

Charles, H ; Costantinos, B ; Fagbulu, I ; Kupfer, G ; Okpa, B; Aderinoye, R. 2003. *Education Sector's Response to HIV/AIDS in Nigeria. Framework for Action. Report of National Workshop on HIV/AIDS and Education.*

The first national workshop on HIV/AIDS and Education was held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 9-13 June 2002, organized by UNESCO and Federal Ministry of Education with support from UNAIDS and DIFD, the Workshop brought together a total of 150 participants representing the Federal and State Ministries of Education, State Primary Education Boards, the donor community, non-governmental and civil society organizations in Nigeria with the aim of identifying preventive education response to the HIV/AIDS challenges in Nigeria.

The historic event was declared open by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo who was represented by his Special Adviser on Education and National Ethics, Chiefs. K. Babalola. The Honourable Minister of Women Affairs and Youth Development, Hajia Aisha Ismail, chaired the Opening Ceremony. The keynote address was delivered by the Honourable Minister of Education, Professor Babalola Borishade, two resource persons - one from the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) Dr Inon Schenker in Geneva and Dr Jonathan Godden of the USAID, South Africa -joined national experts in presenting papers at the meeting.

During the workshop various efforts on HIV/AIDS and education were discussed and assessed. Best practices in other African countries as well as interventions by NGOs/CBOs in Nigeria in HIV/AIDS prevention were reviewed. Recommendations for education strategies to be used in the Nigerian situation and appropriate management structure for all tiers of government on HIV/AIDS and education were developed. Training needs, essential materials, and methods for establishing links between HIV/AIDS and education in lead educational institutions were also identified.

The workshop also identified roles to be played by different tiers of government and other stakeholders.

Some of the discussions at the workshop centered on the needs for:

- Strengthening the HIV/AIDS Education Unit of the Federal, States and Local governments,
- Repositioning UNESCO as the focal point on preventive education against HIV/AIDS within the UN System and
- Linkages with international institutions like IIEP, IBE and others for best practices in the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Based on the considerations of issues raised in the papers presented, the workshop resolved among others that:

Learning theories which include among others, theory of planned behaviour and reasoned action can only bring about change in behaviour, if the delivery strategies are made participatory and interactive.

Provision of basic needs of education planners, managers and curriculum developers, are critical to effective implementation of preventive education. Other essential ingredients for infusion of HIV/AIDS Prevention in the Education process include teacher preparation as well as generation of parental awareness.

The desirability of implementing a pragmatic non-formal education is not in doubt if we are to reach those youth and adults that are at risk. Thus the flexible and open nature of non-formal education curriculum with its adult-friendly innovative approaches make it a relevant tool to reach million of people that are out - of-school and are at risk.

HIV/AIDS poses a major management challenge to education as issues of enrolment, drop-out and transition rates, quality and output will be adversely affected because the system is at risk. And as long as behaviour change cannot be achieved in a dysfunctional environment in which discipline and role models are lacking, education system must not only proffer solutions but must be seen as tackling the problem.

The development of a strategic plan of action is crucial as it serves as aid-memo to implementers.

Finally the objectives of the workshop were achieved through seven major presentations, six group discussions and interactive plenary sessions. The interactive discussions led to the adoption of a communiqué with eleven recommendations and the development of a Framework for Action on HIV/AIDS and Education in Nigeria.

In conclusion establishment of a National Task Force on Education for HIV Prevention (NTFEHP) was the hallmark of the workshop.

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