



Symposium Report

Working on HIV and AIDS in education: System and workplace responses for and by education sector workers

UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on Education

**2nd December 2010
Brussels, Belgium**

Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
EFAIDS	Education for All and HIV & AIDS Education
EI	Education International
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IATT	Inter-Agency Task Team
ILO	International Labour Organization
NANTU	Namibia National Teachers Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNATU	Uganda National Teachers Union
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ZCTU	Zambian Congress of Trade Unions
ZNUT	Zambia National Union of Teachers

Background

The Symposium “Working on HIV and AIDS in education: System and workplace responses for and by education sector workers” took place in Brussels, Belgium on 2 December 2010. The Symposium was convened by the UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on Education and preceded the UNAIDS IATT on Education’s members meeting on 3 December 2010. Education International (EI) and International Labour Organization (ILO) co-hosted the Symposium.

The symposium aimed to encourage stronger dialogue about the workplace response at institutional and school levels, in order to ensure that workplace policies have greater impact and are better integrated in overall sectoral planning.

Specifically, the Symposium provided a forum to advance the discussion of workplace policies and programmes to respond to HIV and AIDS, with in-depth analysis and discussion of the following issues:

- the coverage, quality and implementation status/effectiveness of existing workplace policies;
- the impact of policies on prevention and mitigation outcomes for schools, universities and training sites;
- effective ways to mainstream workplace HIV and AIDS policies and implementation into sectoral plans and strategies where this approach is judged to be the most effective;
- obstacles to the meaningful participation of education sector workers in policy development and implementation; and
- System level implications of the HIV and AIDS response, beyond individual level impacts.

The Symposium participants comprised of members of the UNAIDS IATT on Education, representatives of bi-lateral and multi-lateral organizations, governmental and non-governmental institutions (NGOs) as well as civil society organizations.

This report synthesizes the key issues discussed at the Symposium and the conclusions reached.

Welcoming remarks EI, co-host

Jan Eastman Deputy-General Secretary of EI opened the Symposium on behalf of ILO and EI by warmly welcoming participants to Brussels; she applauded their presence despite the unusually severe winter weather. She highlighted the evolving context of HIV and AIDS work in the education sector. She pointed to the fact that through the years while HIV and AIDS had become ostensibly quite simple to add onto existing education systems, that meaningful integration and mainstreaming was a more elusive goal and one that should be afforded greater attention and reinvigorated effort. Alluding to the ongoing effects of the global economic downturn, she pointed to the concurrent challenge of having to scale-up work in an environment of diminished funding. She emphasised that the theme of the current Symposium had been chosen specifically to interact with the process and impact of the ‘ILO Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the world of work’ which had been adopted in June 2010. She signalled that key positive aspects of the Recommendation include a human rights based approach and ‘very open and comprehensive definition of the workplace’. She concluded that the breadth of the Recommendation was a cornerstone in efforts to ensure the HIV and AIDS related rights of workers were upheld the world over.

She called on Margherita Licata, HIV and AIDS specialist of the ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and Chair of the IATT to make opening remarks.

Opening remarks Chair of IATT

Margherita Licata welcomed the participants and provided an overview of the symposium. She also noted that the rationale behind the establishment of the IATT is linked to the need for coordinating and harmonizing responses to HIV in the education sector, to facilitate knowledge and evidence around issues on HIV and AIDS that relate to the education sector, as well as to advocate for a better involvement of education sector as a whole (institutions, learners and teachers) in preventing HIV.

Her welcoming remark focussed on some considerations that would facilitate reflection and analysis during the meeting:

- Some research will show that while policies are there, specific realities within the teachers' working conditions or regulations don't reflect the same principles around HIV;
- Again some analysis of workplace policy frameworks on HIV and AIDS, as well as relevant measures could contribute to tackle or even to perpetuate broader systemic issues (absenteeism, staff retention etc);
- Practices such as reasonable accommodation, partnerships between teachers unions, MoE and private sector can contribute to reduce stigma and discrimination, for example, Zambia, but also to increase the burden on the education and health sectors.

