

APPRAISAL, SYNTHESIS

Titles: Health and Family Life Education – Teacher Training Manual

Health and Family Life Education – Resource Handbook

Type of documents: Material for Teacher Training

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Summary

These two manuals (Teacher Training Manual and Resource Handbook) have been developed to support the implementation of the revised Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) curriculum to be implemented in schools across Jamaica. They bring together a series of information and guidelines to lead a staff training programme designed in order to adequately prepare teachers to deliver the HFLE curriculum to grades 1 to 9 in Jamaican schools. It aims to provide opportunities for training participants; to explore the nature and benefits of incorporating the HFLE curriculum in schools, participate in planning, implementing and assessing HFLE lessons using the Life Skills participatory methodologies, thus building their knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes so that they can become effective HFLE teachers in Jamaican schools. This training document would help teachers to be able to:

- interpret the four HFLE themes (Self and Interpersonal Relations, Sexuality and Sexual Health, Eating and Fitness, and Managing the Environment) against the background of the CARICOM Regional Framework
- experience greater psychological comfort with their own emotions, values sexuality, social and interpersonal relations and coping mechanisms
- engage in individual and group processing evaluation
- participate in HFLE lesson planning processes utilizing the Life Skills-based interactive teaching methodologies
- deliver selected components of the HFLE curriculum using the Life Skills-based approaches
- design alternative assessment procedures to be applied to teaching the HFLE curriculum

At first, the manual was written to support teacher training that lasts for four days. However, because of resources constraints and lack of time, it is not always possible to do make a 4 four days training. Therefore, three different options to providing HFLE teacher training have been given at the end of the manual: four days model, three days model and one day model.

Notes:

The content of the curriculum is organized around four thematic areas: 1) Sexuality and Sexual Health; 2) Self and Interpersonal Relationships; 3) Eating and Fitness and 4) Managing the Environment. This appraisal aims to evaluate the relevance of the part of the document related to HIV & AIDS education and Sexual and Reproductive Health. Therefore, only the first two themes will be considered in this appraisal.

In order to be able to lead an effective teacher training programme, two documents should be use jointly: the Teacher Training Manual and the Ressource Handbook. Both are complementary and have the same structure.

Strengths:

1) The documents were developed by the **Ministry of Education of Jamaica** with support of UNICEF and the Global Fund. Therefore, they have an **official endorsement** and were designed to serve the implementation of the **HFLE curriculum** that includes HIV & AIDS education. Indeed, the Ministry of Education, in an effort to confront the reality of the HIV & AIDS epidemic, considered that the HFLE programme was the logical vehicle through which this issue could be addressed in the Jamaican education system.

2) Both documents are **clear, well structured, up to date, relevant** and **non-discriminatory**. Therefore, they obtained **high results** in this appraisal. The material is very complete and can serve as a **good reference**, easy readable and **accessible** even for inexperienced trainers. Indeed, it provides many information, guidelines, tools and materials so further documents are not necessary. The activities are suitable and sufficient considering the objectives of the unit/lesson. Teacher trainer has a lot of information and instructions to lead effectively a comprehensive training in a specific allotted time. The document also focuses on the importance of **sustainability** of the curriculum, in particular by the creation of a portfolio, which is indeed essential for HIV & AIDS and SRH (Sexual and Reproductive Health) education. A very good aspect of the

documents is that they provide **complete lesson plan activities**, necessary material and time required to help teacher dealing with the issue correctly.

3) The principles of **confidentiality** and **trust** are underlined in both documents. An entire part of the training is devoted to teaching strategies to create a respectful and conducive environment for learning and to set up a **positive classroom atmosphere**. The teacher training encourages respectful, open and honest sharing of ideas, opinions, attitudes and behaviors.

4) The main objective of the programme is to help students to **develop the skills** they need for their life such as communication, decision-making, managing emotions, assertiveness, self-esteem building, resisting peer-pressure, and relationship skills. These skills are essential for a comprehensive HIV & AIDS education which should be treated in a broader scope.

