



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



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JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS

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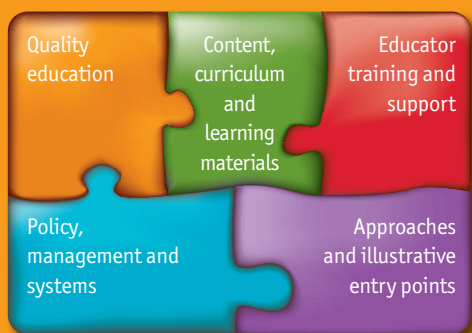
EDUCAIDS

Towards A Comprehensive
Education Sector Response

Promoting comprehensive education sector responses

A comprehensive education sector response to HIV and AIDS is at the heart of EDUCAIDS at the country level. This means a move away from programming on a project-by-project basis, and towards a holistic, sector-wide view of the impacts and challenges of HIV, and the deployment of all components, modalities and capacities of the education system to address and mitigate those impacts.

Comprehensive education sector responses comprise five essential components:



Experience demonstrates that all of these components need to be in place and working well to ensure optimal success.

This includes, for example:

- Ensuring that all learners are reached with high quality education that is rights-based, learner-centred, gender-responsive, inclusive, culturally sensitive, age-specific, scientifically accurate and delivered in secure learning environments.
- HIV and AIDS curricula and learning materials that are evidence-informed, that start early and are sequenced to build knowledge and skills to reduce risk behaviours, and that are based on interactive education methodologies.
- Pre- and in-service educator training to build technical knowledge on HIV and AIDS, confidence and experience, and address educators' own vulnerabilities to HIV and the impact of HIV and AIDS. Training should be complemented by appropriate teaching resources and support, particularly for teachers living with HIV.
- Sectoral policies on HIV and AIDS, workplace policies to ensure zero tolerance for violence, abuse and discrimination, and strategic plans that are costed and funded to implement, enforce and monitor policies.
- A holistic effort which maximises the use of various approaches, opportunities and entry points to address underlying vulnerabilities and behaviours that create and perpetuate HIV-related risk.

Planning and prioritising actions

EDUCAIDS recognises that epidemics and response contexts differ from country to country, and each country will therefore approach the development of a comprehensive education sector response to HIV and AIDS from a different starting point.

Determining the best way to move ahead with the intensification of HIV and AIDS education efforts will depend on country priorities and context, and must be country-led. Within EDUCAIDS, this is determined by a participatory assessment with key stakeholders including ministries of education, teachers unions, civil society organizations in partnership with multilateral and bilateral agencies, and other development partners supporting the education sector response.

Through EDUCAIDS, UNESCO supports national partners to set the priorities for meeting these needs through a coordinated approach, drawing on the full range of available resources, including those available at the country level.

There is no single “one size fits all” approach for undertaking this process of needs analysis, prioritisation and work planning. What is essential, however, is the commitment to work through an inclusive process, ensuring opportunities for building ownership of the HIV and AIDS response across the education sector.



UNAIDS/G. Pirozzi

Building partnerships and promoting coordination

Through EDUCAIDS, UNESCO contributes to linking the work of many partners into a cohesive and coherent set of actions, programmes, and policies at the national level.

As part of a broader effort organized by UNAIDS to move towards universal access to prevention programmes, care, treatment and support, the aims of EDUCAIDS are promoted through greater collaboration among UNAIDS Cosponsors, in partnership with national authorities, ministries of education and other key education sector stakeholders, other ministries and sectors, and bilateral agencies and civil society groups at the country level. The country-level UN Theme Groups on HIV and AIDS and Joint Country Teams on AIDS are key partners in coordination efforts.

Agencies and persons involved in EDUCAIDS include UNESCO staff in the education sector and all other sectors, ministries of education, UNAIDS Cosponsors, civil society organizations including groups working on EFA and groups of people living with HIV. The UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on Education, convened by UNESCO, is a key reference group for EDUCAIDS and a forum for information-sharing, discussion and coordination.

In order to ensure that EDUCAIDS is an integral part of national strategies, it is important to embed it into existing frameworks. This includes the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), joint programmes of support to “Deliver as One UN”, joint teams and programmes on HIV and AIDS, the UNESCO Country Programming Document (UCPD) and the UNESCO Education Sector Support Strategy (UNESS). Similarly, efforts to engage Education Development Partners Groups at the country level are essential to ensure the active engagement of all education partners in the response to HIV and AIDS.

EDUCAIDS has two primary aims:
to prevent the spread of HIV through
education and to protect the core
functions of the education system from
the worst effects of the epidemic

Implementation support for EDUCAIDS

UNESCO, in consultation and collaboration with key partners, has developed practical resources in multiple languages that provide guidance on the technical and operational aspects of a comprehensive approach. These tools, based on what is known globally in relation to education and HIV & AIDS, address the information and capacity needs of various audiences and include:

EDUCAIDS Technical Briefs for officials in ministries of education and other organizations supporting the development and implementation of policies, determining resource allocations, and implementing programmes for education sector staff and learners. Each brief can be used as a stand-alone reference, and together they offer comprehensive and flexible guidelines on the continuum of activities required to respond to the epidemic at the country level.



Overviews of Practical Resources which provide technical staff, programme implementers and managers in ministries of education and civil society organizations with an analysis of the most useful published resources on the five essential components of a comprehensive education sector response to HIV and AIDS.

Technical support and capacity-building – essential requirements for implementing actions in support of strong education sector responses to the epidemic. UNESCO's regional and country offices, other UNAIDS Cosponsors, and education partners are working together to expand the base of technical assistance in support of country efforts towards comprehensive education sector responses to HIV and AIDS.

While funding for the global response to HIV and AIDS has escalated dramatically in recent years, a higher proportion of this funding is now available at the country level – a significant shift that requires changes in the way agencies like UNESCO and other partners in EDUCAIDS mobilise resources. This is a primary reason why EDUCAIDS is not designed to be a funding mechanism, and why emphasis within EDUCAIDS is to support resource mobilisation and coordination through strategic partnerships at the country level.

EDUCAIDS: Central to UNESCO's response

As the UN specialised agency for education, UNESCO has been designated within the UNAIDS technical support division of labour as the lead organization for HIV prevention with young people in educational institutions, with several other UNAIDS Cosponsors as main partners for this area. UNESCO has also been designated a main partner in eight other technical support areas, such as development, planning, workplace programmes, nutrition support, and displaced populations.

In addition to its role as a UNAIDS initiative, EDUCAIDS has been designated by UNESCO's Executive Board as one of three core UNESCO initiatives to achieve Education for All (EFA), the other two focusing on teacher education (Teacher Training Initiative for sub-Saharan Africa, TTISSA) and literacy (Literacy Initiative for Empowerment, LIFE). EDUCAIDS also provides an opportunity to identify and reinforce synergies across other identified UN priorities in education, such as literacy, education for sustainable development, and EFA coordination.

UNESCO brings to the table the strengths of its education, natural science, social and human sciences, culture and communication and information sectors, providing an interdisciplinary response to the epidemic. UNESCO's sectors, institutes, and field offices are contributing and continue to strengthen educational responses to HIV and AIDS through strategic and complementary approaches.



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