

TOOL 10: CRITERIA FOR APPRAISAL OF SRH and HIV & AIDS EDUCATION

B. MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS

* N.B. please read guidelines before completing the form.

Country/ies of implementation	Global
Title of material	The Main Thread: Handbook on sexuality and personal relationships among young people
Author/publisher, year of publication	Author/publisher: LAFA, Stockholm County AIDS Prevention Programme Year of publication: 2004
Author and date of appraisal	Name: IBE-UNESCO Institution: IBE-UNESCO Date: 14/11/2006
Type of material	<input type="checkbox"/> Formal education <input type="checkbox"/> Non-formal education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both
Target group	Age: 13 - 19 years Class / grade / level : lower and upper secondary school level
Material part of set	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, please list other material part of the set:
Implementation mode *	<input type="checkbox"/> As stand-alone subject <input type="checkbox"/> In one main carrier subject <input type="checkbox"/> As cross-curricular issue
HIV & AIDS taught:	<input type="checkbox"/> Infused through the curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> As extra-curricular subject <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not specified
Size & pages	Size: Number of pages: 205

* For more information on the implementation mode, please refer to the introduction of TOOL 2.

Abstract

The 'Main Thread' was developed by the governmental organisation the Stockholm County AIDS Prevention Programme (Lafa). The Main Thread is a handbook that is designed to support teachers and youth leaders to answer questions regarding sexuality and personal relationships that young people might ask. The methods referred to in the Main Thread were developed and evaluated in Sweden, a country 'where education on sexuality and personal relationships has been compulsory since 1955'. It was found that organisations and individuals from around the world were in need of support on how to talk to young people about sexuality and for this reason an English version of the handbook was developed.

The manual is meant to shed light on the 'hows' of (sexuality) education, e.g. how to start a discussion and how to teach young people that sexuality is a positive thing, but also teach them about STIs and HIV. The manual provides a range of tips and methods on how to facilitate 'thought provoking discussions on attitudes and values'. The Main Thread includes over thirty practical methods, value clarification exercises and a number of more in-depth sections. All the texts and exercises have been compiled by people with many years of experience of issues

OVERALL EVALUATION- SYNTHESIS

a) Strengths (in relation to criteria with higher ratings)

The Main Thread manual is positively evaluated on a number of criteria. All in all, the manual addresses a wide range of range of topics relating to sexuality and relationships. It builds on the premise that a good self esteem can lead young men and women to take care of themselves and protect themselves against STIs and unwanted pregnancy. The first criterion evaluated positively is that of 'me, my emotions and others' (V). The first thematic chapter of the manual deals with the topic self esteem, and is aimed at enhancing young people's abilities to express themselves and listen to others. Friendships and relationships are addressed throughout the manual, prejudice regarding (people with) HIV are also explored, e.g. how to react when you hear your homosexual friend thinks he may have become infected or how to respond to a classmate who is HIV positive. The manual addresses abstinence, being faithful and use of condoms, peer pressure, how to support other people/friends, and where to get support.

The criterion on community and culture (VIII) is also rated positively. The manual is a translation of a Swedish language manual that is used to support sexuality education for young people in schools and in non-formal settings in Sweden. The contents and language are particularly relevant within that context, but will also be useful. Despite the fact that the material scores below average on the packaging (due mainly to a number of 'n.a.' ratings), this manual is well laid out and durable. It is relative

b) Weaknesses (in relation to criteria with lower ratings)

The Main Thread manual is evaluated less positively on a number of issues. In many cases, this partly has to do with the fact that questions are not applicable to the material and the 'n.a.' rating lowers the total scores given. The first criterion that is not evaluated well is criterion I (material development). It is not very clear how the Main Thread manual was developed, whether e.g. constraints and needs of teachers and learners were taken into account or not. With regard to criterion II, no specific time frame is given for the overall 'programme' and though it is clarified that the material is designed to support educators working with youth between 13-19 years, the lessons/themes are not further broken down according to age group/grade. Regarding assessment, the handbook does not provide further tools specifically designed for assessment purposes. The third criterion (goals and objectives) also receives a low score, in part because the objectives of the different chapters and exercises are not very specific. Criterion IV (basic information on health) is given a fairly negative rating. This is mainly due to the fact that the material does not cover a number of the issues mentioned under this criterion. The manual was not designed to focus specifically on HIV and AIDS, the different modes of transmission. The criterion dealing with gender (VI) is not evaluated positively, mainly because power relationships and gender discrimination are not addressed in depth. Since the

c) Internal consistency

The language and the examples used throughout the manual are non-discriminatory and gender sensitive. The lay out of the chapters and activities follows a similar structure, providing fairly in depth background information on the particular theme of the chapter and then describing a number of 'methods' or activities with which the theme can be explored by learners. In the description of some of the activities the specific objective, estimated time and a list of required materials is given, whilst in the description of other activities these issues are not clarified.

