



How to use this toolkit...

This toolkit aims to assist Government Ministries or Departments to develop a sector-specific response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The toolkit is intended to facilitate the incorporation of HIV/AIDS issues into existing planning processes.

The following general issues should be considered when using the toolkit:

Active commitment by leadership

- Active commitment by leadership is essential to support the process of planning and implementing an effective response to HIV/AIDS. Whoever uses this toolkit should place the commitment of leadership high on their agenda (the Minister, Permanent Secretary and/or Directors).

Prioritisation of activities

- Activities must be prioritised because of the complexity of the impacts of HIV/AIDS. Responses must not be delayed unnecessarily while full details of all impacts are obtained. Data collection should be prioritised to provide the information that is most important and feasible to collect within immediate constraints. For example, to enlist leadership commitment and allow for initial planning, ballpark figures and readily available data may be appropriate. However, for more detailed planning, more detailed data collection may be required. Responses will need to be prioritised according to expected impact, and the consequences of not responding.

This document is one in a series of pamphlets targeted at Government Ministries.

The aims are:

- to assist priority sectors to identify areas where they are vulnerable to the impacts of HIV/AIDS.
- to suggest specific steps that can be taken.

Expert assistance

- Expert assistance of people with specialist knowledge of HIV/AIDS and planning skills is essential to ensure adequate understanding of HIV/AIDS impacts and effective response planning.

Generic issues

- Some of the issues covered by the toolkit need to be considered by all Government Ministries.
- The four accompanying documents are generic, and apply to all Ministries. These are:
 - 1) *Understanding HIV/AIDS*
 - 2) *Why HIV/AIDS is a Government Issue*
 - 3) *HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees*
 - 4) *Planning Tools*.
- These should be used by the Ministry of Education in conjunction with this document as indicated in the steps that follow on page 2.

The full Toolkit range:

Generic:

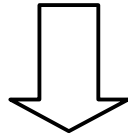
- Understanding HIV/AIDS
- Why HIV/AIDS is a Government Issue
- HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees
- Planning Tools

Ministry and/or Department:

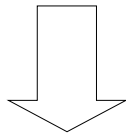
- HIV/AIDS and Agriculture
- HIV/AIDS and Education
- HIV/AIDS and Finance
- HIV/AIDS and Health
- HIV/AIDS and Housing and Public Works
- HIV/AIDS and Labour
- HIV/AIDS and Welfare

*Below is a diagrammatic chart
of the steps described in this toolkit.*

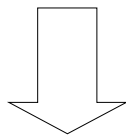
Step 1:
Understanding HIV/AIDS impacts in wider society,
and the role of Government Ministries



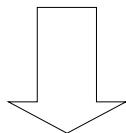
Step 2:
Identify internal impacts within
the Ministry or Department



Step 3:
Identify external impacts that
influence Ministry functions



Step 4:
Identify appropriate action responses



Combined result:
A sector-specific impact assessment
and response to HIV/AIDS

Step 1: Understanding HIV/AIDS impacts in wider society, and the role of Government Ministries

The HIV/AIDS epidemic presents a major challenge to developing countries. A first step in formulating a response to the epidemic is to understand the basic facts about HIV/AIDS and the role of Government Ministries. There are several features of HIV/AIDS which make it different from other diseases, and which need to be understood in order to formulate appropriate responses. Most transmission of HIV is preventable. Although 'technical solutions' such as making blood supply safe and treating other STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) are important to reduce the risk of transmission, it is also important to address social and economic factors that predispose to high risk situations. While there is no cure for AIDS once a person is infected with HIV, some of the impacts of the disease can be mitigated with prompt treatment.

Information contained in the accompanying document *Why HIV/AIDS is a Government Issue*, includes the following:

- Why HIV/AIDS is a critical issue for any organisation.
- Reasons for government involvement.
- How can governments respond?

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is more than just a health issue. Social and economic impacts within Government Ministries and in wider society necessitate government involvement both internally and externally. Typical HIV/AIDS impacts on organisations that will affect the functioning of Government Ministries include increased absenteeism, lower productivity, higher costs of labour, and skills shortages. Externally, appropriate responses within a Ministry's spheres of influence and responsibility are critical to slow the rate of new infections and to help manage the impact of existing infections. In many areas, legal and policy responses by Government Ministries are able to play a pivotal role in managing the epidemic.

