



Workshop Report

**Appraising HIV/AIDS Prevention Curricular  
Materials and Teaching-Learning Resources**  
Geneva, Switzerland, 9 – 11 June 2003

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## 1. Executive Overview

A growing number of governmental and non-governmental institutions at the local, national and international levels have been producing increasing quantity and variety of material intended for the education of pupils and the training of teachers at the primary and secondary levels. The need to document, analyse and disseminate curricular materials for preventing HIV/AIDS in the school context has been clearly identified.

There is a need for criteria to guide the appraisal of HIV/AIDS teaching/learning resources used in schools for HIV/AIDS education. Every education has to answer the basic questions: what is understood as valuable knowledge and which contents should be selected. It then becomes necessary to establish some criteria on what is worth to teach, what is relevant, significant and pertinent over what is considered complementary and secondary. Program developers, decision-makers, school principals and teachers need tools that:

- (a) describe main features of existing materials/resources
- (b) identify options of different kinds of available approaches tested elsewhere
- (c) highlight good or promising practices

The IBE organized this workshop as part of UNESCO's common effort to make existing curriculum documents and teaching-learning materials for HIV/AIDS education easily accessible, and to identify and disseminate good practices and lessons learned, with the aim of improving the overall success of education as principal means of combating the epidemic.

Three objectives have been identified for this workshop:

- *Discuss and improve the set of appraisal criteria* prepared by the IBE to assess curricular materials and teaching-learning resources for HIV/AIDS prevention in schools
- *Apply the proposed appraisal criteria* to analyze concrete curriculum materials and teaching learning resources brought by the participants and identify good practices and lessons learned
- *Formulate follow-up actions and recommendations* for future collaboration among participants for identification and promotion of promising approaches and good practice

Presentations of the participants the first day and discussions on important issues and challenges that the education sector faces in designing and implementing HIV/AIDS prevention in schools provided valuable information, but also crucial questions on how to continue the work.

The presence of experts with extended expertise in curriculum development from three different continents allowed to identify common issues and differences among countries that global criteria had to address (both common and specific).

The first session also revealed that a clear definition of core concepts in education and a general framework for evaluating material were necessary and should be provided. The group work and plenary discussion allowed creating a first version of such a concept framework. A few definitions of core concepts are also needed and will be provided.

Practical application of appraisal criteria on concrete materials provided general comments as well as specific ones on how to improve the tool.

The main outcomes of the workshop are:

1. Appraisal criteria: based on the recommendations from the experts (see sections 5 and 6 below) a revised version of the criteria will be finalized and shared with the experts for peer review.
2. The appraisal tool will be tested in several countries for national/regional and local relevance, usefulness and applicability review
3. The IBE will work with partners in countries to develop a sense of ownership of appraisal tool to disseminate and promote its use efficiently.
4. The IBE will develop a process for a on-going appraisal of material through peer review, using a common set of criteria, to be posted in evidence on IBE HIV/AIDS curriculum clearinghouse.
5. Collaboration within the expert group: the IBE will continue institutional collaboration, through the expert group (UNICEF, WB, NGOs, GTZ, etc.) and through already existing networks, at international, national and regional level as part of process to learn from each other. Ways to interactively exchange through the internet will be set up by the IBE.

## **2. Short presentation of IBE Appraisal criteria**

### *Short History of the development of IBE appraisal criteria*

- Spring 2002: IBE starts to adapt existing criteria developed by Schenker & Berger in 1992 (Draft 1)
- Summer 2002: Review of Draft 1 by experts
- December 2002: internal pilot testing of Draft 2, leading to Draft 3
- May – June 2003: internal revision of Draft 3
- 9-11 June 2003: review and external piloting of Draft 4 by experts

### *Intended Users*

1. The IBE and its partners, to select, highlight and disseminate good and promising practice (both for intended and implemented materials that are included in its Global Content Bank)
2. Anyone interested in:
  - (a) evaluating their own material
  - (b) selecting existing material
  - (c) adapting existing material to their own context, needs and resources
  - (d) developing new material

### *Issues and needs*

In preparatory discussions and through readings the following issues and needs have been identified regarding the development of HIV/AIDS teaching/learning material:

- Adaptation of existing curricular material to other national contexts
- Adaptation to school setting of material/approaches developed in other settings
- Updating existing curricular material to new knowledge and new identified needs
- Integration of teacher/peer training
- Development of adequate material for younger children (under 10 and between 10 and 14)
- Use of national languages

### *IBE criteria*

A document presenting the criteria developed by the IBE was sent to the participants for discussion during the workshop. Nine criteria have been identified, with six core criteria that were designed to be specifically applied to teaching and learning materials (“product”):

- Criteria I – Target audience
- Criteria II – Goals and objectives
- Criteria III – Content
- Criteria IV – Teaching methods
- Criteria V – Teacher/educator training and support
- Criteria VI – Appropriateness and coherence of material

Three additional criteria were addressing the process (also useful to *develop* or *adapt* material). However, information for these criteria is most of the time not to be found in the appraised material itself.