Address from ILO on 'Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the world of work' and relevance to the education sector (Sophia Kisting, Director ILO/AIDS Department)

Margherita Licata focussed the opening address on the 'Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the world of work' in place of Sophia Kisting who sent her apologies.

Margherita Licata highlighted the complexity of the drafting process and the steps towards its adoption, which resulted in an inclusive labour standard, endorsed by employers, workers and governments representatives.

The Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the world of work is the first international human rights instrument to focus explicitly on HIV and AIDS and the World of Work.

Many delegations to the Conference included representatives from the education sector, who recognized the importance of comprehensive education to support HIV prevention efforts, particularly to prevent HIV transmission among young persons.

Margherita Licata pointed out that the Recommendation marks a new milestone in the international response to the epidemic, calling for the World of Work to play a significant role in preventing HIV transmission, protecting human rights at work and mitigating the impact of the pandemic at work, in the mines and in the schools.

While the resulting Recommendation does not have the same legal status of a Convention, the advantages accrued in terms of inclusiveness makes the Recommendation a significant tool in promoting and upholding the rights of workers living with HIV. The Recommendation (No. 200) 2010, an international labour standard, can be summarized with the following key words:

- “Labour and employment” – Recommendation 200 calls for the workplace to be included as an essential element of the national, regional and international responses to the pandemic.
- “Human rights” – Recommendation 200 is above all about the protection of human rights, fundamental freedoms and gender equality at work.
- “Inclusiveness” – Recommendation 200 applies to all workers, (hence also to teachers and education sector personnel, as schools are also workplaces within the meaning of the Recommendation)

Margherita Licata also situated the Recommendation within the context in which we operate:

- a. The global financial and economic crisis;
- b. New trends in the response to HIV and AIDS with a changing global HIV epidemic;
- c. The renewed focus on prevention – enhancing the role of the education sector
- d. But also prevention programmes for the workplace that extend to specific needs and contexts, including harm reduction strategies
- e. High levels of HIV-related stigma and discrimination persist, particularly in employment and education, which continue to block Universal Access –again the education sector has an essential role in raising awareness of modes of transmission and reducing stigma and discrimination
- f. A renewed action to promote the involvement and empowerment of all workers regardless of their sexual orientation

Within the scope of the IATT work, she highlighted the need for policies and programmes to consider children and young people, and highlighted that the Recommendation included a specific section on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Margherita Licata also stressed the role of the Recommendation 200 as a tool for scaling up comprehensive, coordinated sectoral responses to HIV and AIDS:

- It calls for measures to address HIV and AIDS as part of national development policies and programmes, including those related to education
- It calls for these policies and programmes to be implemented through sectoral strategies – i.e. education;
- It calls for evidence and research that specifically relate to sectors and the impact of HIV on different sectors
- It calls for a specific sectoral focus when putting in place training programmes and capacity building

In the specific context of the education sector, she called for a stronger and more coordinated action which requires deeper reflection (and this symposium will be a first step) on the following issues:

1. What is the coverage, quality and implementation status of the existing workplace policies;
2. What has been the impact of policies on prevention and mitigation outcomes for schools and universities;

3. How can HIV and AIDS be mainstreamed into sectoral plans and strategies;
4. What are the obstacles to be overcome to ensure meaningful participation of education sector workers in policy development and implementation by means of effective social dialogue; and
5. What are the system level implications of the HIV and AIDS response, in addition to the impact at the level of schools and institutions

The presentation concluded with a point of clarification from Christopher Castle, UNESCO. He asked given its status did the Recommendation have 'any teeth to sanction member states' that are in contravention. Margherita Licata clarified that, according to the Recommendation, the governing body of the ILO can request regular reports from member States under article 19 of the ILO Constitution as part of the existing reporting mechanisms, in particular General Surveys. Governments' reports relating to HIV and AIDS should be prepared in consultation with the most representative employers' and workers' organizations, including details of progress made and, where possible, examples of good practice. In addition to this reporting, a regular review of action taken on the basis of this Recommendation could be included in national reports to UNAIDS and reports under relevant international instruments.

