
2014 UBRAF thematic report

Ensuring high quality education for a more effective response

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ACHIEVEMENTS

The capacities of over 97 countries were strengthened to scale up the education sector's AIDS response through evidence-based, age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education and support to address school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV).

An accountability framework was developed for implementation of the Eastern and Southern Africa Ministerial Commitment on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) and services for young people, with 20 key indicators set for 2015, 2017 and 2020. As a result, in Zambia a new CSE programme was launched targeting 1 750 000 young people, with over 12 000 teachers benefiting from training. Through the Shuga partnership, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and MTV supported the provision of CSE information to over four million young people through television and radio programmes in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Lesotho, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Officials from 27 countries were supported to better monitor and evaluate the education sector's response to HIV through training led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), with support from UNICEF and the Southern African Development Community, to integrate HIV-related core indicators in UNESCO's Education Management Information System (EMIS).

The Focusing resources on effective school health monitoring and evaluation toolkit was translated into Russian and shared with ministries of education in 10 countries in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) region to standardize HIV and health education programmes and to facilitate benchmarking and monitoring across countries. The quality of CSE programmes was also enhanced through the Sexuality Education Review and Assessment Tool (SERAT), developed by UNESCO and recently expanded to cover sociocultural norms, legal barriers and key populations. UNESCO also supported the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) to apply SERAT with civil society in five countries in the West and Central Africa region and 12 countries in EECA. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNESCO assessment of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) policies and practices in 18 countries in EECA— carried out in 2013—were also used for ongoing advocacy among decision-makers and managers in education and health sectors.

In Central Africa, UNFPA and UNESCO revised DVD-based training modules and trained over 1000 teachers; 420 trainers and supervisors were also trained on similar computer-based modules in Cameroon, Chad, the Congo and Gabon. UNESCO also supported teacher training in Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine on SRH and HIV and a computer-based training course developed for teacher preparation on health education reached 26 000 educators in the region (www.autta.org.ua). In addition to teacher training, efforts have also focused on using information and communication technology for the provision of youth-friendly CSE and SRH information. In EECA, UNICEF, UNDP and UNESCO supported the development of the following:

- a multi-language website for adolescents on SRH (teenslive.info);

- an interactive educational video game about the harm caused by drug use (Xroad.tv);
- a special resource for sex workers (malina-center.by);
- a new mobile application to assess personal risks of HIV and to locate youth health centres for HIV testing and counselling; and
- A regional virtual knowledge hub (adolesmed.szgmu.ru) for youth workers, service providers and educators.

UNESCO organized the 23rd Meeting of the UNAIDS Interagency Task Team on Education (IATT) in South Africa, which addressed preventing and responding to SRGBV. The IATT, UN Women and the UN Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) agreed to develop global guidance on SRGBV. In EECA, a practical guide for schools was developed on SRGBV, while a study in the Arab states will seek to build evidence and develop recommendations on teacher policies and codes of conduct. UNICEF, UN Women and UNESCO advanced action on SRGBV in the Asia and Pacific region through a social media campaign on International Women's Day. An SRGBV infographic was also launched in 14 languages on the International Day of the Girl Child.

UNAIDS is also leading international efforts to defend the right to education of lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people. UNDP's Being LGBT in Asia initiative addresses SRGBV on the basis of perceived sexual orientation or gender identity in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. In Thailand, UNESCO partnered with Plan International and Mahidol University to release the first systematic study on gender-related bullying. In China, a campaign was launched on the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia in partnership with Baidu, a popular independent Chinese Internet search engine, through which over 400 000 Internet and mobile telephone users were reached with messages to combat violence and discrimination.

UNESCO organized a Regional Consultation on Homophobic and Transphobic Violence in Bogota, with participants from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, the United States of America, and Uruguay. With the support of all UNAIDS Cosponsors, UNESCO is leading a regional study on SRGBV and gender diversity in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland.

