

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

POLICY ON HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

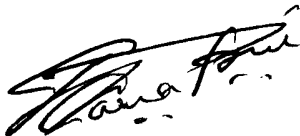
Foreword

The HIV/AIDS Education Policy of the Ministry of Education was developed as part of the national response to the epidemic. The Ministry has a major responsibility to reduce the spread of HIV infection by addressing HIV/AIDS in its education programmes. This is done through infusion/integration of HIV/AIDS issues in the school curriculum and related training of the teaching force. The key aim is to equip all with skills, to develop attitudes and practices to curb the spread and manage HIV/AIDS. This task is not an easy one for the teacher, particularly in our socio-cultural context where discussion on sex related issues is a taboo.

In accordance with Recommendation 45 of the Revised National Policy on Education, a post has been created within the Education Officer cadre to coordinate development and implementation of HIV/AIDS control and education programme. Efforts are being made to network the Ministry of Education HIV/AIDS programme with other programmes such as the National AIDS Control Programme. This, we hope, will strengthen our programmes and ensure acceptability and sustainability.

An infusion and integration approach for HIV/AIDS education has been adopted by the Ministry. This will provide reinforcement of concepts on HIV/AIDS across all subject areas. The approach will also give every teacher a chance of guiding pupils appropriately.

I hope that this policy, which is intended for use by all Ministry of Education personnel, will contribute to the control, management and possible eradication of HIV/AIDS in the long term.



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Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education
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Introduction:

AIDS (Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome) is a disease which is causing concern all over the world. More and more people are getting infected with the Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV), causing AIDS, without realising it. Others are already ill or have died from AIDS. There is at present no cure nor vaccine for AIDS. The only way to stop the spread of the disease is through EDUCATION. This is the reason why we, as educators, have a crucial role to play and the reason for the policy guidelines outlined below.

The National AIDS Control Programme was set up in the AIDS/STD Unit of the Ministry of Health dealing specifically with matters related to HIV/AIDS. The Ministry of Education will be working closely with this unit in the implementation of AIDS education through curriculum development, pre-service and in-service programmes etc. AIDS education will only be effective if it is implemented in a climate that is open and non-discriminatory.

Policy guidelines:

1. HIV/AIDS education must be integrated into the curriculum and should be made compulsory at all levels of education:
 - a) primary schools,
 - b) secondary schools,
 - c) teacher training institutions and all other tertiary institutions,
 - d) non-formal education programmes.
 - e) vocational education and training institutions
2. The content, methodology and strategies used to impart HIV/AIDS education should be adapted to the age and maturity of the students.
3. It is the responsibility of all staff involved in Education to participate in HIV/AIDS education since the disease has social, economic, scientific, demographic and moral implications. This staff includes education officers, principals and headmasters, teachers, lecturers and instructors in all subject areas and boarding staff.
4. In-service courses on HIV/AIDS education and strategies to disseminate this information should be developed and implemented by the Ministry of Education staff listed in paragraph 3.
5. An in-service curriculum and a plan for its implementation will be developed in consultation with the Ministry of Health, and in particular through its National AIDS Control Programme, and other concerned ministries and organisations with experience in this area.
6. Counselling for AIDS prevention and AIDS related social problems should be a component of the training programme for Guidance and Counselling teachers.

7. Schools, in co-operation with the local health authorities, should involve the Parents Teachers Association and the community in AIDS education. There should be links between the school and the local community on this issue.
8. HIV/AIDS awareness programmes for all Ministry of Education employees will be developed and implemented, in consultation with the National AIDS Control Programme.
9. Students, trainees, staff and all Ministry of Education employees with HIV/AIDS or from families with infected members should not be discriminated against and should remain in school/college for as long as their health permits, and should be referred for support and care to appropriate institutions as need arises.