

Some facts

According to UNAIDS, almost 40 million people are living with HIV/AIDS. In 2006 alone, three million people died of AIDS worldwide, and over four million more were infected with HIV.

Medical science has advanced dramatically since HIV/AIDS was first discovered over 25 years ago. The appropriate use of the right antiretroviral drugs can give an infected person a high quality of life for many years. But too few people have access to life-saving drugs.

HIV/AIDS is a trade union issue

The vast majority of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) are engaged in productive activity. HIV/AIDS is an issue for trade unions and workers. Unions have workplace access and roots in the community; they fight discrimination, victimisation and stigma.

Unions can build on the trust of workers and negotiate agreements with companies to prohibit discrimination and victimisation and secure training, voluntary counselling and testing and anti-retroviral treatment.

Women

Women are particularly hard hit by the pandemic. Gender inequality and economic dependency expose them to partner infidelity and sexual violence. Yet they often lead the response to HIV/AIDS and play a vital role as carers of families, children and PLWHA.

Resources

If you do not have campaigning material go to www.worldaidscampaign.org, the website of the World AIDS Campaign. You can also find resources on the website of UNAIDS, the joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, www.unaids.org and at ILOAIDS www.ilo.org/aids.

The ICEM has a dedicated section on HIV/AIDS at www.icem.org where you can find materials, tools and other useful links. The ICEM website also gives access to all Global Agreements. Some of them now include an HIV/AIDS clause based on the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work. Use them for your campaigning!

World AIDS Day, 1 December 2007



ICEM Affiliates Lead the Fight Against HIV/AIDS Join World AIDS Day Campaign

Leadership is the theme for World AIDS Day 2007. The ongoing campaign slogan of the World AIDS Campaign is “Stop AIDS – Keep the Promise”.

Unions can demonstrate leadership at every level – in the workplace, in their own governing bodies, in women’s committees, in health and safety committees, in negotiations with companies, in the community and at the national policy level.

Any union member, shop steward, union official, committee member, gender representative who takes action on HIV/AIDS is a leader in the fight against the deadly disease.

ICEM calls on its affiliates to take the lead in campaigning on World AIDS Day, 1 December.



Stop AIDS – Keep the Promise

The ICEM – International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers’ Unions – is a Global Union Federation representing some 20 million workers in 400 unions in 120 countries worldwide.

The ICEM and its Affiliates

The ICEM and its affiliates cover sectors hardest hit by the pandemic such as mining because of the working and living conditions of miners. We also organise workers in the pharmaceutical industry. The ICEM and its affiliates are strategically positioned to play a key role in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Global Agreements are an invaluable tool for national affiliates to hold MNCs responsible locally for what has been agreed at global level. Some include an HIV/AIDS clause. Knowledge of Global Agreements and their practical application at national level is essential.

Why should your Union get involved?

- Your union can protect its members and their families from infection, defend their rights and give support to those infected.
- HIV/AIDS activities will increase your union's credibility among existing members and can be used as an organising tool to attract new members, especially the young.
- A policy and programme on HIV/AIDS will raise your union's profile and enhance its standing at national level.

What can Affiliates Do?

- Make HIV/AIDS a core issue in your strategies and programmes, and organise prevention and awareness campaigns.
- Negotiate with employers to implement HIV/AIDS policies and programmes at the workplace.
- Organise events and rallies for World AIDS Day which include families of your members and the wider community and support the activities of the National AIDS Committee.
- Produce your own campaign material and target the media.
- Advocate voluntary counselling and testing (VCT).
- Develop partnerships with international agencies working in your country, with companies, foundations and NGOs.
- Use the ICEM Guide on HIV/AIDS Resources and Funding and the Manual on Collective Bargaining.

**Don't wait – start your activities today!
Make World AIDS Day 2007 a big step
in reversing the course of the epidemic!**

Action Plan

Step 1: Identify Campaign Objectives and Targets

Your campaign objective could be as simple as creating awareness among members and their families; it could be rejecting discrimination and victimisation of HIV positive people. You could target employers to negotiate workplace policies or local authorities and your government in demanding better HIV/AIDS services.

Step 2: Consult and Get Support

Once the objectives and targets have been identified, share them with your members, other unions and the national centre. Approach the National AIDS Committee, NGOs and employers for support.

Step 3: Plan your Campaign and decide on Practical Needs

Individual members can circulate information to family members, among work colleagues and in the community. The union can hold community forums. It can partner with employers to organise workplace activities.

Step 4: Carry out Preparatory Work

Decide which material you will use for the campaign. Have material translated into local languages. Organise guest speakers for forums and rallies. Organise equipment such as mobile VCT units to carry out a massive Know-your-Status campaign.

Step 5: Launch the Campaign

Make sure everybody is informed well in advance of your activities on 1 December. Issue a press release for the media. Inform UNAIDS and other international organisations.

Step 6: Report Back to your Members and to the ICEM

Make reports on your activities a prominent feature in your union journal. It is very important that you report back to the ICEM Global HIV/AIDS Coordinator hiv.aids@icem.org. Send campaign materials and pictures. This will be published in the e-bulletin.

Step 7: Evaluate your Campaign

What went well, what did not go so well? Write down the lessons learned. Continue activities beyond World AIDS Day. Plan for World AIDS Day 2008.