Panel discussion on School workplace level practices

featuring EFAIDS trainer Martin Matsuib from NANTU (Namibia National Teachers Union) and Teopista Birungi Mayanja, General Secretary of UNATU (Uganda National Teachers Union)

Martin Matsuib is a member of Namibian teacher union, NANTU and has extensive experience coordinating training with teachers through Namibia on the theme of HIV and AIDS. In addition, he has developed his expertise in the area of HIV and AIDS related policy development and implementation.

Matsuib presented Namibia's program on HIV prevention, care and treatment. He highlighted Namibia's continuous efforts to develop an efficient and sustainable national strategic plan involving the public and the civil society sector since the first registered HIV infection in 1986. The described program tackles different intervention areas considering prevention and support at different levels as well as national policy development. Matsuib sketched the components in Namibia's work place policy on HIV/AIDS. His report on his own daily work implementing this policy practically with affected students and teachers gave participants an even better understanding of how important it is to develop strategies and policies further.

He explained that in line with Vision 2030 a national plan for transforming Namibia to an information-based economy, the National Statutory Framework in AIDS is in operation. This focuses on impact mitigation and is characterised as an individual, community and institutional response.

In the context of their work under the EFAIDS Programme the NANTU has been instrumental in establishing a teachers' support network. A principal characteristic of this network which has been active since 2009 is facilitating community-based care for Teachers Living with HIV by coordinating home visits from their colleagues.

He pointed to progress made in work-place provisions with the 2009 introduction of a relief teacher strategy. Under this initiative a database of retired and unemployed teachers is compiled so that once a teacher's absence surpasses five days then on the sixth day a relief teacher is introduced.

He highlighted that HIV and AIDS is taught across the curriculum so that themes are introduced at the various junctures of a whole range of subjects.

Teopista Biringi Mayanja is General Secretary of the Uganda National Teachers Union (UNATU) which is nationally recognised as a leader in the response to the HIV and AIDS crisis in Uganda. She signalled that the teacher union response has been instrumental in driving implementation of the national Workplace Policy on HIV and AIDS as approximately 70% of the education sector workforce is concentrated in schools. The union has taken upon itself the responsibility of disseminating policy as lack of awareness was a major barrier. In 2006 it was estimated that a mere 18% of teachers at primary level were aware of the policy and its implications. Through the intervening years UNATU has worked hard to fill in gaps on implementation of workplace policy, to the extent that a Teachers AIDS Action Group was established and is continuing to grow in strength.

Continuing the discussion the panel compared and contrasted some of the experiences with policy and practice in the Zambian and Ugandan contexts. The issue of condom distribution in schools was a theme of interest and debate to the larger group. In Uganda condom distribution in schools is not normal practice, not necessarily due to opposition from teachers or their unions but out of recognition of the fact that teachers and schools are based in communities, where publically, there is a consensus that children of school-age are not engaged in sexual activity.

Those present from Namibia noted a greater readiness in approaching the subject of condom use in Namibia in recent years. Michael Nasheya of NANTU explained how it was common practice in school for there to be a 'health corner' in a central place, and often that was a place where condoms could be available if not actively distributed.

He expanded to explain the model in Namibia that every school had a life-skills teacher who is often trained in counselling. While a learner on disclosing their status may be open to a certain level of discrimination, this counsellor will be on hand to link up the student with Ministry of Health services and the support which this entails. In terms of support for Teachers living with HIV, six of the districts across Namibia have a teachers' support network.

A parallel model of life-skills teachers taking the lead within their schools was described in Uganda, where the teacher tasked with life-skills education was more often than not an 'agent of change', and was frequently a trainer of other teachers on HIV and AIDS related themes.

