



Why HIV and AIDS Matter to the Transport and other Infrastructure Sectors

Between 2-3.5 million people in South Asia are living with HIV or AIDS (UNAIDS 2008). Throughout the region, HIV is mainly concentrated among the most at risk populations, including injecting drug users, men who have sex with men, and male and female sex workers and their clients, such as migrant workers and truckers. Reaching these groups with focused interventions is one of the key strategies to reduce the spread of HIV.

Because of widespread stigma and denial, and due to underlying factors driving HIV transmission, key non-health sectors have a role to play in changing people's attitudes and practices. For this reason, the South Asia Region at the World Bank has adopted a multi sector approach to combating the HIV epidemic. The infrastructure and transport sector is one of the key sectors in tackling HIV since HIV/AIDS has a triple impact on the transport sector. It affects (a) transport workers, their families and communities, (b) the enterprises concerned, and (c) the community as a whole. In addition, as transport improves and people move around freely, this mobility facilitates HIV transmission.

Why the Transport Workforce is at Risk

Groups at increased risk for HIV in the infrastructure and transport sector are:

Long-distance truck drivers; operators of buses, trucks, trains, ships and airplanes; migrant workers; allied workers (e.g. loaders, vulcanizers, mechanics) and workers in roadside workshops and dhabas (rest stops), filling station employees; residents of communities surrounding project sites; and sexual partners and spouses of these groups.

Research by the International Transport Workers Federation indicates that transport workers are twice as likely to acquire HIV as workers in 'low-risk' occupations for the following reasons:

- Migration of workers/prolonged absence from home: Most transport and infrastructure projects attract migrant and unskilled labor to project sites. These workers, mostly men, are separated from their partners and families for prolonged periods, increasing their predisposition to engage in risky behaviors. India's 2006 sentinel surveillance data indicate that HIV prevalence was highest among women whose spouses were employed in the transport industry.
- Sex workers/dhabas along the highway: most major routes have frequent rest stops or dhabas. Many

dhabas serve as meeting points between sex workers and their clients, who are mostly truck drivers and their helpers.

- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and poor access to care and treatment: several studies indicate high STI rates among truck drivers, indicating high levels of risky sexual behavior. The presence of STIs and lack of access to adequate treatment increase their vulnerability to HIV infection.

- Lack of knowledge: migrant workers and long distance truck drivers often lack knowledge about HIV and STIs, and how to protect themselves. This, coupled with frequent alcohol consumption, can lead to poor judgment and increased risk behavior.

- ‘Hot spots’ like train stations serve as meeting points for other at-risk groups like injecting drug users and as ‘cruising grounds’ for men who have sex with men.

The Rationale for Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in Infrastructure

The impact of HIV/AIDS on the transport and infrastructure sector:

- Reduced productivity due to AIDS-related illness.
- Increased costs of workers’ benefits and health expenses. In order to avert losses from reduction in productivity, employers will find themselves faced with increasing health care costs for affected

employees including anti-retroviral therapy (ART).

- Declines in the sector’s overall productivity and earnings. This occurs as a cumulative result of frequent turnover of employees due to increased illness and death from AIDS. There is also the risk of attrition in skills and expertise.

- Increased costs of training and hiring replacements for workers lost to the disease.

The impact of the transport and infrastructure sector on the HIV epidemic:

The transport industry has a unique opportunity and key role in combating HIV and AIDS by:

- Disseminating information about HIV prevention to train, and bus passengers.

- Targeting interventions towards the most-at-risk population (truck drivers, migrant laborers and sex workers).

What can be done in the Infrastructure Sector?

A comprehensive approach and scaling up are necessary for results. This will involve interventions at both the individual and societal levels, and actions at community, state and national levels. These include:

- Education and training, using champions within each group being targeted. These peer educators should be trained to deliver appropriate information to their peers,

and to direct them to where they can obtain help if needed.

