lack of stigma which has been created in the workplace. Positive employees are currently receiving treatment through the public health system.

Sanitas is just one recent addition to the workplaces that have realised a high VCT uptake through their programme. At the SWHAP regional conference it was for example reported that Alfa Laval has a 100 per cent VCT uptake, Sandvik Tanzania has a 90 per cent uptake, Sandvik Kenya has a 100 per cent uptake, Tetra Pak in Kenya has an 84 per cent VCT uptake, and Autoliv has had 95 per cent uptake for three consecutive years.



Alfa Laval South Africa family days in November.

Programmes Brings More Benefits

In order to assess the financial impact of HIV and AIDS on companies, the SWHAP conducted an assessment of ten of the companies that is cooperating with the programme in South Africa. The assessment clearly shows that there are significant costs to individual companies caused by HIV and AIDS. However, these costs can be reduced significantly with a successful workplace programme. The conclusion of the assessment showed that the aggregated costs of HIV and AIDS for the companies involved could surpass as much as 360 million SEK between 2008 and 2012. However, these costs could be almost halved if implementing a successful workplace programme through which employees take up VCT and ARV treatment early.

Atlas Copco South Africa is another striking example of benefits that could be gained from running a comprehensive workplace programme. Due to the comprehensiveness of its programme and the excellent uptake of Voluntary Counselling and Testing that has been carried out over the years, the insurer of Atlas Copco was able to establish an accurate risk cost of HIV.

The outcome was extremely positive and benefits all employees at Atlas Copco as a smaller portion of the premium is now allocated to the risk of disability and death. A proportionally higher portion can thus be invested in benefits. The net effect is a cost saving of around a million Rand per annum. An estimated total saving of around 21 million Rand will thus be realised over the coming 18 years. In addition to this, the company enjoys healthy competitions with the various divisions – all attempting to reach a 100 per cent VCT uptake. So there is now an additional reason for all employees to know their HIV status.

The International Council of Swedish Industry (NIR) and the Swedish Industrial and Metalworkers' Union (IF Metall) have jointly decided to initiate and implement a long-term programme to support and contribute to the establishment of HIV and Aids programmes at Swedish-related workplaces, through projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Swedish Workplace HIV and Aids Programme (SWHAP) is financially supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). However, Sida is not responsible for the content of this newsletter.