- Criteria VII – Need assessment
- Criteria VIII – Material development
- Criteria IX – Quality of implementation and impact on students

The following questions were discussed during the workshop:

1. Coherence of the concept/overall approach and of the structure (6 + 3 criteria)?
2. What is missing?
3. What could be removed?
4. What could/should be addressed differently?
5. Other concerns?

### **3. Issues and challenges raised by the participants regarding HIV/AIDS prevention in school settings**

Throughout the workshop, but in particular in the discussion following the participants’ presentations of the first day, the following issues and challenges were mentioned in relationship with HIV/AIDS prevention in school settings. Some issues are not specific to school settings, but are also valid and have to be addressed in school settings.

**Secrecy and taboo** that foster fear and stress are still widespread. It is necessary to provide straightforward information. We often hear: “In our culture we don’t talk about these things”, but students want to know, and this is not true anyway: these things are discussed, but not at school, in the classroom. There is a need for drastic change and for challenging taboos and myths. We need to stop hiding behind the common excuse “we don’t talk about these things”

We also have to find ways on how, when and where to integrate information on **sexuality**, on where and when it can be discussed. Sexuality is a blind spot of HIV/AIDS prevention.

**HIV/AIDS fatigue** has also been mentioned

**Gender** (masculinity/femininity issues, role models of boys and girls, girls education) is a central issue and crucial for HIV/AIDS prevention. Gender issues are not enough taken into account yet in prevention. Importance to address gender issues and to challenge gender stereotypes has been stressed by all experts.

**Prevention, care and assistance and human rights** should also be included in HIV/AIDS education.

Initiatives are often **NGO** driven. Because of very strict governmental points of views non-formal and out of school education carried out by NGOs is often easier to implement, as the

government do not have endorse programs. For a national integrated strategy, the government (MoE) should however be involved. We should look at how these NGOs initiatives and approaches could also penetrate schools.

It seems that in many places we are still in a **crisis reaction mode** most of the time and that things are not thought through thoroughly. There is a need for mobilization and scaling-up.

**Availability of material:** it seems that lots of materials of all kinds are available. But at the same time, teachers and students complain that they have no material. Distribute: Material is sitting around in storage, because of lack of resource or planning to distribute it. We should therefore think more about the issue of adapting material and about ways to improve implementation of existing material.

We have to ask ourselves what is feasible in a state of urgency – shouldn't we stick to some **core/basic content** to achieve school prevention: learning experience can be achieved with very little or no material – and best material are simple materials. There are many issues involved, but is there a core message, things that you would always find, that we can agree on and define here? Would the following be enough?

- Content has to be culturally sensitive
- Gender stereotype have to be challenged
- Participatory teaching methods are necessary

When defining this core content, we also have to address teacher training, as this is a big problem.

We also need to **look at the wider picture:** you have to be careful with the quality of the environment, as well as the quality of the learner. Do these aspects make it possible to use HIV materials? Will these have an impact? Who are the children? Who are the teachers (limitations of teachers)? What are the links with communities? And take into account that there is often no ownership of programs.

### **Teacher training**

Teacher training has been mentioned to be a key-issue several times. Teacher training is vital but not integrated in the curriculum. Much is focussed on group dynamics and interactive teaching, but teachers do not always have the corresponding skills. Teachers are not prepared, or even when they have been trained, they are not actively implementing HIV/AIDS education. Teacher training has to address teachers' own needs (skills, comfort with issues related to sexuality, etc.). Teacher books should provide lots of guidance for themselves on how to address sexuality, gender issues, etc.; and provide practical guidance/lessons suggestions, as the teacher book is often the only resource the teachers have at hand. However, teachers should not be expected to do miracles. We need to consider the tensions created by lots of unskilled teachers, lack of resources, emergency mode and already crowded curricula.

### **Young people**

Integrating young people themselves as a resource is important, by creating spaces and opportunities for young people to participate and advocate. We should not look at young people as being a problem, but rather at them being opportunities: they are part of the solution and able to create and work at creating their own solutions. Young people should not be only "receivers" of HIV/AIDS education. Young people are frustrated not to get more information from parents and teachers. Students are motivated to participate more.

**Parents** should be brought in. Teachers often overestimate parents' opposition to sexuality. Parents' participation is difficult. A good example from India shows the difficulty to involve parents: There was no parents' opposition to the implementation of preventive policies. Now that the programme has spread through India and other countries, some cases of parents' resistance have been reported. The problem is that parents do not participate on the meetings promoted before the implementation of the project. We need to start thinking about some sort of "post-involvement" of parents in the programme.

