

SWAZILAND

EDUCAIDS was launched in Swaziland in March 2006. Activities initially focussed on advocacy and capacity-building, leading to the establishment of partnerships with key stakeholders and the development of a comprehensive plan for the education sector response to HIV and AIDS. The [Virginio Bruni-Tedeschi Foundation](#) partnership with UNESCO enables the expansion of activities to facilitate implementation of education sector commitments to HIV and AIDS prevention.

Activities

Start-up planning and implementation were supported through consultations with 22 partners from the Ministry of Education, non-governmental organisations working in education, the National Association of People Living with HIV, the National AIDS Commission, UN agencies, teacher unions, and teacher training institutions. The meetings ensured that proposed activities were in line with national priorities and programming, and have broad ownership.

The key recommendations are to:

- Increase the coverage and quality of effective HIV and AIDS education materials for learners.
- Provide technical support to the Ministry of Education's Guidance and Counselling Unit to increase their capacity to plan, prioritise and implement a comprehensive education sector response to HIV and AIDS.

High-quality, age-specific HIV prevention materials for learners in school are currently being developed. To ensure activities are complementary to ongoing projects, an extensive review of existing materials is supporting the process.

With the technical assistance of a newly recruited national coordinator, the education sector HIV and AIDS strategy is now being developed. It is due to be finalised by late 2008. Its development is coupled with the reinforcement of UNESCO's capacity to coordinate education sector HIV and AIDS interventions and development of monitoring and evaluation tools.



Traditionally dressed students participating in HIV and AIDS awareness-raising activities at school.

Lessons Learned

To be effective, HIV prevention education must address not only learning about HIV transmission, but also the skills to adopt protective behaviours and reduce vulnerabilities.

For policies to be translated into effective programme implementation, political leadership in both the national and education sector response to the epidemic is critical.

A thorough understanding of the nature, extent and structural drivers of the epidemic in Swaziland are central to developing education programmes that will respond to the context and need.