

## UNESCO

---

Key achievements since the last IATT meeting (Geneva, 17-19 November, 2008)

### Policy/strategy development or revision

UNESCO commissioned an [external evaluation of EDUCAIDS](#), the UNAIDS Global Initiative on Education and HIV & AIDS, involving two in-depth case studies in Kenya and Namibia and consultation with key partners and stakeholders of the education sector in 12 countries. Preliminary findings suggest that EDUCAIDS has been instrumental in mobilizing partners and advocating for comprehensive education sector responses at country-level. The final report will be available in mid-2009.

### Workshops, seminars, technical consultations

UNESCO participated in the [14th International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa \(ICASA\)](#), 3-7 December 2009, Nigeria. The Conference notably engaged disabled people and groups, focused on human rights especially for marginalised groups, emphasized the importance of assessing the needs of men who have sex with men (MSM) and presence of African MSM organizations, and disseminated powerful messages about the vulnerability of women, especially young women.

UNESCO, World Bank, Education International (EI) and WHO co-organized a workshop on [AIDS, Health and Education for Sustainable Development \(ESD\)](#) at the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), 31 March – 2 April 2009, Bonn, Germany. The workshop advocated for the positioning of health, including HIV and AIDS, higher on the agenda of sustainable development and ESD; reflected the essential contribution of school health responses to SD/ESD, and vice-versa; took stock of the implementation of the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) in relation to health and sustainable development; and fostered reflections on strategic direction, priorities for action and partnership modalities for the second half of the DESD.

UNESCO's Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA) and the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) co-organized a workshop in Ghana from 20 to 24 April entitled "[Educational planning and management in a world with AIDS](#)". The workshop targeted ministries of education staff and trainers in education from faculties in Anglophone West Africa, with the aim to develop planning and management strategies to protect education systems from the worst effects of the epidemic.

On 18 November 2008, UNESCO's Director-General, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, held an [Information Meeting for UNESCO Permanent Delegations](#) on HIV and AIDS with the participation of Dr Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS, and Lady Cristina Owen-Jones, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for HIV and AIDS Prevention Education. Dr Piot reaffirmed the importance of prevention in the addressing HIV and AIDS, which he said "must become a priority".

### Technical products and materials

UNESCO, in collaboration with UNFPA and others, has been engaged in a process of developing [international guidelines for sexuality education](#). This process has been supported by UNESCO's Global Advisory Group and informed by an expert technical consultation in February 2009. The guidelines, which will be published in early 2010, set out a clear rationale for sexuality education, key characteristics of effective programmes together with the novel concept of a comprehensive set of learning objectives and topics for different age groups. The guidelines, intended primarily for ministries of education

and curriculum planners, are designed to function as a global template for a basic “minimum package” of topics and learning objectives for primary and secondary school curricula (four sets of age ranges from 5-18 years), on the basis of which, adaptation can be made to ensure local relevance.

UNESCO has revised the first three booklets in its series on [Good Policy and Practice \(GPP\) in HIV & AIDS and Education](#) and developed two new booklets. Booklet 1 provides an overview of why HIV and AIDS are important issues for the education sector, identifies weaknesses in current policy and programming responses and highlights evidence gaps. Booklet 2 discusses issues affecting learners in the context of HIV and AIDS, including rights and access to education, protection, knowledge and skills, and care and support. Booklet 3 addresses issues affecting educators in the context of HIV and AIDS including training, conduct, and care and support. Booklet 4 concentrates on the role and importance of strategic partnerships in developing education sector responses to HIV and AIDS. Booklet 5 focuses on the topic of effective learning using illustrative examples. The booklets can be accessed online at <http://www.unesco.org/aids>.

In December 2008, UNESCO released the first report on the [educational needs of HIV-positive learners](#), a commissioned review of best practice as well as an exploratory study in Namibia and Tanzania to understand how the education sector can and should support HIV-positive learners at school. The report identifies the specific challenges faced by the education system in responding to the needs of HIV-positive learners, concludes that the failures to support HIV-positive learners are masked by lack of data and investigation, and recommends to focus as much on improving the equitable delivery of accessible, quality education for all as they do on specific interventions for HIV-positive learners. This report is available in French and Portuguese (as of June 2009), and will be complemented by individual country reports (Namibia and Tanzania) and a desk study on this theme (available in English, French and Portuguese mid-2009).