We also need to rethink curriculum development in the face of the large numbers of **Orphans**.

**Younger children:** We need to educate younger children too. Target groups are usually children from 14 to 17 years old, very rarely younger. It is not allowed to approach themes related to sexuality with younger children. It is a matter of denial: children are thought to be innocent and therefore teachers should not address sexuality issues with them.

**Peer education** was not talked a lot about, but when mentioned, it was said that it should not be seen as a “soft” option. We should take to scale lessons from peer education

#### **Comprehensive preventive education**

How do we address poverty-related issues? For this we need a comprehensive view. How do we put in the balance HIV/AIDS issues and risks and other health risks or challenges that youth face? How do we integrate HIV/AIDS in comprehensive school health programmes. Someone also reminded us of the quite common observation that **Teenage pregnancy** is a higher concern than HIV/AIDS, and should not be neglected, as an “entrance door” to also prevent HIV/AIDS.

Do-able **monitoring and evaluation strategies** have been mentioned as necessary to identify programs that work. .

## **4. General Recommendations for IBE work on HIV/AIDS curricula**

### **Facilitate access**

IBE's goal should be to facilitate access to appraised material (through its Databank on HIV/AIDS curricular material and website). Users need to access the “good stuff”. IBE should provide upfront on its website some good examples of teaching and learning material, and references of few rigorous evaluations of such material that meet our beliefs. A rating system was proposed to assist people finding useful material without wasting too much time on documents or materials they do not need.

### **Be selective**

“Quality and relevance rather than quantity”. The IBE should avoid distraction and stick to best materials: a short and selective list of good material well documented was felt to be more important and useful than wide coverage. IBE has to define the scope of its work (in collecting, cataloguing and appraising)

### **Limit country scope**

The IBE should consider concentrating its efforts to active collection of material on a few countries and provide a good comprehensive appraisal of available material. Such efforts should also include ministries of Health and Welfare Affairs.

### **Consider other types of material**

The IBE should also look at *teacher training education* and include teacher training material. It also seemed important to include *peer education* materials that have been tested and reviewed. Peer education should not be considered a “soft solution”.

### **Adapt existing material**

Keeping in mind that good material is already available, we should rather think of compiling and adapting existing material rather than developing new ones; of building on existing experience and good work already done; and of improving implementation. This leads to the question of the flexibility of the material: what makes a document adaptable? For material that has been adapted: has the process been documented? We could think of developing criteria for adaptation of material.

### **Address curriculum development**

It is important to also act on the curriculum and on teacher training. IBE should therefore also address curriculum processes, document curriculum models, and set guidelines on how to develop HIV/AIDS material.

#### **Consider political dimensions too**

Appraisal should not be considered only as a technical issue, but also as a political one: best materials will not work (i.e. be implemented) without political support and commitment. It is important to work with the countries and governments from the start in order to develop a sense ownership of appraisal tool so it will be used in countries.

#### **Build on existing partnerships**

The IBE should build-up on this expert group and maintain it alive as a forum to think around curriculum and teaching/learning material development and appraisal to improve HIV/AIDS prevention in school settings. The IBE should avoid creating new partnerships, but rely on collaboration with existing networks and channels.

#### **Promote rigorous trial of very promising material**

The IBE could select very promising material and look for funding for real size rigorous trial of these materials to have fact-based evaluation. Funding could also be sought to develop material following IBE criteria (pilot/small scale projects).

### **5. General recommendations related to appraisal criteria developed by the IBE**

As a **quality control instrument**, the IBE should come up with a document that is useful worldwide and at country level as an advocacy instrument to assess material and promote assessment process. Appraisal is necessary, but has to be linked with political process. There therefore is a need for partnership at country level, to (1) popularise the tool and (2) improve the material.

As an instrument, what is needed is a **basic guidance tool** that should propose a standard identifying the core elements that should always be found in good curriculum:

1. Basic knowledge and information are provided
2. Life skills approach is used to address values, attitudes and competencies
3. Content is culturally sensitive
4. Gender stereotypes and issues are challenged
5. Teaching methods are truly participatory
6. Teachers are provided with guidance and training

Beyond the set of core criteria, the tool has to allow some **flexibility** to be culturally relevant and acceptable. There is a need to decide in each context what is negotiable, and what is not. The ABC approach (Abstinence / Be faithful / Condom use) is a good example: the ABC approach is not adopted at all in *Brazil* (except for the C part) whereas advocacy of pleasure in sexual relations is part of the official approach. In *India*, focusing on the A part was the only way to get the government's approval for the project of teacher training presented by the Indian expert. In *Nigeria*, sexuality altogether could not be addressed directly in the curriculum. Therefore, the usefulness and political feasibility of the tool designed by the IBE will have to allow for these national differences and will have to be tested in different countries. Moreover, contextual particularities at country, region, community and school level also have to be taken into account. The example of Brazil shows very well the difficulty in establishing policies because of the profound differences between regions.

