

Capacity Building Programme: HIV and AIDS in Teacher Training

In Brief

HIV and AIDS affect the whole world – they also represent major challenges for education systems. Many attempts to improve prevention and the handling of the pandemic at schools in Africa have not had the desired effect and the number of young people becoming infected remains far too high. In the meantime, it has become clear that teachers must themselves first learn to address the topic of HIV and AIDS at schools in a way that is likely to change the behaviour of young people.

InWent and the University of the Western Cape in South Africa have therefore developed a regional training programme on HIV and AIDS for teacher educators in southern and eastern Africa. It is part of the broad offer on HIV and AIDS at InWent.

A New Perspective

In contrast to conventional training programmes, this course goes beyond biological and medical aspects of the disease. It teaches the participants to actively deal with the different perspectives that develop around the pandemic and the virus itself. The course attempts to highlight the complexity of the AIDS pandemic by placing the focus on the people – their social environments, values, fears and living conditions. In addition, the course aims to end the epidemic of silence that accompanies the topic of AIDS and that continues to provide fertile ground for the disease to spread.

Target Group: Why Teacher Educators?

Throughout eastern and southern Africa, teachers are increasingly being called upon to help individuals, families and communities affected by HIV and AIDS to find solutions to the many challenges brought about by the virus and the disease. Teachers often find themselves having to provide leadership without having the necessary skills or knowledge. Therefore, the philosophy of this course is based on the premise that skilled, caring and committed teachers can make a significant contribution to addressing the AIDS pandemic and reducing its impact.

The Success Story of NTERA in Malawi

In the Malawian language Yao, NTERA means "medicine"; but it is also an acronym for the name of an organisation: "Network of Teacher Educators Responding to Aids". Indeed the members of the network do consider themselves 'medicine' against the social malaise that provides a breeding ground for the spread of HIV and AIDS.

The network was formed by Malawian alumni from the course "Teaching and the Aids Pandemic". The aim of their broad range of activities is to continue to promote their approach of empathy based on umunthu (humanity) and an exchange of knowledge in this area. They consider their approach as the counter-model to the formal transfer of knowledge.



On behalf of
Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development



inWent

Capacity Building International
Germany

The course strengthens the capacity of teacher educators to ensure that teachers gain the knowledge and skills required to teach within contexts increasingly affected by HIV and AIDS. Thereby, the teacher educators learn to question their own roles in overcoming the pandemic and to develop strategies that can be implemented at their place of work in order to achieve a change in behaviour among teachers and young people.

Course Design and Teaching Concept

The programme is designed as a blended learning course. It combines short seminars with an eight-month online course, which is accompanied by tutors. The participants begin by learning how to use modern information and communication technologies, and procure up to date information and (teaching) materials, before going on to discover virtual spaces for regional and international exchanges of knowledge.

The methodology of the programme is based on an active and self-reflective

understanding of learning. The participants learn how to apply course content to their own place of work and integrate it in their teaching plans and practice.

The course is accredited by the University of the Western Cape. The evaluation of the course is based on written assignments, participation in online discussion forums, personal reflection in a journal, a school field study and the ability to apply course content to participants' own everyday work.

Over 100 educators from teacher training colleges and universities in Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, South Africa and Tanzania have attended the five blended learning courses since 2006. Follow-up activities include networking and coaching via virtual workspaces, as well as short seminars to support the implementation of what has been learnt.

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NTERA Activities

- NTERA members developed a curriculum with which 46 teacher educators at four teacher training colleges were provided with additional skills.
- Teacher educators at all state-run teacher training colleges are organised in NTERA committees to develop and implement answers to the pandemic in their organisations.
- NTERA members work with communities to ensure that the climate of humanity towards HIV and AIDS is also promoted in these communities.
- NTERA student organisations have been formed at many different colleges in the country.
- NTERA members regularly exchange information on their strategies, problems and solutions in online forums.
- NTERA Malawi has made a major contribution to the development of similar organisations in Tanzania and Namibia, which now operate likewise.

Partner

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) is a South African university very aware of its academic role in helping build equitable and dynamic societies. It is committed to its African context and subscribes to the SADC Protocol on Education and Training, and to the declaration of the African Association of Universities. UWC is strongly committed to responding to the AIDS pandemic. It has a dedicated HIV and AIDS programme that reports directly to the Vice Chancellor of the university.