

SWHAP Newsletter July 2012

Sandvik Celebrates 150 Years

The 31st of January marked 150 years since Sandvik was formed. To celebrate, Sandvik Mining and Construction Zimbabwe organised a Family Wellness Day. It was a festive occasion and a chance for fun, games and interaction for employees, their families and invited guests. Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT), screening for diabetes and blood pressure were made available to all adult participants. Among the invited guests were children from SOS Children's Home, which Sandvik has been supporting as part of its community outreach programme for the last 3 years. Childline, an organisation dealing with the protection of vulnerable children, provided a special booth where children and their carers could discuss issues of concern in confidence. SWHAP has supported HIV and AIDS workplace programmes at Sandvik workplaces in Southern and Eastern Africa since 2005 and one common factor in these workplaces is strong community outreach programmes. Sandvik has realised that workplaces have a responsibility to raise awareness on issues of HIV and AIDS in the communities that they operate in. The celebrations in Zimbabwe exemplified Sandvik's core values of Open Mind, Fair Play and Team Spirit and celebrated Sandvik's key asset, its people.



Sandvik participants at the Family Wellness Day

Trade Union Support

Since 2011, SWHAP has been in partnership with the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union in Kenya, to spread the SWHAP experiences through mentorship programmes to non-Swedish companies. Mutsimoto Motor Company Limited was identified for mentorship through the union and had 7 workplace programme steering committee members trained on the 25th and 26th of May in Nakuru town.

In Zambia, 14 representatives of the National Union of Building and Engineering and General Workers (NUBEGW) came together to share international and regional best practice in HIV and AIDS policy formulation. The union's HIV and AIDS policy once finalised should reach over 15 000 employees and is expected to promote increased uptake of workplace programmes within the private sector in Zambia.



Trade union representatives during training in Zambia

Networking

Since March, over 160 SWHAP Peer Educators and workplace Programme Coordinators have come together to share experiences in quarterly network meetings held across the region.

SWHAP partners based in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza in Tanzania held their Peer Educators network meeting in March and April respectively. The forums sought to bring out issues surrounding Sexual and Reproductive Health and the linkages to HIV and AIDS at a workplace level as well as within the family and community at large.

The Swedish Workplace HIV and AIDS Programme (SWHAP) is a long-term strategy to support the response to HIV and AIDS at Swedish related workplaces in sub-Saharan Africa. SWHAP is a joint programme between the International Council of Swedish Industry (NIR) and the Swedish Industrial and Metalworkers' Union (IF Metall). It is financially supported by Sida.

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In South Africa, the second Peer Educator network training of the year tackled Medical Male Circumcision and the role of men in Prevention of Mother to Child Transimission (PMTCT). This was a very popular session facilitated by the Peer Educators themselves. The training highlighted the importance of male involvement in this area to reduce HIV infection.

Failure to target men in such programmes can weaken the impact of interventions as men can significantly influence the reproductive health outcomes of both women and children particularly in patriarchal societies where women's access to resources is limited. Peer Educators from SWHAP partners' supply chains and The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) also participated in the training.



Peer Educators facilitating workshops in South Africa

Spousal Programme Update

In continued efforts to bridge gaps in knowledge between men and women on issues related to HIV and AIDS, SWHAP regularly organises network meetings for spouses of employees. As SWHAP programmes are implemented at largely male dominated workplaces, spouses attending network meetings are predominantly female. In February and May spousal network meetings were held in Zimbabwe and Zambia dealing with topics such as signs and symptoms of sexually transmitted infections with participants being urged to seek early and competent treatment. The network meetings have been instrumental in empowering women with knowledge and many reported that they have been able to offer counselling and advice to their families, churches and communities thus enabling SWHAP to have an impact beyond the workplace.

CEO Breakfast Meeting

On the 22nd of June, SWHAP in partnership with the Zimbabwe Business Council on AIDS (ZBCA), held a breakfast meeting for CEOs and Programme Coordinators from the SWHAP network and ZBCA membership. Representatives from the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union (ZCTU) also joined the event. The theme for the meeting was "Are your employees an asset value?", the purpose of which was to challenge business leaders to invest in the health of their employees as a way of investing in the bottom line. In his keynote address, Ian Bagshaw, the Managing Director of Sandvik Mining and Construction Zimbabwe, noted that many companies are still focused on programme costs when they should be looking at return on investment. The steady increase in non communicable diseases such as cancers, hypertension and diabetes, which can negatively impact the treatment of HIV, pose a threat to productivity and economic growth. The private sector needs to address wellness at the workplace level and facilitate the adoption of healthier lifestyles by their employees.

Sharing Lessons on Cost Benefit Analysis

Between the 3rd and 5th of July SWHAP is participating in an electronic discussion forum on the AWiSA Network focusing on HIV and wellness services in the world of work in eastern and southern Africa. The SWHAP contribution will highlight lessons learnt from the programme in the cost benefit analysis of investing in HIV and Wellness. Mainly, that the overall financial benefits of running an HIV and AIDS workplace programme outweigh programme costs. To participate go to: <http://awisa-network.net>

SWHAP expands into the DRC

SWHAP is delighted to welcome a new member to the team, Mianda Mwepu Hatton. Mianda will work as Programme Officer for SWHAP in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and support the roll-out of the programme there. Mianda previously worked in the HIV field for the American Embassy in Kinshasa as well as with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Population Services International (PSI).

New website

SWHAP recently revamped its website. Please take a look at www.swhap.org

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