

Case Study 7.3

Social dialogue examples from the transport sector on changing men's behaviour

Transport is an important 'world of work' issue and an area of risk of gender-based violence. The transport industry plays a vital part in transporting goods in the global supply chain – by ship, air or road. Responding to the transmission of HIV infection along supply routes, where transactional sex at border controls can be a major carrier, is a key priority for health programmes. This example shows how transport unions have addressed men's behaviour in order to address gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS awareness.

Transport unions have a predominantly male membership, making it an important influencer of male attitudes. The global union, the International Transport Federation (ITF), argues that violence against women cannot be challenged without a change in men's behaviour. Highlighting the health dangers of violent or non-consensual sex can influence men to change their behaviour. Education about violence in the context of HIV/AIDS awareness can help both men and women to appreciate the serious health consequences of violent behaviour and sexual violence.

Rwanda: spouses take charge

Wives and partners of male transport workers exposed to or infected by HIV are vulnerable to infection by their husbands, as are their children if women become pregnant after infection. Women have a strong motivation to educate themselves, their husbands and the wider community about the dangers of unprotected sex, violence and HIV/AIDS.

The Rwanda Truckers Spouses' Association (RTSA), an association with over 2,000 members, was formed in consultation with the ITF affiliate, *Association des Chauffeurs des Poids Lourds au Rwanda* (ACPLRWA). The initiative came from the spouses themselves after they realized the challenges and problems they share.

"We are exposed to a high risk of HIV/AIDS due to the type of work our husbands do, so we decided to educate men and women on the prevention of the disease, as well as about the dangers of violence towards women." (Irene Babazi, RTSA chair)

Central African Highway Truckers' drop-in centres at border posts challenge violence

The Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union (ATGWU) in Uganda, and other ITF affiliates from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Tanzania, are supporting projects for long-distance drivers along the Northern Corridor in Central and Eastern Africa. The truckers are an important link in the global supply chain, transporting primary products, such as coffee and tea.

The ATGWU runs a drop-in centre at four border crossings where truckers are often delayed by border controls for several days – a wait which often involves casual or transactional sex. In the centres, full-time co-ordinators work with teams of trained HIV/AIDS peer educators and counsellors. They conduct sessions for both drivers and local community members, at which violence against women and sexual violence are challenged.

"The ATGWU has to challenge male violence – it is a major reason for rising levels of HIV infection. We have increased the focus on gender-based violence ... because a growing number of cases ... are being reported by peer educators and recorded at Ugandan police stations." (John Mark Mwanika, HIV/AIDS co-ordinator, ATGWU)

Source: ITF Action Guide on Violence Against Women.