In West Africa, UNESCO developed 20 classroom activities to make the education sector response to gender inequality, gender-based violence, stigma, discrimination and abuse more efficient and will further adapt them in partnership with Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria. In Nigeria, UNFPA and the International Labour Organization (ILO) worked to help the Chibok community recover from the Boko Haram atrocities. Training in HIV and gender-based violence prevention were provided for parents of the abducted school girls and teachers' union representatives. In Malawi, UN Women worked with traditional chiefs to address customary laws concerning HIV, gender, marriage and girl's education. In Ethiopia, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is supporting the Ministry of Education to pilot the Strengthening Families Programme in Addis Ababa,

focusing on HIV, crime and drug use prevention. In Haiti, WHO, in cooperation with the ministries of health and education, undertook a global survey on student health for over 2300 students between the ages of 13 and 17 in 50 public schools.

School feeding programmes supported by WFP drove attendance in a number of countries, including the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Myanmar, Swaziland and Zambia. The World Bank supported programmes to increase retention in, and quality of, secondary education, including for the Education Quality Improvement Program targeting girls in Afghanistan. By keeping vulnerable children and adolescents in school, these programmes provided a platform for the delivery of CSE, SRH and other education to build life skills, support healthy lifestyles—including good nutrition—and delay early marriage and childbearing.

MAJOR CHALLENGES AND HOW THESE WERE ADDRESSED

The emerging post-2015 sustainable development goals have raised some questions about the future of education on HIV. Without an explicit goal for HIV, creativity and strategic thinking is required to secure a place for it within the education sector. To further complicate matters, unforeseen threats, such as the Ebola epidemic, have shifted donor priorities and taxed over-burdened education systems.

These changes occur in an education sector that is globally underfunded and increasingly under pressure. Resources in the education sector are focused on meeting basic knowledge level targets, meaning there is sometimes little left to build the capacity of educators to foster the skills of learners on issues concerning HIV, such as education on sexuality. Some teachers may lack the skills for their own health, so it remains unrealistic to demand that they work with their learners without being given the requisite skills. While many resources have been devoted to teacher training in the past 15 years, these have often been bit by bit and disconnected from a wider supportive policy and administrative environment. This means that efforts are not sustained. Further, the high degree of attrition in the profession means that teacher training should be a recurring priority.

Outside of formal schooling systems, there are approximately 60 million school-age youths who are not in school. While there are many excellent community initiatives to reach these adolescents and young people, these have not been commensurate with the need. Our responsibility remains in creating opportunities to get these youths in school and to provide relevant skills based sexuality and health education as part of an overall good quality education.

These challenges come with lessons learned that offer hope for the future. Educational innovations such as computer-based learning will help peer education among learners and teachers. Use of local forums will help to coordinate efforts among development partners. Another lesson is to adopt a more integrated approach, linking the response to AIDS with other issues that attract the attention of ministries of education and donors, such as teenage unintended pregnancy and gender-based violence.

KEY FUTURE INTERVENTIONS

- The Joint Programme will continue to support the Eastern and Southern Africa Ministerial Commitment process to ensure young people receive comprehensive sexuality education and sexual and youth-friendly health services. Delivering good quality comprehensive sexuality education requires well trained and supported teachers in the classroom. Cosponsors will continue to support teacher training to ensure the delivery of sexuality education in Africa and the Asia and Pacific region. Cosponsors will also support governments of Eastern and Southern Africa Ministerial Commitment countries to meet the following targets:
 - Increase the number of schools that provide life skills based HIV and sexuality education.
 - Increase the number of teachers who have received training and have taught lessons in HIV and sexuality education.
 - Ensure each country has a national CSE strategy for out of school youth.
- UNICEF , UNFPA and UNESCO are partnering on a regional assessment of CSE in Bhutan, China, India, and Thailand that will be used for curriculum revision and to support CSE.
- UNESCO will continue to support the integration of essential and desirable comprehensive sexuality education and HIV-related indicators into the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), including through regional training for education ministry staff.
- The Joint Programme, via the IATT, is conducting multi-country research on the conditions needed for teachers and administrators to respond to SRGBV in school settings. Additionally, UN Women, UNESCO and UNGEI will develop global guidance on preventing and responding to SRGBV.
- ILO and UNESCO will work together on enhancing teachers' access to HIV services and creating an enabling environment to reduce school-based stigma and discrimination for HIV-positive teachers.
- The first global report on the status of homophobic and transphobic violence in educational institutions will be developed by UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and UNESCO.
- UNFPA, UNESCO, WHO and IPPF are planning a regional technical consultation on healthy lifestyle education, including CSE, to better assist EECA countries in delivering such education at the national scale and to ensure its quality and effectiveness.

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