The accompanying document *Understanding HIV/AIDS* includes the following information:

- What is HIV/AIDS?
- How is HIV transmitted?
- What are some of the important features of the HIV/AIDS epidemic?
- Is there any evidence that prevention programmes work?
- Is there prospect of a cure for HIV/AIDS?
- Is HIV/AIDS a manageable condition?
- Useful Internet resources.

Step 2: Identify internal impacts within the Ministry or Department

Identifying internal impacts involves understanding the extent and consequences of infections among Ministry or Departmental employees. These may severely compromise the ability of any organisation to deliver, but the effect may be particularly pronounced in Government if it lacks flexibility to respond to new pressures. The impact of employee infections will be particularly severe for

Ministries in the social sector, such as Education, or Health, because of the multiplier effect of personnel infections. For example, for every teacher infected, the education of some 20-50 learners will be affected. However, the loss of key personnel in any Ministry may adversely affect the functioning of that Ministry, with a ripple effect in wider society.

Experience and research show that a Ministry's vulnerability to employee infections depends on several key areas. Step 2 of this toolkit has been designed to help guide collection of data for identifying the extent and nature of impacts of employee infections in these key areas.

Areas to consider by Ministries include the following:

- Numbers of HIV infected employees
- Absenteeism and productivity
- Recruitment and training
- Morale
- Benefits
- Gender
- Capacity to respond

Some of these areas of vulnerability may be the ultimate responsibility of a central body, such as the Ministry of Public Service Administration, and individual sectors should liaise with this Ministry.

The accompanying document *HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees* provides an overview of areas of vulnerability to employee infections and flags data that may be needed fully to appreciate impacts.

The types of assessment needed depend on the purpose for which the data are to be used.

In the accompanying document *Planning Tools*, Chart 1 provides examples of assessments that may be appropriate, as well as suggested indicators.

Step 3: Identify external impacts that influence Ministry functions

The impact of HIV/AIDS on communities served by the Ministry of Education will be profound. Further, the Ministry is uniquely placed to reduce the future HIV/AIDS epidemic as it can influence risk behaviour of large numbers of young people, many of whom are not yet infected.

Demographic and economic impacts of HIV/AIDS will influence the number of school enrollees and the number of learners who drop out of the system or repeat grades. There will be many learners with new special needs, including children orphaned by AIDS and learners who themselves are HIV infected. HIV/AIDS will be a challenge to education at primary, secondary and tertiary level. Clear understanding of potential external impacts will influence whether the sector's response is appropriate and effective in meeting the needs of society and individuals. Some external impacts may already be experienced, but many will be felt fully only in the medium- to long-term.

The type of impact assessments and responses that are appropriate will depend on the context, in particular the stage of the epidemic and the extent to which resources have already been mobilised around HIV/AIDS.

For example:

- Is there a high rate of new HIV infection?
- Are there already substantial numbers of people ill with AIDS? What is the current size of the AIDS epidemic?
- What priority policy areas have been identified where resources may be used most effectively, and what further data or analysis are needed to enhance effectiveness of these?
- Are appropriate and regularly up-dated HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives in place in the sector?
- To what extent are the Ministry of Education, trade union bodies and other NGOs already mobilised and committed to dealing with the epidemic?
- Have sector-specific strategies to respond to HIV/AIDS been prepared? In particular, have the roles and responsibilities of the Ministries of Education, Welfare and Health been defined with respect to the support of vulnerable children, including orphans and HIV infected children?

The core functions and priorities of the Ministry will be essential to prioritising areas of concern. These are the issues that are expressed in strategic plans and senior management discussions. The challenge of HIV/AIDS should be assessed, guided by the following key questions for each Ministry function and priority:

Key questions for Ministry priorities:

- How does this function or service impact on the spread of HIV?
- How will HIV/AIDS in wider society impact on this function or service?

All relevant stakeholders should be involved in planning impact assessments and identifying appropriate responses. The items in the next section provide a general idea of the scope of the impact on typical Ministry of Education functions.

