

UNAIDS 2023

---

# United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

---

**2022 Organizational Report**



# United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

## HIV in UNESCO's mandate

UNESCO uses its comparative advantage within the education sector to support Member States to advance young people's health and wellbeing. Efforts are guided by the new, revised [UNESCO's Strategy on education for health and well-being](#), launched in 2022, which places greater emphasis on building stronger, more resilient school health systems that promote learners' physical and mental health and well-being. It also emphasizes HIV and reproductive health, while maintaining an intensive focus on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) and on ending violence and discrimination. The strategy aims to build on the intersections of SDGs 3 (Health), 4 (Education) and 5 (Gender Equality).

UNESCO is a member of the Joint UN Team on AIDS in 51 of the 91 countries where the Joint Programme operates

### Key UNESCO strategy for HIV

UNESCO's work on global HIV prevention continued through support for the delivery of in-school comprehensive CSE programmes, using the international technical guidance on sexuality education as a guiding framework for curricula, policy and advocacy.

Meaningful engagement of a diverse range of young people lies at the heart of UNESCO's work on education for health and well-being. Efforts focus on ensuring that young people have an active role at all levels, from programme design to implementation and evaluation. Young people are the ultimate protagonists and beneficiaries of activities implemented by UNESCO through the Joint Programme, with efforts focused on strengthening meaningful and ethical youth engagement, while enhancing the political commitment of countries to the education and health needs of young people.

## Top results in 2022

**Quality of CSE strengthened as an essential tool of HIV prevention.** The revised UNESCO Strategy on education for health and well-being continues to focus on supporting countries to strengthen good-quality CSE, an essential tool in HIV prevention. As co-convenor of the Global Partnership Forum on CSE with UNFPA, UNESCO has worked to transform global leadership on CSE by fostering a space for thought leadership and strategic action. In mid-2022, an online global symposium on CSE featuring 120 speakers attracted over 800 participants. It emphasized the need to tackle the social, cultural and political environment, and promoted young people's meaningful involvement and the inclusion of under-served populations. The event also highlighted the current evidence and good practice on effective delivery of CSE. Two important outputs of the Forum are a survey to obtain information on the latest or ongoing published and unpublished research and evaluations on CSE from around the world, and a "call to action on CSE".

**Global efforts to respond to CSE opposition strengthened and better coordinated.**

UNESCO continues to improve coordinated global efforts to respond to opposition against CSE. Two studies on CSE and SRHR counter-movements were completed in the first half of 2022, leading to the enhancement of a strategic road map and communications strategy.

**Efforts intensified to meet the needs of young people living with HIV.** In 2021, UNESCO embarked on an innovative partnership with the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+) and the Global Network of young people living with HIV to produce a youth-led update of the 2012 "Positive Learning" recommendations for meeting the needs of young people living with HIV in the education sector. The recommendations were shared with a wider audience during a virtual webinar of over 100 participants, which was organized in collaboration with GNP+ and the UNAIDS Secretariat. The event featured young people, teachers, parents and education sector stakeholders who reflected on the continuing challenges of HIV-related stigma and discrimination in school settings. They also shared best practices for harnessing the power of education to meet the needs of young people living with HIV. "Positive Learning" and the power of education to end HIV-related stigma and discrimination were also the focus of the thematic segment of the June 2022 UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board meeting. It resulted in expressions of support for UNESCO's work on CSE, including on HIV prevention, treatment and care.

**Strategic information generated to guide action for young people.** In collaboration with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the International Institute for Educational Planning, UNESCO commissioned a review of the SDG thematic indicator 4.7.2, which tracks the proportion of schools that provide life skills-based HIV and sexuality education within the formal curriculum or as part of extracurricular activities. The main objective of the review was to improve data standards, collection and reporting. UNESCO collaborated with the Global Education Monitoring Report team to develop a series of profiles enhancing education review for 50 countries, with a focus on sexuality education. The profiles have been launched and are intended to motivate national policy dialogue, regional peer-learning and facilitate monitoring of policy trends on CSE.

