

## Viet Nam: A model of successful UN family collaboration to support a comprehensive education sector response to HIV and AIDS

# EDUCAIDS

## Country Snapshot



Training workshop for teacher trainees

### How the education sector response to HIV and AIDS has been supported

The UN family has been working together in several ways to support the Vietnamese education sector's response to HIV and AIDS, including:

- Reinforcing institutional structures and mechanisms in Viet Nam's Ministry of Education and Training (MOET);
- Supporting strategic planning and inclusion of HIV and sexuality education in national strategy documents;
- Supporting the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of HIV and AIDS education;
- Advocating for inclusion of HIV prevention in the education sector.

This work has been primarily undertaken through three structures: the UN Programme Coordination Group on HIV (PCG HIV); the Joint UN Team on HIV/AIDS, which involves all of the UN agencies working in Viet Nam as well as bilateral development partners, multilateral development banks and international NGOs; and the UN Education Sub-Group, consisting of UNESCO (as the lead agency), UNICEF and UNFPA. Coordination through these mechanisms has been enhanced by Viet Nam's status as a "One UN" country, which has allowed it to benefit from "One Plan" funds and other resources.

### What was achieved

- Many successes were achieved through the UN family working together, including the establishment and strengthening of MOET's Inter-Departmental Committee on HIV and AIDS (ICHA) as a means to ensure that all MOET departments are working together to address HIV;
- Formulation of a Strategic Plan on HIV for 2011-2015 by the MOET, containing a work plan with clear objectives, timelines and budgets;

### Some statistics about HIV and education in Viet Nam

Viet Nam is a low prevalence country, with an adult HIV prevalence rate of 0.43% and a 15-24 age group prevalence rate of 0.3% as of 2009. However, only 42.5% of the latter age group were able to both correctly identify ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV and to reject major misconceptions about HIV. In terms of the education sector response, out of 460 schools which reported, 34.3% said that they provided life skills-based HIV education during the last academic year (UNGASS 2010). Additional information can be found at: [http://cfs.unaids.org/country\\_factsheet.aspx?ISO=VTN](http://cfs.unaids.org/country_factsheet.aspx?ISO=VTN).

- Integration of sexuality education into the National Education Strategy 2011-2020. The UN family worked together to secure the support of the Vice Minister of MOET for this initiative through active consultation;
- Integration of HIV prevention in the national school curriculum. This curriculum integrates reproductive health and HIV into core lessons and extra-curricular activities for secondary schools. It also includes special training for parents so that they can better discuss sensitive HIV and reproductive health issues with their children;
- Strengthened implementation of legislation on stigma and discrimination against those infected or affected by HIV and of the National Programme of Action on Children Affected by AIDS.

For these efforts, Viet Nam (along with Peru and Mozambique) has been selected as a "best practice" example in coordination of HIV prevention efforts in a global research project commissioned by UNFPA and UNAIDS.

### What we learned

- Ongoing advocacy is needed for integration of HIV and AIDS in the education sector, even if there is strong political will and commitment.
- In order for advocacy efforts to be successful, UN agencies must work together in order to ensure coordinated action and maximum impact.
- EDUCAIDS, with its five components for a comprehensive education sector response to HIV and AIDS, provided a useful framework for the UN Education Sub-Group in its support to the MOET. It will continue to be used as a guide, including for the development of the current MOET proposal to the Global Fund.

EDUCAIDS is a UNAIDS multi-country initiative – led by UNESCO – to support the implementation of comprehensive education sector responses to HIV and AIDS