The workshop was focusing on appraisal of the teaching/learning resources. However, a preliminary **framework** that situates the different levels and possible entry points to the appraisal process would have been necessary to work more efficiently. The result of the work

group was a preliminary definition and presentation of a general framework that includes the environment level (policy and cultural), the education sector level, the school setting (learners, teachers and teacher trainers) and the curriculum (as a process and a content, including products such as teaching/learning resources).

A preliminary **definition of the concept of curriculum** and curricular materials is also needed as it appeared that participants did not all have the same definition. As a result, the workshop was also the occasion to refine a definition of the material that appraisal criteria should apply to:

1. Material for student use (textbook)
2. Material for teacher use (teacher book/guide)
3. Accompanying material (posters, booklets, etc.)
4. Material for teacher training
5. Kits
6. Curriculum and syllabus

It also seemed that the instrument as it was presented could not be used across all materials and that some work was needed to make the criteria document specific to each kind of documents. A shorter set of criteria could be designed accompanying material (posters, etc.).

The potential **users** of the tool should also be better defined and the tool adapted to their specific needs: for users in schools who will select existing material, the tool should be simpler and in plain English. A more developed, complete and technical tool could be designed for criteria for the developers, to assess their own material and adapt or develop new ones. A shorter version of the criteria chart could also be useful for a quick selection of material.

## 6. Detailed recommendations related to the proposed criteria

### *General comments:*

1. Criteria are too general, some criteria need to be more specific or need to be listed (skills (criteria III), activities (criteria IV)).
2. Should go from specific to general (not as it is now); reorganize the content to help avoiding repetitions
3. Too long, could be condensed, but not obvious what to take out, maybe prepare a short and long version
4. Do not mix description and prescription (Identity Sheet for description and Criteria Chart for prescription)
5. Make sure it is understandable, improve the English
6. Beware mismatch of skills and issues (criteria III)
7. Ensure a common definition and a common understanding of Life Skills.

### *Structure and content*

1. Criteria I to VI are reasonable and can be answered by looking at the material
2. Chapter on coherence is difficult to answer (criteria VI)
3. Pre and post curricula issues should not be found in appraisal criteria (process criteria that most of the time cannot be answered from the appraised material itself (criteria VII to IX). Therefore, the usefulness of a framework and matrix to identify what set of criteria are relevant to what material examined and to what user (regarding his/her goal)
4. Goals and objectives (criteria II) should come first, following the logical process
5. For material development (criteria VIII), add references to theoretical frameworks used to develop the material to assess the likelihood of impact (for developers only, as this information is most of the time not available in the material itself)

6. The feasibility and facility of implementation should be assessed whenever possible (quality of material provided for students and teachers, quality of guidance for teachers, quality of training or counselling/mentoring provided, realistic time allocation for each lessons and over the school year, etc, as well as the availability of students assessment tools (knowledge and attitudes & values)). Criteria to assess implementation and impact on students (criteria IX) have to be more specific.

#### *Missing criteria*

1. Gender (not developed enough in criteria III) and human rights, both as cross cutting issues
2. Care and support (throughout)
3. Environment (family, community, school)
4. Technical aspects (can be judged by specialist only), such as cost, graphical quality (font, readability, empty pages), durability/solidity, one/several uses

#### *Missing skills*

1. Coping skills of children (to deal with loss)
2. Teachers' coping skill to deal with HIV/AIDS (criteria IV)
3. Skills to provide practical support (food)
4. Skills for counselling

#### *Structure of answer*

1. Yes/no answer is confusing: a tick box for listed items could work better
2. Core knowledge / skills / teaching methods & activities, etc. should be listed for a more detailed and systematic approach
3. Should the criteria be graded? (must / should / can / shouldn't = "killing criteria"), and add the possibility to answer "not applicable" or "don't know"

#### *Identity sheet*

1. The Identity Sheet should ideally be filled by those who developed the material.
2. First item of information needed on the Identity Sheet is the type of material.
3. Some clarification and definitions are needed (type of material, educator involved, delivery approach)
4. Format and cost are also needed as well as available evaluation with sources cited.
5. Target groups the material applies to have to be more specifically identified (for ex. young people, Muslim country, formal education)
6. A more qualitative summary is also necessary
7. It is important to look at when the material has been produced and at updates, since all this material is not static material.

Appraisal criteria and the identity sheet have been revised, accordingly to experts recommendations.