d) Transferability and/or usefulness for developing/improving one's own material

The manual provides solid in depth background information on topics such as sexuality of boys and girls, homosexuality, working with young people from ethnic minorities, personal relationships ('infatuation, couples and sexuality') and ethical questions. In combination with the great variety of activities, such as the values clarification exercises can be of use to educators in both the formal and non-formal setting. N.B. the manual can also be of use to education staff involved in planning; the chapter on planning provides brief guidelines of issues to take into account when planning to provide education on sexuality and relationships, and gives a number of examples of the way in which different schools provide their learners with education on these topics. The main purpose of the Main Thread is to help teachers in discussing sexuality with learners and this does require a certain degree of willingness and comfort to talk about this topic with young people. Training in the different active learning exercises may be necessary.

e) Special features/ additional comments

TOOL 10: B. MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS

Acronyms: SRH: Sexual and Reproductive Health VCT: Voluntary counselling and testing

Rating: from 0 (not at all, or very badly done) to 5 (very good, very well done) n.a.: not applicable

Criterion I	Material development and inclusion in the prescribed curriculum	mean score : <u>1.4</u>	Rating
NB: These information are not always available in the document itself. But this is an important criterion to assess the quality of a material	1. Material is part of a defined HIV and AIDS education policy framework		4
	2. Material has official endorsement (ministry of education)		3
	3. The program is part of the official curriculum		n.a.
	a. HIV and AIDS education is specifically assigned to one or several disciplines		n.a.
	b. Time for HIV and AIDS education is specifically assigned by the prescribed curriculum		n.a.
	4. Material was developed based on research, evaluating:		
	a. Needs and concerns of students		2
	b. Needs and concerns of teachers and school staff		4
	c. Needs and concerns of parents and the community		2
	5. Material was developed based on analysis of existing resources & constraints:		
	a. financial resources		0
	b. number of available trained teachers		0
	c. available teaching and learning material		0
	6. Material was pilot tested		0
	7. Material was developed involving:		
	a. A multi sectorial team		0
	b. Students		0
c. School staff		2	
d. Parents and other representatives of the community		2	
8. Material was developed based on theoretical framework for behaviour change		3	
Total score			22

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES (in relation to the items with higher ratings and lower ratings)

The 'Main Thread' manual was translated from Swedish as a result of the identified need of organisations and individuals from different parts of the world for support in teaching young people about sexuality. It was developed with a view to provide this support. In other words, this version of the manual was not developed specifically for use in (Swedish or other) classrooms and it can therefore not be said that this was developed in the framework of a particular HIV and AIDS education policy, or was developed taking into account constraints and needs of a particular set of people. It is mentioned that the methods referred to in the manual were evaluated in Sweden - a country where sexuality and personal relationships education has been compulsory since 1955. In other words, this manual was developed within that framework. One of the first chapters of the manual deals with planning of education on sexuality and personal relationships. It takes the reader through some of the basic workplace criteria which 'permit well thought out work on sexuality and personal relationships: support, money, materials and skills' (p. 24); the organisation of teaching on sexuality; the purpose of and theory underlying the teaching.

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Criterion II	Time frame and assessment	mean score : <u>1.1</u>	Rating
	1. Time frame:		
	a. Number of programme units/lessons defined for certain (school) period is realistic		n.a.
	b. Time allocated for each unit/lesson is realistic		n.a.
	2. The topics are covered in a logical sequence		4
	3. The material includes means to assess learners before the programme on:		
	a. knowledge/understanding of SRH, HIV & AIDS		0
	b. skills		0
	c. attitudes/values		0
	d. behaviours		0
	4. The material includes means to assess learners after completing the programme on:		
	a. knowledge/understanding of SRH, HIV & AIDS		2
	b. skills		2
	c. attitudes/values		2
	d. behaviours		2
	Total score		12

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES (in relation to the items with higher ratings and lower ratings)

No specific time frame is given for the overall 'programme'. The material is designed to support educators working with youth between 13 - 19 years of age, but the lessons/themes are not further broken down according to age group/grade. Some activities mention the time needed, but in many cases it is not clarified how long an activity is expected to take. Regarding assessment, though the chapter on planning mentions the need to define how work will be assessed, the handbook does not provide further tools specifically designed for assessment purposes. Teachers will be able to make use of the different activities for informal evaluation purposes (e.g. the values clarification exercises), but some may need further guidance on how to use exercises as means to monitor progress.