5) The curriculum is organized into units and lessons fully explained and linked to HIV & AIDS education. Depending on the interest, need and level of the class, a teacher may need more than one class session to complete a lesson. Actually, the programme should not be seen as a strict and one block teaching. A teacher may not be able to cover all the lessons for respective grade in the school year and should rather select those that will be more beneficial and relevant to the group. The delivery of the curriculum should **take into account context, needs, and availability of resources**. The discipline based method (HFLE is taught as a separate subject) of delivery is the most recommended as it ensures that HFLE is visible and given priority.

6) The most **sensitive theme** of the HFLE program is undoubtedly the “**Sexuality and Sexual Health**” which include HIV & AIDS education. It is designed to help students to acquire knowledge about sexuality but more so to develop positive attitudes and helpful skills that enable healthy sexual growth and development. However, before doing so, the material reminds teachers that students are coming from different background with different values that may be different from their own. Special sensitivity is required from the teacher, especially with some topics that might be related to students’ personal experience. By taking account of these aspects, the document correctly addresses the thematic in accordance to age of the target group, literacy, development level, and socio-cultural context of the learners. Moreover, a precise tab provides developmental characteristics of students’ ages 5-18 years old and implications for the HFLE by outlining desired health knowledge, attitudes or behaviors for each age category.

7) Material was developed based on **theoretical framework for behavior change** embodied in the Life Skills approach. This theory has the potential to facilitate the acquisition and development of the requisite attitudes, knowledge and skills of students enabling them to become productive citizens in charge of their personal advancement

and contributing to national, socioeconomic and political development. The material provides activities to give teachers a comprehensive overview of life skills education, including theories supporting life skills education such as: child & adolescent, constructivist, social learning, problem-behavior, social influence, cognitive problem solving, multiple intelligences or resiliency theories.

8) The material is also based on a **report** made to identify the profile of the educated Jamaican in order to adapt the program to their specificities. It tries to help teacher to feel more comfortable and confident when they have to deliver the HLFE programme in their classrooms. An entire chapter of the document invites trainees to explore the self, their own attitudes to sex and their sexuality. It is designed, in particular, to support teachers to implement lessons related to Sexuality and Sexual Health thematic. It is a very good point of the document because it really tries to take account of the needs and concerns teachers might have regarding sensitive issues, in **Jamaica specifically**. This session aims to help teachers to think critically on how their own values influence their behavior towards others who have dissimilar beliefs from them.

9) The HFLE is very **activity focused** in order to make learning fun but also to help children learn the skill, attitude and information in ways that enhance learning. A good aspect of this teacher training manual and the resource handbook is that they focus a lot on the use of **interactive methods** in the classroom and on the importance to do so for the learning process. As the documents correctly stated, skills-based education is to change not only a student's level of knowledge, but to enhance their ability to translate that knowledge into specific and positive behaviors. **Participatory, interactive teaching and learning** are critical components of this type of education. Thus, the teacher training manual suggests that each training sessions starts with an **ice breaker activity**. The document also provides a chart with various interactive/participatory teaching methods for Life Skills education with their description, benefits and process. Finally, the document contains an entire session intended to introduce teachers to the concept of interactive teaching methods to be used in a learning environment.

10) The material includes **means to assess** participants before, during and after completing the teacher training programme. At the beginning of the training during registration, a pre test questionnaire should be administered, in order to determine the knowledge, skills and attitude levels of the participants with respect to the themes of the HFLE curriculum. During the training sessions, the trainer should make a test to record participant's level of involvement and participation in the various training activities. Finally, at the end of the training session, the pre-test instrument should be re-administered. Assessments are indeed important for the trainer as the responses would be a vital source of measurement of the changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes with respect to the HFLE curriculum planning and delivery that are attributable to the training experience. An entire chapter is dedicated to alternative assessment methods to make teachers able to incorporate them in life skills education.