The conditions of leave and the issue of absenteeism were discussed in broad terms and more particularly in relation to the practical implications of managing teachers living with HIV. In Namibia there is a provision to allow teachers to take up to nine days of sick leave without being penalised. For teachers who through circumstance or choice must access their HIV care some distance away, it may be difficult to remain inside this allocation. From her perspective Teopista Biringi Mayanja advocated that matters pertaining to health-related leave should favour a culture of self-regulatory mechanisms by teachers rather than externally imposed regulation. She viewed this as ultimately the better option for achieving a balance between meeting the teachers' needs and promoting a good working culture. She followed on to highlight the pro-activism of teachers in Uganda in mobilising resources when state intervention was absent or lacking.

As a footnote to the contentious issue of condom distribution in schools, one participant commented on the liberal approach of Brazil. In spite of the prevailing Catholic culture, sexual health in schools and education was readily accepted as necessary. Initiatives such as a competition to design the best prototype for a condom-vending machine and then installing the winning model in secondary schools across the country was held up as both an inclusive approach and a tolerated step. Meanwhile in Zambia anecdotal evidence was offered of cases where forward-looking principals who took steps in HIV prevention, education and support encountered community opposition, which at its most extreme led to their expulsion, thus suggesting a dichotomy between theory and practice.

Panel discussion on Institutional/government level

by Dr Karl Peltzer, Research Director in the HIV/AIDS, STIs and TB (HAST) research programme of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) , South Africa and Roy E Mwaba, General Secretary ZCTU (Zambian Congress of Trade Unions) and Vice President ZNUT (Zambia National Union of Teachers)

Dr Karl Peltzer opened the session with a presentation of the South African context. He presented an extensive study that the HSRC carried out on the Department of Education's policy on HIV/AIDS. The objective was to analyze the policy's implementation efficiency and its impact on other work place policies. The review of the existing relevant policy set, a series of discussions at stakeholder workshops and a large-scale survey resulted in a significant list of recommendations. Amongst others his findings concluded that 'generally the relationship between policy and practice needs to be better understood'. The causes for the existing weak link between these two levels are diverse and complex, but in any case disorganization and a lack of resources play a major role. However, Dr Peltzer also pointed out there is a solid basis for more systematic work in the future. Consequently the study suggests improving the preparation and coordination of future policy implementation work. It considers the setting up of planning and control mechanism to link the areas of policy development and policy implementation closer together.

Following on from Dr Peltzer's presentation, Roy Mwaba also highlighted that to consider policy in isolation was unhelpful. Finding that South Africa has been more proactive in the production of policy than other countries in the region he nonetheless cautioned that developing policy was no guarantee of subsequent action. Continuing to the context in Zambia, he referred specifically to sectoral unions as he recognised efforts to make policy but pointed to 'implementation and adherence' as a major issue. On a nationwide scale, he pointed to the crucial issue of political awareness in order to implement policies, given that changes in government can lead to uneven policy application. He challenged that unions must lead by example and maintain a consistent approach to policy development and implementation. He advocates mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS into collective bargaining processes. He also felt that research was a cardinal issue - while research is taking place it would benefit from better coordination. The outcomes of research conducted in Europe and USA were not necessarily suitable for direct application in an African context, and he cautioned about the lack of ownership garnered by such a strategy.

He stressed what he perceived to be the hijacking of the role of educators in the HIV and AIDS response. While he insisted that the education sector's core business should remain on prevention and awareness, he contended that increasingly teachers were taking on roles as carers in their communities. In terms of practical application of policy he advocated applying a system of focal points in workplace situations whose principal task was HIV and AIDS mainstreaming rather than an add-on.

Dr Peltzer provided further feedback on his research and clarified that the broader context was to look at the health status of educators, and the related factor of teacher attrition. The finding of HIV prevalence was around 12% and it can be inferred that while in many cases it was not openly apparent that it was nonetheless a significant cause of death amongst teachers. He highlighted that a pre-existing shortage of educators is exacerbated by this burden. On the level of national policy in South Africa, on the initial publication of the survey there was lukewarm reaction to research recommendation that more educators needed to be trained to maintain levels. However more latterly with successive governments there has been more of an upsurge in efforts.