- Behavior Change

Communication: This is important to counter misconceptions about HIV and AIDS and to deal with persisting stigma. Awareness campaigns need to be organized and information, education and communication (IEC) materials should be strategically displayed and maintained.

- Advocacy with policy makers and stakeholders (including the community, law enforcement agencies and government).

- Creating an enabling environment for services to be provided and for fostering behavior change such as:

- ✓ Creating more official rest stops for bus drivers, with information, education and condom promotion.

- ✓ Granting frequent home leave for migrant workers as well as creating family-friendly environments and residences where families can stay with the workers when away from home.

- ✓ Condom promotion as well as creating convenient locations for condom purchase.

- Instituting workplace policies and programs on HIV/AIDS, and addressing stigma and discrimination.

- Care and Support:

- ✓ General medical services and facilities for STI treatment should be

provided for workers and should be strategically placed at rest stops.

- ✓ Provision of and referral to voluntary counseling and testing services.

- ✓ Antiretroviral (ART) treatment, care and support for affected individuals.

What the World Bank is Doing

The South Asia Region is focusing on mainstreaming HIV in new infrastructure projects. This will be achieved and monitored by:

- HIV prevention components in major transport and infrastructure projects.

- Budgetary allocations for HIV prevention.

- Seed money for clients to encourage commitment and action.

- Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of these interventions.

- New World Bank staff orientation and mobilization of management support.

- Incentives and rewards for commitment and actions to address HIV/AIDS.

In addition, the Bank has developed standard clauses in civil works contracts to mitigate the impact of HIV. The Clauses require contractors to arrange HIV awareness programs for its employees and its sub-contractor's employees. The contractor is also required to take actions to mitigate the risk HIV transmission between and among the Contractor's personnel and the local community, and promote testing and care for affected individuals.

What can be done to mainstream HIV/AIDS in Transport and other Infrastructure Sectors?

Methods	Examples of what to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the International Labor Organization's code of practice on HIV/AIDS in the workplace. • Institute a corporate policy on HIV/AIDS approved by highest levels of management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically display the corporate policy on HIV/AIDS in various locations. • Make knowledge of the HIV policy part of the orientation and staff training requirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint someone internally as the focal person for coordinating HIV prevention activities within the organization. • Provide financial commitment to program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate a committed person as the focal point for HIV/AIDS programs and activities in the organization. • Allocate an amount specifically for HIV workplace programs in the yearly budget.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the respective State AIDS Control Societies and the National AIDS Control Organizations. This may involve coordinating with NGOs and other development partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a liaison between the focal person and the respective state or federal technical agency in charge of HIV/AIDS prevention. • Liaise with NGOs and other interested development partners to provide technical and financial support. • Access the relevant websites for information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish workplace interventions, such as education and provision of referral services to voluntary counseling and testing centers. • Address stigma and protect affected workers from discrimination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular education and training for staff on preventing HIV. • Sensitize staff about misconceptions and address stigma and discrimination. • Provide condom vending machines.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider impact of projects on HIV transmission and institute mitigation measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce clauses (HIV contract clause) for HIV/AIDS mitigation in civil works contracts as well as signed agreements for HIV interventions for workers and the communities in which they work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide care for workers who are infected with HIV as well as ensure confidentiality of their status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of treatment or referral of infected workers for treatment and care.

Sources for further information

[*The World Bank South Asia HIV/AIDS website*](#) Links to country briefs and general information

[*Transport Sector and HIV/AIDS*](#) Link to the Transport Sector's social responsibility programs

[*National AIDS Control Program in India*](#) Link to the website detailing the programs and activities of the National AIDS Control Program in India.

[*The ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS*](#) This framework for action in the workplace contains key principles for policy development as well as practical guidelines for programs at company, community and national levels.

[*The IFC Good Practice Note on HIV in the workplace*](#) Outlines how organizations can intervene. The corporate HIV roadmap helps the company assess its commitment and level of intervention.

For further information, feedback and suggestions, please contact.

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