

UNAIDS 2025

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

2024 Results Report

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UNESCO uses its comparative advantage with the education sector to support Member States to advance young people's health and well-being.

HIV in UNESCO's mandate

Efforts to support HIV prevention for young people are guided by the [UNESCO's Strategy on Education for Health and Well-being](#), launched in 2022. The Strategy emphasizes building stronger, more resilient school health systems that promote learners' physical and mental health and well-being, as well as HIV and reproductive health, while focusing on CSE and on ending violence and discrimination. It addresses the mutually reinforcing intersections of SDGs 3 (Health), 4 (Education) and 5 (Gender equality). In 2024, UNESCO assumed the role of Chair of the Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations.

Key UNESCO strategy for HIV

Efforts for global HIV prevention continue through support for delivery of in-school CSE programmes around the world, using the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education as the principal guiding framework for curricula, policy and advocacy. UNESCO is the co-convenor of the UNAIDS division of labour area on young people, along with UNICEF and UNFPA. UNESCO's work also directly contributes to the success of the [Education Plus](#) initiative, which aims to strengthen the education and empowerment of adolescent girls and young women in Africa.

Top results in 2024

Political commitment strengthened. In 2024, 29 Member States enhanced policies and programmes on safe learning environments free from all forms of school-related violence, with 20 countries in advanced stages of policy framework maturity. UNESCO's report [Safe to learn and thrive: ending violence in and through education](#) was launched at the Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children in Colombia in November 2024, coinciding with the International Day Against Violence and Bullying in Schools. Summarizing available data on violence in education, its causes and consequences, the report advocates holistic approaches for creating safe, inclusive learning environments. It builds on previous efforts to address gender-based violence, bullying and school violence, which can help reduce the vulnerability of young people, especially adolescent girls, to HIV. With the support of joint advocacy with UNICEF, WHO and the Governments of Colombia and Sweden, 44 countries (27 of them in sub-Saharan Africa) made pledges to ensure safe learning environments. The pledges include commitments to develop or strengthen violence prevention curricula; focus on teachers training; establish school-based services for responding to violence; and improve school governance and reporting mechanisms.

HIV prevention efforts strengthened. In 2024, 27 million learners were reached with life skills-based HIV and sexuality education. The "Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future" programme continued its second phase (launched in mid-2023) and supported the delivery of high-quality CSE programmes that equip young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to protect themselves from early and unintended pregnancies, HIV, other STIs and sexual and gender-based violence.

Capacity and commitment on comprehensive sexuality education and school-related gender-based violence increased to reinforce HIV prevention. The [Global Partnership Forum on CSE](#), which unites 75 member organizations and is co-convened by UNESCO and UNFPA, expanded its work on in- and out-of-school CSE, programme research and the promotion of gender equality and human rights. The Forum also contributed to ongoing efforts to build a positive narrative for CSE through digital platforms, including via social media and human-interest stories that highlight the contribution to the HIV response. Community engagement grew by 75% in 2024, with engagement averaging at 5–10% and peaking at 30%, well above the industry benchmark of 1.95% for education.

The Global Working Group to End School-Related Gender-Based Violence, convened by UNESCO with the UN Girls' Education Initiative, expanded its membership to 70 organizations and 143 individuals. UNESCO also remained an active member of the Safe to Learn Coalition, collaborating on advocacy efforts, a renewed call to action and high-level events such as the Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children in Colombia mentioned above.

The global research agenda strengthened. UNESCO developed two major studies to highlight and clarify the benefits of CSE. The first study conducted a mixed-methods global analysis to explore the needs and experiences of adolescents and young people in low- and middle-income countries in relation to school-based sexuality education. The second study was a mixed-methods, exploratory research project that examined how in-school national CSE programmes affect learners' knowledge, skills and preparedness to navigate healthy interpersonal relationships with parents, peers and romantic partners. The aim was highlight the broader benefits of CSE and the foundational skills and knowledge that can lead to positive health outcomes (e.g. preventing HIV or unintended pregnancy) and identify contexts and best practices for achieving those outcomes.

In 2024, UNESCO and UNICEF published technical briefs offering evidence-based guidance for education stakeholders. The briefs, developed after consultations with over 200 stakeholders, cover topics like designing content, involving schools and classroom implementation. The initiative was launched at a symposium in Zambia, with 115 in-person and 371 online participants from various sectors.

Digital community of practice established. Recognizing that digital spaces are increasingly used by adolescents and young people as sources of sexuality education, UNESCO engaged young people through popular social media platforms, creating and promoting content in collaboration with youth influencers and experts. By the end of 2024, over four million adolescents in eastern Europe and central Asia had increased their awareness of HIV prevention, sexual health, gender, relationships and violence prevention, thereby empowering themselves to make informed, healthy choices.

In the Asia-Pacific region, national initiatives empowered over 1,000 individuals, including youth leaders, teachers, educators and government officials across multiple countries, to foster safe, inclusive, equitable and health-promoting learning environments. Actions to promote CSE, gender-responsive pedagogy, LGBTQI+ inclusive advocacy and mental health and psychosocial support led to strengthened capacity on HIV prevention and reduction of HIV-related stigma.

In Armenia, UNESCO and the Secretariat supported a media campaign which engaged over 200 000 young men (16–25 years) to combat gender-based violence. The campaign, informed by a study on young men's perceptions of masculinity, led to the creation of a chatbot promoting positive masculinity and non-violence. Over 2,000

adolescents interacted with the chatbot, while the campaign also raised awareness on preventing gender-based violence and bullying in schools.

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