11) Contrarily to a lot of materials, the documents clearly focus on the importance of the **learning objectives** to be **SMART**. They even add another characteristic, which is “unity” and make therefore the learning objectives “SMARTU”. They correctly recall that the learning objectives should be written from the learners’ perspective. It is the learner who should be able to do something by the end of the lesson, not the teacher who should have carried out a set of actions. Indeed, the objectives of the documents are “**specific**” because they provide clear information on the skills or issue to be discussed in each lesson and what students should remember at the end of the class. They are “**measurable**” by encouraging an assessment at the beginning, during and at the end of the lesson. They are also “**achievable**” because the content is flexible enough to be adapted to the need, resources available, student’s age, development, values and time constraint. The objectives are also “**result-oriented**” because they are based on Life skills education which are very practical. They encourage the acquisition of healthy and positive skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. Moreover, every learning objective is related to the lesson topic, to the unit objectives and, generally to the broader framework of the education programme of the school and country. Finally, they are also “**time-bound**” because it invites teachers to plan their lessons with clear and realistic learning objectives the students should acquire by the end of the course.

12) A consequent chapter of the training manual address **HIV & AIDS education** in a relevant, complete and clear manner. It provides opportunities for trainees to examine their own values and attitudes regarding persons living with HIV & AIDS. It aims to help them to acquire the capacity to give instructions on the subject in their classrooms and support people affected and infected by HIV. The chapter provides an HIV & AIDS quiz to assess learners knowledge before the course on various aspect related to HIV & AIDS (does HIV only affect homosexual?, what are the specific symptoms of AIDS, when is World AIDS day held? Is there a cure for AIDS? Is there a difference between HIV and AIDS? Etc). The document also explains **what HIV and AIDS are**, the **way of transmission** and **how to prevent** to be infected. The “frequently asked questions and answers about HIV & AIDS” part is very well done and clarify many important points regarding HIV & AIDS. Moreover, the document provides some tips for teaching about HIV & AIDS.

13) The documents address **myths and misconceptions** surrounding sexuality and sexual health, as well as HIV & AIDS. They provide an activity on HIV & AIDS facts or fiction to fight against **stereotypes** and **prejudices**. Finally, the material also contains an HIV & AIDS **glossary** of terms to be sure that the vocabulary used is correct and in order to avoid any lack of understanding or misunderstanding.

14) The material doesn’t address the **ABC strategy** expressly but explains strategies to prevent HIV infection which are: **abstinence**, **having one faithful sexual partner** and use a **condom** during sexual intercourse. It also add don’t share **needles** or **razors** and apply “**universal precautions**” (avoiding any potential exposure to blood and body fluids). **Male and female condoms uses** are clearly explained. The resource handbook provides information on various **STIs** and encourages condom use for sexually active persons. The

training manual also offers a list of sources for teachers who may want further up to date information on HIV & AIDS or STIs. The document also calls the teacher to be realistic about the numbers of teens in their classroom who are sexually active and need therefore explicit information about how to protect themselves. It explains that abstinence is the only method of contraception that is 100% effective. Besides abstinence, the most effective way of preventing STIs, including HIV, is condom. Depending on age and likely status of sexual experience, the teachers will be trained by this material to correctly explained condom use to their students.

15) In the session about HIV & AIDS; an activity on **stigma and discrimination** focuses on the perception in the society of **prostitute, HIV positive** or **homosexual** amongst others and invites participants to think about the way they perceive and judge each other. By doing so, the documents correctly explain how and why stigma and discrimination can have negative effects, suggests strategies and examples to combat and avoid stigma, discrimination and prejudices, focuses on the importance of **empathy** and ways to show empathy, and explore how to respond to stigmatization, discrimination and prejudice. Relevant activities are provided to overcome discrimination and stigma in general and against people living with HIV& AIDS more precisely as well. The material also correctly underline that people who are infected or are ill with AIDS require special care, information, and counseling and explore the reasons why HIV & AIDS is surrounded by so many stigma. Finally, the material suggests a HIV in school policy which promotes effective prevention and care within the context of the educational system.