These items are:

- New HIV infections among learners
- Ability to access basic education and new special needs
- Future numbers of learners
- Financial implications
- Policy and legislation.

Review the examples of the type of assessment you may need fully to appreciate impacts in these areas.

Suggested indicators are given in Chart 2 in the document *Planning Tools*.

- Complete a similar chart for areas that are relevant to your Ministry.
- Tick those areas where data may be useful for motivation or planning within your Ministry.

New HIV infections among learners

Levels of new HIV infection may be high among learners while they are in the education system and afterwards. This represents enormous human costs, and "wasted investment" in education.

- What are the levels of HIV infection among learners and recent graduates at various levels of the system?
- Are there significant levels of new HIV infection among learners or recent graduates at various levels?
- Are there HIV prevention initiatives in schools?
- Has the coverage and effectiveness of HIV prevention and life-skills programmes been evaluated? Have they been strengthened wherever appropriate?

- Are there existing or expected skills shortages in the country which may worsen due to HIV/AIDS impacts on learners?
- Do curricula and courses at all levels help learners to reduce their HIV risk and ensure rapid returns on their investment in education?

Ability to access basic education and new special needs

HIV/AIDS in society may mean that many children are kept out of school because they are needed as carers at home, or because households lack resources when breadwinners get sick or die. Death and sickness in families and among friends will affect many learners' morale, socialisation and performance. Large numbers of orphans will have particular needs. Many learners will themselves be infected by HIV at birth, or through abuse, teenage sexual activity or reliance on commercial sex work for an income. Stigmatisation of HIV/AIDS worsens all the impacts on learners.

- Is there evidence of reduced school enrolment and by how much? Which provinces or regions are most affected?
- Is school attendance reduced?
- Is there evidence of increased drop out rate or repetition of grades?
- What are the characteristics of learners who drop out and who repeat grades? Are these orphans? Girls/young women? Children from poor households? Which provinces or regions are most affected?
- Do educators have the understanding, skills and support to recognise and respond to special needs created by HIV/AIDS?
- What is the extent of disruption of learning due to absenteeism and attrition of teachers? Which provinces or regions are most affected?
- Does the design of built forms need to be modified to assist schools to cope with special needs, e.g. increased need for sick bays, counselling areas, flexible classroom sizes?

Future numbers of learners

HIV/AIDS may reduce the number of school entrants over time and change the age structure of the population.

- What is the expected number of learners at each level of education, given the HIV/AIDS epidemic?
- What are the implications for staffing and infrastructure planning?

Financial implications

The major financial loss to education will usually be "waste" of basic state subsidies of education for learners who later die of HIV/AIDS. However, certain bursary or loan mechanisms may be vulnerable to HIV/AIDS among beneficiaries and their families. Needs created by HIV/AIDS in other sectors may limit budgets available for education.

Exposure of certain learners (e.g. student nurses) to infection during training may create liabilities for institutions, although the main risk of infection

will usually be through sexual activity.

- Is the sustainability of financial assistance programmes vulnerable to HIV/AIDS impacts on beneficiaries?
- Are any learners at risk of exposure to HIV infection in the course of their training? Are the training institutions involved ensuring appropriate education and adequate supplies of protective equipment?

Do any current or planned policies and legislation related to the sector:

- Increase or decrease the rate of spread of HIV infection?
- Provide adequate protection against discrimination for the increasing numbers of people infected or affected by HIV/AIDS?
- Require adaptation to meet new challenges to implementation because of HIV/AIDS?

Step 4: Identify appropriate action responses

Responses in areas of internal impact

Responses to internal impacts involve preventing new infections among employees and reducing impacts of existing infections.

Key questions for Ministries are:

- How can employee infections be prevented?
- What can be done about the impacts of existing employee infections, and future infections that are not avoided?

Actions that can be taken by Ministries include those related to:

- Prevention of new infections
- Absenteeism and productivity
- Recruitment and training

- Morale
- Benefits
- Gender
- Capacity to respond

Where actions are the ultimate responsibility of a central agency, such as a Department or Ministry of Public Service and Administration, the Ministry of Education should liaise with this agency.

