

# **HIV/AIDS MAINSTREAMING IN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR MALAWI – NATIONAL ROADS AUTHORITY**

**March 2007**

## **1.0 Mainstreaming**

Currently the transport sector has established focal points in the various organizations within the sector and most of them have developed policy Documents.

This paper will mainly centre at efforts by the Ministry of Transport and Public works and the National Roads Authority.

In the sector focal points were set up which are the main implementation points and management buy in was sought by organizing a workshop for managers within the Transport sector where the issue of mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into the various organizations was emphasized. The managers came up with a plan of action and strategies which are currently being implemented by the focal points.

Government has also put up a mandatory rule that all organizations should have 2% of their budget dedicated to HIV/AIDS activities.

NRA has got a part time coordinator and focal point committee. There is a policy document in place which is now being implemented. Involvement of PLWHA was done by use of secondary information from other parties since at NRA we have not gotten to the stage where people are opening up to reveal their status. Indications are that once we put up the treatment program then people will be willing to disclose since at the moment they don't feel there is anything to gain from disclosure.

The extent of mainstreaming has been sector wide in the sense of coordination to ensure all players in the sector are putting up program and NRA in particular along with the communities and construction companies we interact with in the course of our duties.

The main challenge faced in the mainstreaming is the many stakeholders within the transport sector which makes setting target groups a challenge. Lack of a dedicated full time coordinator has also affected mainstreaming efforts.

## **2.0 HIV/AIDS Prevention**

Prevention mainly looks at behavior change, at the moment awareness is very high but changing of behavior and attitude is the challenge that we are dealing with. Most interventions are borrowed from the National Strategic Framework and synchronized to fit environment in the various organizations.

HIV prevention strategies include the provision of information and education, condoms, voluntary counselling and testing (VCT), connecting people to antiretroviral (ARV) medicines

The issue of stigma is being addressed through increased awareness of the fact that HIV/AIDS is a disease like any other and that it is now manageable. With the roll out of the ARV program by the Malawi government and the improved health condition of the patients who are on therapy is assisting in doing away with stigma. People can now see patients actively contributing to the economy of the country and also leading a normal life.

Prevention programs are carried out by sensitizing staff members and communities and employees of contractors where NRA has construction projects. Also sex workers in the various communities are being sensitized. Currently we have condoms in our washrooms and information posters and articles from internet are sent to staff

### **3.0 Care Support and Treatment**

Currently for NRA staff members there is an agreement with Malawi Business Coalition for HIV/AIDS which allows its members to access ARVs through the Medical Aid Society Of Malawi in private clinics which is being preferred by many people as compared to the Government program through the light house. There are wellness centers along the borders and major roads where people get advice, treatment for opportunistic infections and sexually transmitted infections.

They also get advise on testing centers and Treatment schemes available both in private clinics and Government Hospitals.

Data on how many know their Sero status in the transport sector is not yet known as people are not opening up. This is the challenge that our strategies are trying to overcome

### **4.0 Coordination and Capacity Building**

Currently NAC is supporting organizations by providing consultants who help them come up with strategies that are linked to the national framework.. There is good collaboration through NAC and in the Case of Transport Sector the Department of Statutory Cooperation.

UNDP has assisted in the recruitment of a national coordinator for the transport sector and NRA being the major stake holder will also do with one since the current officers handling the issue of mainstreaming are doing it as part time. Focal point personnel have also been trained to be able to take up the challenge as this is a new field where experts are few. NRA wishes to come up with HIV clauses in its contracts so that all contractors include HIV mainstreaming in their projects and this will require fulltime personnel to constantly follow up

### **5.0 Management**

UNDP has recruited a National Coordinator for the transport sector and organizations within the sector have focal points. NRA has a part time coordinator and a focal point committee which acts as peer educators. HIV/AIDS is an add on to the normal activities of

the focal person in NRA. The ministry is actively involved and we have a transport sector Policy Document from which other organizations derive their policies and implementation documents.

Stakeholders are highly involved through consultations and workshops.

## **6.0 Monitoring and Evaluation – Quality Assurance of Data**

Based on the National framework the HIV/AIDS Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan to assess the success of the sectors response to HIV/AIDS and to inform and guide future strategies and interventions. In particular, M&E shall assess:

- prevention of HIV infections.
- guidance and accessibility of prevention, treatment, care and support services.
- mitigation of the impact of HIV/AIDS on individuals, the family and communities.
- reduction of individual and societal vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.

## **7.0 Sustainability**

Currently most activities are dependent on donor support but organizations have been encouraged to set aside 2% of their recurrent budget to support HIV/AIDS activities and with the ground work that is being laid by the donors the budget will be able to sustain the follow up activities provided a good ground is laid using donor support.