16) The material deals with **homosexuality** by exploring, with students aged 9 to 18 years old, accurate information on differences in **sexual preferences** in order to prevent discrimination and fear towards differences in sexual orientation and to let them the liberty to establish their own sexual preference later. Speaking about homosexuality is important for HIV & AIDS education. As the documents correctly state, the AIDS epidemic has led to a rise in the incidence of violence against gays and lesbians and has the potential to increase homophobia among teens. Indeed, some still believe that gay people tend to be infected by HIV or are the only one to be infected. The material provides views from researchers about homosexuality and analyses homosexuality in relation to the **Jamaican Law**. It is important to overcome discrimination & stigma and stereotypes surrounding homosexuality.

17) The material addresses the issue of **love feeling** in accordance with learners' age. At ages 9 – 12, when students start to have “crushes” the programme examines factors that help to identify “love”. It go further with teenagers from 12 to 15 by exploring similar and different factors in friendships and dating, the meaning of being “in love”, ways to enhance relationships other than sexually and pressure that influence men-women relationships. With young people aged 14-18 years old, the material deals with sexual activity, pregnancies prevention and contraception.

18) The documents provide information about **drugs abuse** and try to help students to understand motivation for using of **caffeine, alcohol, tobacco** and **drugs** and their **harmful effects**. A sample lesson plan, provided as an example, analyses the impact of alcohol, and other illicit drugs on behaviours and lifestyle. The main goal of the lesson is to provide students with the ability to identify reasons people abuse drugs; acknowledge the consequences of drug use on a person's life; and use decision-making skills to determine the consequences of drug abuse on various aspects of a person's life. However, it would have been useful to add a part explaining the possible warning signs that a learner is taking drugs and what to do in such a situation.

19) Beyond providing knowledge of HIV & AIDS, the documents try to provide teachers with the skills to render students **less vulnerable** to contracting and spreading HIV. It focuses on the importance to address issues related to the physical and emotional aspects of HIV, stigma of living with HIV & AIDS, and discrimination against people living with HIV & AIDS. Students are encouraged to examine a range of options for reducing vulnerability to these problems such as abstinence, a drug free lifestyle and so on.

20) Many different skills are developed in the documents, including **negotiation skills, problem solving, effective communication** or **decision making** or **refusal skills**. The latter explains **how to say "no"** effectively and clearly (by using the word "no", repeating the refusal assertively, using appropriate body language, giving reasons for refusing, suggesting alternative, changing subject or walking away). The material also help to understand and practice **how to improve ones own self confidence** and self esteem in various situations or **how to manage emotions and stress** by addressing life skills such as coping with emotions, coping with stress, assertiveness or healthy management/monitoring skills. However, the documents could have been more precise on how to cope with loss and death because teachers can have orphans amongst their students.

21) In order to prevent any **sexual abuse**, the curriculum explains to children age 5-9 that they have to avoid strangers offering rides or candy and what they should do if they are lost. The document also discusses the classical sentences to persuade a partner to have sex and to prepare students to **negotiate sex** and being able to fight sexual abuse and **coercion**.

22) The documents help teachers to be aware to the importance of improving students' self-esteem. To do so, they provide some tips to boost self-esteem and to encourage students to believe in themselves and in their own values, particularly in situation of **peer pressure**. It is indeed an essential aspect to effectively **reduce vulnerability** and **risky behaviors** such as drug or alcohol abuse or unwanted sexual intercourse amongst other. The part "acceptance and refusal skills" also suggests some ways of protection from unwanted sexual and other advances and possible sexual abuse.

23) The documents include a lesson with the aim to develop knowledge and skills to access age-appropriate sources of **health information**, products, and services related to sexuality and sexual health. They stated that students should be capable of identifying a range of age-appropriate health services in their communities, in particular in terms of sexuality, child abuse, sexual assault/harassment, and domestic violence. The material provides a **list of agencies providing child protection services** in Jamaica and presents how to make sure that children's rights are put into practice. It tries to help teachers to be able to provide support and counsel if a student's needs some and who to call in such a case.