Pointing to the parallel issue in Zambia, Roy pointed to figures for recent years wherein, in a given year in Zambia, 11,449 teachers left the teaching profession whilst only 6,700 were recruited. According to the statistics resignations were in fact the major cause of attrition with only 614 attributed to death. He concluded that the issue of absenteeism is not very well documented in

Zambia, making it very difficult to draw conclusions. He signalled difficulties in identifying contributing factors such as second jobs to supplement income.

In terms of new infections HIV is on the decline in Zambia but that financial implications to manage an effective HIV and AIDS response at national level continue to be difficult. He alluded to the lack of political will where the needs are not explicitly addressed in national budgeting, and the mismanagement of international donor funds resulting in a questioning of the motives of civil society. He highlighted the impact of education financing structures on teacher management systems. The disempowerment of national government due to international conditionalities had a knock-on effect on principal management systems dependent on resources.

Rounding out the session Jan Eastman highlighted how systemic issues such as absenteeism extend beyond contexts of high HIV prevalence, and that teachers in schools have an additional burden when their colleagues are absent for whatever reason. In some cases an increase in teaching assistants was accompanied by decrease in teachers and the impact of such practices could not be underestimated.

In general, the discussion highlighted some critical issues:

- When the education sector workplace policy (like in the case of Namibia) is designed and implemented in the framework of the overall National AIDS strategy, as well as the Human Resource policy of the education sector, it is easier to apply.
- Issues linked to the policy development process and its implementation at the workplace (i.e. schools and teachers), are strictly linked to systemic issues of ensuring retention and reducing absenteeism
- The importance of the role of teacher unions (as demonstrated by Uganda) which can bring the policy into the schools. A general discussion took place on how schools are often not considered workplaces and how policies are often left to MoE with consequent lack of implementation. The unions are essential actors in ensuring policies become alive and are understood by the main users: the teachers and learners
- Other education sector staff at school level are not involved in prioritization and decentralization processes, hence the need for them to be considered when building approaches to implement on the ground
- Need to implement workplace policies for the education sector in the context of the broader management system of teachers and education personnel, and in line with human resource policies
- Need to ensure linkages at school and district level between education institutions and health sector providers
- The challenges faced by teachers becoming “health counsellors and nurses”, with consequent workload and pressure
- Need to link workplace policies on HIV with code of conducts, in the context of sexual harassment policies
- Need for evidence informing education sector actors on trends around attrition, absenteeism etc in order to better plan HIV specific interventions
- Need to match level of absenteeism over the years with the benefits provided to teachers in the context of HIV

- A worrisome trend in the last years in Africa has been noticed, whereas there has been an increase in hiring teacher assistants but a decrease in teacher recruitment and training and retention

Presentation on Research on Teacher Management in the context of HIV and AIDS: the Case of Zambia by Mrs Eileen Nkwanga

Eileen Nkwanga worked as a teacher and principal in the education sector in Zambia for over 20 years before bringing her experience to work in the World Bank. Now retired from the World Bank, she shared her experience stemming from a recent research visit to Zambia to investigate Teacher Management in HIV context.

After providing a general overview of the context in which the education sector in Zambia operates, she moved to highlight some of the specific challenges facing achieving quality in education, and more particularly the role of the education sector vis-à-vis the HIV and AIDS response.

She highlighted that responsibility for primary education was at district level, while provincial education boards controlled the provision of secondary education. A national implementation mechanism continues to govern third-level. She noted the training of teachers is passing from two to three years. In view of her research visit she identified a mismatch between what is happening at ministry level and grassroots level. Similarly to education systems across sub-Saharan Africa while there has been progress on the quantitative measures of EFA, quality was being compromised. There is a serious issue of dependency on external funding, with a seeming absence of a contingency plan in the event that this funding is no longer made available. While there was agreement some years ago that 4% of GDP would be dedicated to education, this was only implemented until Zambia achieved debt reduction. Macro management across the education sectors is uneven; this is exacerbated by uneven communication between different ministries involved in policy implementation and resource allocation such as Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance.

