



Education International (EI) and the World  
Health Organisation (WHO)

**Training And Resource Manual On School  
Health And HIV/AIDS Prevention**

Prepared for EI and WHO

by

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With the collaboration of CDC, UNAIDS,  
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# PREFACE

In the last 20 years, over 20 million men, women and children have died of AIDS. Over 3 million in 2002 alone. Today, an estimated 42 million people are HIV/AIDS infected. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone 30 million people are HIV/AIDS infected. More than 3 million of them are children. Over 13 million children have lost a father, a mother or both to AIDS. By 2010 the number of AIDS orphans will double.

The epidemic is spreading rapidly across the globe. India has 4 million infected, though the unofficial figures are four times higher. HIV/AIDS is now also a leading cause of death in many Caribbean countries.

These figures are indeed dramatic. And as teachers we are very much aware that behind the data and the statistics is a human drama. Of the individual human being. Of the student who's lost a mother. The pupil who's lost a brother. All of these individual tragedies are to be put on the scale of millions of families that are in grief. HIV/AIDS is destroying the social fabric of thousands of villages and is destabilising many societies world-wide. AIDS is shattering young people's opportunities for leading normal healthy adult lives.

The impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector is dramatic. In some countries the number of teachers trained to enter the profession is less than the number of teachers that die of AIDS. Absenteeism due to AIDS-related illnesses represent a major loss to education systems. This has a direct negative impact on the quality and efficiency of education. Costs made to finance the education system will increase considerably due to AIDS. The number of children out of school because of HIV/AIDS affects over 4 million families. More and more households are child-headed.

Adapting to AIDS necessitates significant changes. Teachers must be enabled to deal with this topic within the school environment. Teachers must be in the forefront to breaking the silence.

Over the last two years EI has worked with the World Health Organisation, UNESCO and various other cooperating organisations, to strengthen the capacity of teacher union leaders and their constituency in about 20 countries in Southern and Western Africa. The programme is comprised of advocacy, training in the school environment, working with adults: all efforts are focused on help in gaining knowledge, on adopting life skills, on promotion of changes in behaviour. This, with the purpose to prevent the further spreading of this deadly virus.

Practice shows that this manual plays a crucial role in these activities. It has been copied and adapted by many outside the EI/WHO programme.

Teachers are a window of hope in a world with AIDS. Let us all work hard to enable teachers to make the difference.

Fred van Leeuwen  
EI General Secretary

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