24) The programme invites teachers to help students to understand physical, social, emotional and implications of having any **disability**. It explores disease causes, preventions and the **body's defense**. The question of **STIs prevention** starts with students aged 12-15 years old. With students aged 14-18 years, it encourages a more critical analysis for disease prevention by assessing personal and societal responsibility for health problems in the society.

25) Both documents involve **parents** in the HIV & AIDS education process. They should act as a **positive model** for their children and practice safer sex, talk honestly about HIV & AIDS with their children and don't discriminate people living with HV & AIDS. Indeed, it is crucial that the message children receive at school is not contradicted by the parents' attitudes and behaviors. An open and confident climate should prevail between parents and children so both can freely discuss and learn from each other.

26) The documents call teachers to ensure respect for the **rights** and **dignity** of students and school personnel living with HIV & AIDS, as well as all other members of the institution's community. In the HIV in school policy framework, the document clearly states that to prevent discrimination, all students and school personnel should be educated about **fundamental human rights** as contained in the **Constitution of Jamaica** and the **UN Convention on the Right of the Child** to which Jamaica is a signatory. The complete declaration is also available in the document.

Weakness/ aspects to be improved:

1) Structure and readability of the documents

The whole program, including the teacher training manual and the resource handbook is very relevant and complete. All the important aspects to train teachers to teach effectively SRH and HIV & AIDS education, or HFLE in particular, can be found in both documents. Therefore, the material can be used as a reference regarding structure, content, presentation and relevance. However, the major weakness would be the use of these two documents that actually only differ a few. Having recourse to two similar documents can be confusing and undermine the consistency and an easy use of the programme as a whole.

→ *Suggestions for improvement*

The introduction part of both documents explains that the resource handbook has been created to support the training manual. It contains supplementary information on all topics contained in the sessions. This is intended to be resource information for Master trainers, trainers and those implementing the HFLE programme in school. It also states that the resource handbook is organized in the same order as in the manual.

Therefore, the training manual and the resource handbook should be used jointly. Even though, at first sight, it is pretty confusing because both documents seem similar.

To summarize, besides some extra paragraphs and subsections, the **training manual** provides complete instructions to lead the HFLE staff training and the training activities. Indeed, the teacher training manual begins with a full introduction part explaining what are the objectives of the session, who is the session for, how long will it take to implement this entire session, what activities are in the session, regional standards and outcomes and resource materials.

Regarding the **resource handbook**, it provides some complements and activities, which are “suggested ice breakers” (p. 105), “the emotional and spiritual self” (p. 126 – 130), “gender and sexuality” (p. 148 – 149), “Impact and Influence of the Media on Children and Adolescents” (p. 149 – 151), “social factors driving the HIV & AIDS Epidemic” (p. 180), “sexually transmitted infections (STIs)” (p. 187 – 194), “sexuality, gender & sexual preference” (p. 213 – 214), “views of homosexuality” (p. 215 – 216), “scenarios for discussing sexuality, gender and HIV” (p. 217 – 219), pressured (unwanted) sexual activity” (p. 220- 221) , “what is abstinence” (p 222-223), “contraceptive methods” (p. 224 – 230), “the united nations declaration on the rights of the child” (p. 232 – 234).

Finally, out of a total of the 275 pages from the resource handbook, only 41 pages are different from the training manual. Furthermore, differences in presentation, layout or sessions numbering tend to make it even more complicated for the readers to use the documents.

Therefore, to facilitate the use of the material and the access to each resource, it would be useful to make two clearly distinct documents. There is no need to repeat the content in the two documents and add some few pages here and few pages there. Three options can be suggested:

- Making a resource handbook with its specific pages. Only pages that cannot be found in the training manual would be provided. Therefore, the document would be smaller, more readable and relevant.
- Creating an annex part at the end of the training manual with the content that the resource handbook only has (adding the 41 pages).
- Adding the content of the resource handbook after the relevant subjects discussed in the training manual. Mixing the two documents and making an all in one document.