Despite good outlook in macroeconomic terms 58% live on less than 1 US\$ a day. The Jesuit Research Centre produces regular updates comparing public sector wages with cost-of-living indexes. HIV prevalence continues to be high at 14.2% and traditional cultural attitudes and practices concerning gender roles and the status of women are pervasive, with Professor Michael Kelly documenting how gender roles impact HIV profiles in a 2007 edition of Zambia Analysis Magazine.

Equity in access to education has improved, as the effects of efforts to get OVCs into schools on scholarships, are realised. A HIV and AIDS mitigation programme is also being implemented, but the 2009 allocation was half that of 2008 funding. In 2009, the first budget release was in April, and given the other priorities for district administration, some funds earmarked for HIV and AIDS was diverted to other priorities.

Striking difference between rural and urban working conditions leads to an urban agglomeration of teachers. However teachers living with HIV are given the benefit of transfer to an urban school to facilitate their care and treatment. Aside from this concession, conditions of service for public sector workers have seen little substantive changes from those established in 1964. Thus there is little official accommodation for the impact of HIV and AIDS on the education sector where in Zambia it is estimated that 60% of absences can, directly or indirectly, be attributed to the epidemic. In general it was reported that there was a lot of understanding and very liberal approach to these absences, but the impact cannot be ignored. On a practical school level senior teachers tend to fill in for absences affecting their other duties. There is a lack of discretionary funds at district level to draft in retired teachers to fill absences. On a macro level there is a cap on hiring at

5000 a year despite demand being greater and on average children being exposed to only half the recommended learning hours. In terms of new teachers entering the profession, currently there seems to be about a 6 month lag between students finishing courses and receiving results.

While there appeared to be a wealth of policies on HIV and AIDS, and the national plan Vision 2030 optimistically proclaims a Zambia free from HIV and AIDS by 2030, the impact of these policies on a practical level is problematic. In 2006 the HIV and AIDS Workplace policy in the education sector was introduced. However knowledge of the policy existence and content remains very low. During an informal poll of teachers at a pre-academic year meeting it was found that of 35 teachers only one had seen policy, having received a copy at a seminar. This suggests that communicating the content and application of the policy would appear to be inadequate.

Commitment to mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS on the education sector is not apparent in upper levels of national government. Consistency is a real issue as cumbersome bureaucratic procedures inhibit implementation. A very good logical framework for action on HIV and AIDS which was developed in 2001-02 was never truly operationalized. Equally while some research has taken place, the lack of teacher management information system precludes effective progress. The HIV and AIDS desk has never been formally instituted within the Ministry of Education so it continues to be consultant based and donor funded. Annual progress reports from the Ministry tend to be replications of previous reports and concentrated on tasks completed rather than impact achieved.

Summing up the response to HIV and AIDS in education at a national level, Eileen Nkwanga identified the following challenges precluding progress and success;

- commitment,
- consistency,
- coordination,
- cumbersome bureaucratic procedures,
- communication,
- collection and consolidation of data, and
- resource allocation.

However she signalled that the approach of organised, dedicated HIV and AIDS days was a successful one, and over the course of six such events in 2009 participation was estimated at 9,100 and some 1,400 people opted to undergo voluntary testing and counselling as a result.

In summary, the discussion highlighted the following challenges in responding to HIV in the context of teacher management, focussing on aspects around a) capacity of the system; b) pressure on the system; c) management of the system:

- The Education Sector is under pressure because of systemic reforms at country level (Zambia), in particular the decentralization process that creates issues of implementation and coordination
- Education for All, translated at country level, brings additional burden to the Ministry of Education, hence capacity issues need to be addressed when planning the response to HIV
- There is an overall decrease in quality of education as consequence of HIV, and relevant impact on supply and demand

- The issue of increase in programmes on HIV, paid though through external resources, leads to considerations around sustainability
- In some cases money allocated to HIV are re-allocated for other purposes reflecting financial constraints and different priorities set in the education sector

Working groups

To facilitate deeper and more focussed group discussion two working groups were formed, with participants free to join the theme of most relevance to their experience or interest to their work.