The accompanying document *HIV/AIDS and Ministry Employees* provides an overview of some possible responses.

All key stakeholders must be encouraged to identify and plan projects related to particular action responses. It is important to prioritise responses that are most critical and feasible in your specific situation.

Examples of types of responses or projects that may be undertaken are provided in Chart 3 of the accompanying document *Planning Tools*.

Responses in areas of external impact

Responses to external impacts include those aimed at assisting the Ministry to continue to achieve goals and fulfil its functions in the context of changed needs in society. It also shows how the Ministry can take action to reduce HIV spread.

As for the impact assessments described in Step 3, the type of responses needed will be guided by the Ministry's core functions and priorities at a particular time. The challenge of HIV/AIDS should be assessed, guided by the following key questions for each Ministry function and priority:

Key questions for Ministry priorities:

- How can these services impact on HIV spread in the wider community?
- What can be done about the impacts of HIV/AIDS on these sector functions?

The items in the next section provide a general idea of the scope of possible responses by Ministries of Education. These are:

- New infection among learners
- Ability to access basic education and new special needs
- Future numbers of learners.

Some responses may actively address impacts, while others may include more detailed research and planning of specific issues. It is important to prioritise responses that are most critical and feasible in your specific situation. Appropriate participation of key stakeholders is likely to be important for effective prioritisation and buy-in.

Review each of these areas of action and consider which may be relevant to your Ministry.

Suggested indicators are given in Chart 2 in the document *Planning Tools*.

- Complete a similar chart for areas that are relevant to your Ministry.
- Tick those areas where data may be useful for motivation or planning within your Ministry.

New infection among learners

- Develop strategies to slow the rate of new infections in pupils: these may include life skills programmes emphasising abstinence, HIV/AIDS education and condom provision. Where these programmes are already in place, use findings of effectiveness evaluations to strengthen them where appropriate. Scale up pilot projects once these have been shown to be effective.
- Consider fee exemption or bursaries for girls and young women to reduce economic pressures for sexual networking.
- Implement effective strategies to eliminate rape and sexual abuse of learners in educational institutions.

Ability to access basic education and new special needs

- Explore ways of providing bursary schemes for poor pupils: consult with local communities to ensure bursary recipients are able to attend school.
- Develop protocols and institute training to help teachers respond to special needs of all pupils and orphans.
- Include HIV/AIDS education for teachers in all in-service training initiatives.
- Require institutions offering teacher education to include HIV/AIDS education.
- Liaise with other Government Ministries to develop a care programme for AIDS orphans and decentralise implementation to local level.

Future numbers of learners

- How may staffing and infrastructure planning take into account HIV/AIDS impacts on the size and structure of the learner population? AIDS impacts on attrition and absenteeism of teaching staff will also need to be factored into planning.

Is it appropriate for the Education Ministry to mobilise the Education sector in any of the above areas of response?

Appendix 1: Examples of data that may be useful to drive sectoral AIDS responses

- In one study, it was demonstrated that firms took on average 8 times longer to replace a deceased professional than a skilled worker.
 - A study of teachers in Lusaka found that over 40% were HIV positive.
 - Tanzanian projections indicate that HIV/AIDS may reduce the number of teachers in the country by over 14 000 by the year 2010.
 - "We are losing 3 to 4 teachers each week. They are dying of this disease." Source: Ministry of Education, Swaziland 1999.
- Malawi and Uganda Surveys and Studies found the following problems among orphans and their families:
- Large numbers of orphans per family
 - Increased poverty
 - Lower nutritional status in fostering households with large numbers of children
 - Increased labour demands on children
 - Reduced access to education
 - Harsh treatment and abuse from step/foster parents
 - Less attention to sickness in orphans
 - Segregation and isolation of orphans at mealtimes
 - Loss of property and inheritance
 - Forced early marriage of female orphans
 - Higher child mortality
 - Abandonment
 - Lack of love, attention, affection
 - Grief for parents, separated siblings

Source: *Report of an Assessment of the Situation of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic and its Consequences for Families and Children, focusing on Orphans, Swaziland 1999.*

Acknowledgements

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