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Analyzing the response of Teacher Training Colleges in Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia to HIV and AIDS

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E-mail contact: cnzioka@uonbi.ac.ke ABSTRACT No 7890
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Lessons learned:

- HIV and AIDS are affecting students, staff and the operations of these teacher training colleges, yet there is little evidence of a response.

Recommendations:

- Teachers are the most valuable resource in the education sector. Make them even more valuable as agents of positive change in a world with HIV and AIDS through training that will enable them to communicate successfully and effectively with their students on HIV and AIDS. Young people in teacher training colleges can be vulnerable to HIV infection and should be provided with correct knowledge and with the means to protect themselves.

Background:

- Teachers play a critical role in preventing the further spread of HIV and in providing psychosocial to children and young people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.
- The countries selected to participate in the study are highly affected by HIV and AIDS.
- There is limited documentation on the experiences of teacher training institutions in dealing with HIV and AIDS.

Methods:

- Exploratory case studies which employ qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion were used.. Interviews were held with selected college staff and teacher trainees in 8 teacher training colleges and with officials in the ministries of education in Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia. The data was collected with the aim of assessing the way these institutions were organizing their responses to HIV and AIDS.



Figure 1. Trainees at a teacher training college in Zambia Source: L. Ramos

Results:

- HIV is still spreading in teacher training colleges due to a multiplicity of factors including reduced government subsidies to colleges and students, poverty, peer pressure to have sex, gender imbalances, inadequate access to information on HIV and AIDS, alcohol abuse and difficulties in accessing condoms.
- Other factors include lack of institutional policies on HIV and AIDS, inadequate budgets, limited teaching and learning resources, inadequate institutional resource mobilization capacity and an overloaded curriculum that leaves little time for HIV prevention education.
- These are aggravated by ill-equipped health facilities, operated by untrained personnel, and ambiguous government and religious policies on condom use. Fear, denial and concealment leading to stigma and discrimination still characterize the management of the epidemic.

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