The two themes for discussion were:

- **Group 1:** Responses to the impact of HIV and AIDS on human resource policies, good practices and interventions to meet teacher shortages, replacement or retention issues driven by the epidemic, and
- **Group 2:** Policy needs related to teachers and education sector staff and how these are embedded into national policies, in terms of reasonable accommodation, access to services and ensuring good teaching and learning environments in the context of HIV and AIDS

Summarising the main points of their discussions in plenary, Group 1 highlighted that:

- Issues pertaining to HIV and AIDS do not really influence HR policies of government; what policies are shown to do is alleviate situation of teachers, whereby they have a framework to refer in times of difficulty. However, in practice they are often reactive points of reference rather than proactive plans for implementation;
- The rural/urban divide and its impact on the teacher work/life experience is important;
- The maintenance of a database (with appropriate attention to confidentiality issues) of disaggregated data concerning teachers living with HIV could be a useful tool in coordinating improved responses;
- Given the preponderance of over-burdened and under-resourced education systems it is not always easy to distinguish specifically HIV and AIDS factors from the general challenges faced by the education sector:
 - there is a need to recognize the importance of mechanisms in place to support teachers in addressing HIV and AIDS in their schools;
 - and within this, There is need for multiple-faceted approach that favours both formal and informal interventions within schools and their communities;
 - There is a lack of consensus on how best to include HIV and AIDS in the curriculum (issues of mainstreaming, exceptionalism, holistic health, 'examinability'),
 - Skills are cornerstone of HIV prevention education, as knowledge taken in isolation is insufficient to cause behaviour change.

Summarising the main points of their discussions in plenary, Group 2 highlighted,

- The importance of not underestimating the stigma that exists within education sector, and recognising it as essential to improve confidentiality;
- That greater effectiveness in guaranteeing access to treatment would be garnered by adopting an 'integrated services' approach rather than creating discrete HIV services;
- That supporting staff-centred initiatives and promoting micro-scale action and facilitating the building of structures from below is considered as best practice;
- That a gap existed in involving staff in drafting of policies and that this might go some way to explaining the gap between policy in theory and in practice;
- That the larger context of the specific education system (whether it be the challenges of an over-burdened curriculum, quality losing out to quantity with increased enrolment) needs to be evaluated if effective policy is to be drafted and implemented.
- There is a general need to re-assess policies and prioritize around the real needs of the education sector. This means looking into existing policies and assessing what are the needs of teachers and learners and how the government can help in realizing these needs, rather than building new policies.

The discussion continued in plenary, with the following points arising:

- Policy not an end in itself, but a framework in order to support actions by teachers to promote an effective HIV and AIDS response;
- Knowledge of policy should not be assumed; initiatives to publicise and disseminate policy such as the 'notice-board' friendly version developed by Ugandan teacher union UNATU should be replicated;
- Investigating how to compile and track good examples of policy implementation so as to move away from abstract discussions to concrete solutions based on empirical evidence is necessary;
- Developing a 'plan-of-action' is an important and too often overlooked step in following up policy development with practical initiatives;
- Such a system of 'plan of action' can be carried out even at a very local, grassroots level as a way to advance action and not rest on rhetoric. Such micro-level engagement can also include getting teachers involved in monitoring and evaluation through action research;
- It is worth giving more consideration to providing incentives and motivation for education sector actors to become more involved;
- Forums for sharing of information and data between different stakeholders are important if effective policies and plans are to be developed and executed;
- Policies are not a 'silver bullet', but a tool to facilitate discussion and action on HIV and AIDS.
- ILO and EI thanked participants for the excellent discussion. It was noted that due to the small size of the group, more in-depth discussion had been possible, and on a less formal basis, which mitigated the disadvantage of low attendance.