2) Information about the antiretroviral treatment

The material provides basic information about the antiretroviral treatment. It explains that besides taking anti-retroviral drugs, somebody living with HIV should also practice a healthy lifestyle and benefits from a strong support system. However, it would be useful to go further.

→ *Suggestions for improvement*

Treatment is an integral part of the life of people affected or infected by HIV. Complete information on treatment should be included when teaching HIV & AIDS education because most of the time, discrimination and stigma result from ignorance. It is important to know about when and why a treatment should be taken, what are the main side effects of such a treatment and how to react if someone is infected or affected. By doing so, it would encourage understanding, empathy and tolerance so students would be able to care and support better people affected or infected by HIV without fear, embarrassment, shame or denial.

3) Gender issues

The material states that it is important for students to develop positive attitudes about self and their evolving sexuality. It invites teachers to plan lessons to explore personal experiences, attitudes and feelings about the roles that boys and girls are expected to play, and to assess traditional role expectations of boys and girls in our changing society. A part of the resource handbook is dedicated to gender and sexuality. The document correctly explains that gender is a socially defined construction influenced by history, culture, religion or economics, and that male and female identities are partially created in the process of socialization. Traditional gender roles in the Caribbean are explored and achievements for women of the region are exposed. The document also explores

the impact and influence of the media on children and adolescents considering the beneficial effect and the harmful effect in terms of sexual content or body image and self esteem amongst other. It tries to understand how this exposure influences their concept of love sex, male and female relationships, sexual behavior or promotes negative gender stereotypes. However, even if the document explores some important gender issues, it doesn't challenge them and emphasize enough on the importance of the issue.

→ *Suggestions for improvement*

The question of gender is addressed in the resource handbook, as an annex subject. Hardly one page and a half address the relations between men and women in the whole teacher training program which is insufficient considering the importance of gender issues for any SRH education program, including HFLE. The document doesn't expressly promote equity and respect between gender, formally condemn discrimination against woman or explain clearly the impacts of these stereotypes on every women's' life. In the same way, the material doesn't exposes and explains the biological, social, cultural, economical and political factors making girls and women more vulnerable to HIV & AIDS.

Today, in the Caribbean, but also everywhere in the world, we speak about "feminization" of the epidemic because girls and women are more vulnerable to HIV infection. In the world, slightly more than half of all people living with HIV are women and girls and this number is still increasing. Gender roles and power relationships influence the course and impact on the HIV & AIDS epidemic. Teachers and learners have to acquire the knowledge and understanding on the differences between men and women, what is gender equity and what are the negative impacts of inequities between men and women in the communities. Achieving gender equity is crucial in the response to HIV & AIDS. Therefore, the document should clearly promote equity between boys and girls, men and women, challenge stereotypes of gender-based cultural practice and encourage women empowerment in all spheres of life.

Transferability and more suggestions for adapting manual

The documents refer to the **Jamaican society** and to the **Caribbean community** in general. The four themes of the HFLE have a set of regional standards so the whole document is developed in accordance with cultural and community context. The material provides information on HIV prevalence amongst young people and specific key social and environmental concerns. For example, the material promotes respect for the diversity among Caribbean peoples as a valuable resource, provides global and Jamaican statistics about HIV & AIDS, or analyses the influence of socio-cultural and economic factors, as well as personal beliefs on the expression of sexuality and sexual choices. According to the Jamaican society, it tries to develop action competence to reduce

vulnerability to priority problems, including HIV/AIDS, cervical cancers, and STIs, by demonstrate skills to counter the negative influence reaching youth people through personal beliefs, media, money, marketing and technology. Therefore, the material should not be **transferred** as a whole to another country without a good understanding of the HFLE program and the Caribbean region. However, some parts of the document can serve as **good practices** on how to address some sensitive issues related to SRH and provide **examples** of complete and relevant activities and lesson plans.