**Efforts taken to ensure that quality CSE meets the needs of diverse learners.**

UNESCO's ground-breaking work, "Safe, Seen and Included", explores how sexuality education programmes can and should address the needs and rights of LGBTI+ learners. It highlights ways in which sexuality education can be made more inclusive of sexual orientation, gender expression and identity, addressing gaps documented in all regions of the world. The findings and recommendations are pertinent for policy makers, practitioners, youth, activists and other interested parties seeking to promote or better understand school-based sexuality education that is inclusive of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions.

UNESCO also took steps to support the delivery of quality CSE to younger age groups (5-12-year-olds) to provide foundational knowledge, skills and attitudes that can influence their future health, education and social outcomes. In mid-2022, UNESCO and partners started a spotlight initiative for this age group, titled "Building strong foundations", which brought together evidence from a desk review, report and consultations to document the rationale for providing CSE or foundational education for health and well-being to younger learners. Further case studies and practical examples will be published in 2023.

**Regional efforts undertaken to address the needs of young people.** A range of activities was conducted across regions.

- **Sub-Saharan Africa.** UNESCO supported HIV prevention through its long-standing experience working with ministries of education and by synergizing efforts with ongoing initiatives on girls' education and quality comprehensive sexuality education, including the "Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future" (O3) programme. It seeks to transform gender norms and attitudes of learners, while challenging rigid notions of masculinity and promoting gender equality. The O3 programme addresses barriers to girls' education, health and empowerment, including adolescent pregnancy, HIV and gender-based violence. In western and central Africa, UNESCO worked closely with more than 10 ministries of education to strengthen their curriculum, policies, teacher training or monitoring relating to school-related gender-based violence, training over 20 000 teachers in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal.
- The ESA Commitment, renewed in 2021, has been endorsed by 11 countries. UNESCO supported them to integrate their priorities into national strategies and develop plans to accelerate implementation. In the context of the WCA Commitment, a new regional communication and advocacy campaign, "Education saves lives", reached 15 million people across the continent in just one month and raised awareness of the urgent need for health education programmes that address HIV, child marriage and gender-based violence.
- **Eastern Europe and central Asia.** Over 8,000 educators, psychologists, and youth workers from nine countries in this region (Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine and Uzbekistan) improved their skills in HIV and sexuality education, gender-based violence and bullying prevention in school. This was done via free self-study and instructor-led courses and webinars with experts, which were offered at the UNESCO-supported regional online educational platform EDUHUB and other training opportunities. It is expected that about 200 000 learners (at least 55% of them) will benefit annually from health education delivered by the trained teachers.
- Across eastern Europe and central Asia, over 4 million young people have improved their knowledge and attitude on issues related to HIV and sexual and reproductive health and rights thanks to UNESCO-supported youth-led digital media/platforms and artificial intelligence powered chatbots operating in three languages. A new online course for adolescents and their parents about HIV prevention and reproductive was launched with UNESCO's technical support. Jointly with UNFPA, the UNAIDS Secretariat and the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, UNESCO organized the first-ever festival on digital sexuality education in Kyrgyzstan, which enabled over 250 content creators, nongovernmental organizations, media and health workers, educators and young volunteers to share their experiences and consolidate approaches for robust online HIV and sexuality education and health promotion, with a particular focus on gender equality, stigma, discrimination and gender-based violence prevention and supporting young LGBTI+ people.
- **Asia Pacific.** UNESCO co-supported the UNAIDS-Youth Lead Asia-Pacific Youth forum on HIV, attended by 30 youth advocates on HIV and SRHR.
- **Latin America and the Caribbean.** Education ministers in Latin America and the Caribbean specifically included references to the importance of education for

health and well-being in their 2022 Buenos Aires Declaration. UNESCO continued its support to FLACSO Argentina in its delivery of the sixth edition of a diploma-level course on CSE for authorities, educators and other specialists in the education and health sectors in the region. Over 100 participants from 19 countries participated in the 2022 edition. Since its inception, over 1,000 specialists have benefited from a curriculum on HIV prevention for adolescents and young people.

**UNAIDS**

20 Avenue Appia  
CH-1211 Geneva 27  
Switzerland

+41 22 791 3666

[unaids.org](http://unaids.org)