UNESCO's existing resources centres on HIV, AIDS and education in seven offices and institutes have been brought together to form, in a single technical platform, the [UNESCO HIV and AIDS Education Clearinghouse](#). The Clearinghouse has an interface in English, French and Spanish and contains over 4,000 resources, alerts to scientific journals, a calendar of HIV and AIDS-related events; electronic newsletter subscriptions; a listserv for HIV and AIDS professionals; and an enquiry and literature search service. Users can access the Clearinghouse through <http://hivaidsclearinghouse.unesco.org> or email: [hiv-aids-clearinghouse@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:hiv-aids-clearinghouse@iiep.unesco.org)

In December 2008, UNESCO launched an [e-newsletter](#) to alert subscribers to HIV & AIDS and education updates from that are featured on UNESCO's websites. Four issues of the e-newsletter have been disseminated since December to over 750 subscribers.

### **Strategic partnerships and collaborations**

UNESCO is collaborating with SADC on the '[Care and Support for Teaching and Learning](#)' (CSTL) Programme, along with other UNAIDS Cosponsors and partners, to improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that essential care and support services are available to schools. It will be piloted in 6 countries, namely DRC, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia. The programme builds on existing interventions and experience and focuses on a better coordination (both regional – SADC, and national – MoE coordinating Units) and targets both policy development and school-based actions.

Within the framework of EDUCAIDS and in partnership with the Virginio Bruni Tedeschi Foundation and Education Sector AIDS Response Trust (ESART), UNESCO is currently working on a project to strengthen [pre- and in-service teacher training in Southern Africa](#), with particular focus on Angola, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland. A teacher

training manual has been compiled to encourage and assist countries to integrate training on HIV- and AIDS- related issues (including adolescent SRH, relationships and life skills education, basic and HIV-orientated guidance and counselling) as a stand-alone, mandatory and examinable subject in the core curriculum of teacher training institutions.

### **Technical and financial assistance/relevant resource mobilization**

UNESCO has recently received confirmation of a \$3.5 million grant from the [OPEC Fund for International Development](#) to support comprehensive education sector responses to HIV and AIDS in East and Southern Africa. As part of this programme, UNESCO will be appointing and supporting national programme officers in seven of the countries.

UNESCO has started an internal process for allocating its core 2010-2011 [Unified Budget and Workplan](#) (UBW) funds. The process aims to build on UNESCO's previous experience with the UBW, involving all Sectors, and above all seeking to ensure impact at the country-level.

### **Challenges**

In the current financial climate, donors and development partners are increasingly looking to prioritise their investments in areas that demonstrate performance and results. Education, however, is a necessary but long-term investment and the evidence around the impact of education on HIV-related behaviour change is limited. This is especially true in low prevalence settings, where formal education sector response to AIDS is often regarded as "low cost and low impact" approach. Similarly, the education sector's contribution to reducing stigma and discrimination and to preparing the public to address broader underlying risk and vulnerability factors is often not well-understood. The evidence base needs to be pulled together on the contribution of the sector to the epidemic in different epidemiological settings to "make the case" for such investments.

Given recent developments related to sex education in a number of countries, dissemination and use of the International Guidelines on sexuality education to support countries to clarify age-specific learning objectives is likely to be challenging. For example, a Parliamentary Committee in India has opposed the introduction of sexuality education in schools; and draft legislation being considered by the Russian Federation is critical of components of sex education and HIV prevention programmes in school curricula; in Uganda, a manual on sexual and reproductive health produced by UNICEF for 15-19 year olds has been strongly attacked (seven years after it was distributed) on the basis of a brief section on same sex relationships, interpreted as 'Western values promoted by an international agency'. The issue of coverage of issues related to men who have sex with men in the curriculum is particularly crucial in the Asian setting, given the epidemiology (an issue highlighted in the Asia Commission Report discussed at the IATT Chiang Mai meeting). A related challenge is how to deal with issues related to injecting drug use, in areas where this is a significant factor in HIV transmission, when the context for HIV education is being strongly argued as being sexuality and relationships.