



Swedish  
Workplace  
HIV/AIDS  
Programme

## SWHAP Newsletter March 2014

### DRC CEO Meeting

SWHAP in the DRC held its first CEO network meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January. The meeting was attended by the Ambassador of Sweden to the DRC, Annika Ben David, along with representatives from the Ministry of Public Health, the local business coalition, UNAIDS, the National AIDS Council and SWHAP partners in the DRC. Ambassador Ben David spoke of the gender dynamics in workplace programmes and the importance of promoting women's participation in the economic arena. Discussions during the meeting also explored the return on investment of workplace programmes. The Ambassador noted that workplaces that create enabling environments for workers to manage their health and general wellbeing enjoy the benefits of this investment as healthy employees are generally more productive.



From left: Ambassador Annika Ben David and Dr Lievin Kapend, Head of the DRC National AIDS Council, PNMLS

### International Women's Day

International Women's day celebrated on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March is a time to build support for women's rights and participation in the political and economic arenas. According to the World Bank, gender equity is key to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, "putting resources into poor women's hands while promoting gender equity in households and society results in large development payoffs".

Poverty and gender inequality are some of the factors contributing to the spread and greatest impact of HIV. Two workplace programme coordinators from the SWHAP network share their perspectives on the theme for International Women's Day, "Equality for women is progress for all":



### Claire Mawana, Programme Coordinator, Ericsson DRC

*"Equality for women is progress for all". What does this mean for you?*

*This is an opportunity for women to prove their capabilities and show their potential to contribute to development in their communities. The same opportunities must be given to all, both men and women, to contribute in promoting health at the workplace, implementing mechanisms for prevention and sustainable workplace programmes and to address diseases which are specific to women.*

*How have you been working to promote gender equity in your workplace programme?*

*I had the opportunity to be part of the steering committee which was appointed to implement the programme last year, and by working hard, proving that what matters is not gender but what you can contribute towards successful programme implementation, I am now coordinating the programme for 2014.*



### Kedious Mphingo, Programme Coordinator, Revco Zimbabwe

*How have you been working to promote gender equity in your workplace programme?*

*Through our community outreach programme we have initiated a micro lending "Wellness and Banking Club" for unemployed women in our community. Women meet and pool their resources together and borrow against that fund to start income generating projects. The Wellness and Banking Club is also a platform for participants to learn information about health and wellness. Participants gather on the last*

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Saturday of each month for workshops on topics such as HIV, financial wellness, self-esteem, women in leadership, as well as technical assistance on running businesses.

#### **Is gender equity important for men?**

Yes, gender equity is not just important but beneficial for men. Some of the problems that our nation is facing will fall away, for example poverty, if gender equity is promoted. I strongly believe in the 2014 theme, there must be equality in positions and resource allocation. Once we all see each other as equal, then progress really begins.

#### **Sustaining Programmes through Passion**

Peer Educators at Ulrich Seats in South Africa created virtually cost free posters to promote health and wellness at their workplace. One poster illustrated the social and economic factors perpetuating gender based violence, whilst another encouraged employees to join the workplace fitness club. Members of the club meet at lunch-time to take walks and share information on healthy living, recognition that social support is an important component of maintaining a healthy diet and lifestyle. To view the posters, please visit our [Facebook](#) page.

In 2012, Ulrich Seats received support from SWHAP as part of the National Union of Metal Workers South Africa (NUMSA) Mentorship Programme. Ulrich Seats were mentored through policy development and implementation as well as Steering Committee and Peer Educator training. The Peer Educators at Ulrich Seats are a demonstration of passion driving programmes in times of economic difficulty.

#### **Wellness Days**

Wellness Days were held at ABB in the DRC and Metso in South Africa raising awareness on employee health status and modifiable risk factors associated with chronic conditions such as diabetes and cardio vascular diseases. Wellness Days are important for creating risk profiles allowing companies to develop programmes that meet the needs of employees. At the ABB Body Mass Index screening, obesity was identified as a problem in nearly 50% of participants. As a result the company will now focus efforts on nutrition sessions and promoting physical exercise amongst its workforce.

Beyond testing at wellness days it is imperative to have support programmes for employees to provide follow-up and support in managing identified risk

factors. Metso South Africa has a strong Employee Support Programme with 87% of HIV positive employees from the company registered on the programme. Additionally union participation and involvement in major aspects of the HIV and Wellness Programme has enhanced employee participation.



Metso Wellness Day

#### **Atlas Copco Zambia Environmental Health Initiative**

Atlas Copco Zambia recently received a certificate of registration from the Zambian government for their corporate social responsibility initiative "Water for All" through which they have adopted a local community, sinking boreholes to ensure access to safe drinking water. According to the World Health Organisation, safer water supplies could prevent 1.4 million child deaths from diarrhoea and 500,000 deaths from malaria annually. Initiatives such as these are some of the reasons why Atlas Copco is ranked amongst the top sustainable companies in the world. ([Atlas Copco Global 100](#))

#### **Sandvik Youth HIV Programme reaches 10,000 community members**

Peer Educators from Sandvik Tanzania organised a youth football tournament raising awareness on HIV and AIDS in the Nyamagana Community. During a three month period from October to December 2013, 156 boys from 12 teams participating in the tournament and 10 000 spectators received training on HIV and healthy lifestyle choices. The final match of the tournament was held on World AIDS Day with VCT provided for all. 524 people were counselled and tested. Sandvik credit the success of the tournament to the participatory approach used in planning the tournament. Stakeholders were involved at all stages and local district leaders mobilised community participation.

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