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Criterion III	Goals, Objectives and Target group	mean score : <u>2.9</u>	Rating
	1. The material outlines:		
	a. clear goals, that are linked to HIV and AIDS education		4
	b. precise and limited target group		2
	2. The objectives mentioned in the material are "SMART"		
	a. specific		2
	b. measurable		2
	c. achievable		3
	d. relevant		4
	e. time-bound		1
	3. Content is generally appropriate in view of:		
	a. age of target group		3
	b. literacy level of target group		4
	c. socio-cultural context		4
	d. probable status regarding sexual experience (mainly virgin or possibly sexually experienced)		3
	Total score		32

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES (in relation to the items with higher ratings and lower ratings)

The material is designed to support educators to teach young people about sexuality, personal relationships, HIV and so forth. The target group is young people between 13-19 years of age, which at that age, is a relatively wide age range. The book consists of 10 chapters, each dealing with a different topic relating to (sexual) development and relationships. The objective of the chapter can be deducted from the introductory section and in some cases the specific objective of a particular method/activity is specified (but these are not very specific, nor are they time bound). Quite often the objective is not explicitly clarified, however, and whether or not an objective is measurable is therefore difficult to say. The subjects dealt with are relevant to young people, however, and for this reason a higher rating was given to item 2.d. Though the age range is rather wide, the contents of the manual are appropriate for young people, seeing as they deal with matters that generally do concern learners of secondary school age.

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Criterion V	Me, my emotions and the others	mean score : <u>3.1</u>
	1. Me and myself: the material helps to understand and practice	Rating
	a. What are self confidence and self esteem?	4
	b. How to improve its own self confidence and self esteem in various situations?	4
	c. How to manage emotions and stress?	2
	2. The material helps to overcome personal fears:	
	a. How to react when someone I know is infected or affected?	4
	b. How to cope with loss and death?	2
	3. The material addresses vulnerability factors and helps avoiding risks:	
	a. How do alcohol and drugs increase vulnerability?	3
	b. Are various strategies to avoid unwanted sexual intercourse explored?	2
	c. Are the three components of the "Abstinence - Behavior faithful - Condom use" approach explained?	4
	d. Depending on age and likely status of sexual experience: is condom use clearly explained?	4
	4. Peer pressure is addressed:	
	a. How to resist to peer pressure?	3
	b. How to avoid putting pressure on the others? (How to respect others?)	4
	c. Which different ways can be used for refusing, delaying or saying "no" ?	2
	5. Help, support and counselling	
	a. Where can I find help, support and/or counselling?	3
	b. When should I ask for help and support or counselling?	3
	c. How can I help and support the others?	3
	Total score	47
STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES (in relation to the items with higher ratings and lower ratings)		
<p>The first thematic chapter deals with the topic self esteem, which is aimed at enhancing young people's abilities to express themselves and listen to others. The exercises in this chapter aim to help young people to practise putting forward their views and expressing what they believe. Friendships and relationships are addressed throughout the manual, but in particular in chapter 4 ('relationships'). Prejudices regarding (people with) HIV are also explored, e.g. how to react when you hear your homosexual friend thinks he may have become infected or how to respond to a classmate who is HIV positive. Abstinence, being faithful and use of condoms are all addressed at some point in the manual, with a focus on being faithful (building good relationships) and using condoms to protect yourself. They are not described as the three main strategies for preventing HIV, however. Peer pressure is discussed, but fairly briefly and avoidance of putting pressure on others is primarily discussed in the sense of respecting one another. How to support other people/friends, where to get support, how an educator can support a learner who reports sexual abuse are discussed and explored in different parts of</p>		

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Criterion VI	Addressing gender issues	mean score : <u>2.9</u>	Rating
	1. The content addresses gender issues, promotes gender equity and is challenging gender stereotypes:		
	a. Understanding and respect between genders is promoted		4
	b. Gender identity (masculinity, femininity, traditional roles in society, etc.) is explored		4
	c. Power relationships are explored and challenged		3
	d. Gender discrimination towards girls is addressed and challenged		2
	e. Gender-based cultural practice is explored and challenged		2
	2. The overall presentation is adapted to gender issues:		
	a. Images and pictures are gender sensitive		n.a.
	b. Situations and examples are gender sensitive		4
	c. Language is gender sensitive		4
	Total score		23

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES (in relation to the items with higher ratings and lower ratings)

Throughout the manual respect for young people is promoted, be they male or female. Different activities are designed for learners to explore the meaning of masculinity and femininity, and to understand how society may influence perceptions on sexuality, males and females. Power relationships and gender discrimination are not addressed in depth, however, except in the final chapter that is designed to provide educators with in depth information on a range of topics, including pornography ('freedom or oppression?') and sexual abuse. Gender based cultural practices are not discussed in the sense of e.g. 'rites de passages', but more in the sense of societal perceptions of (the roles of) fe/males in relationships. The manual does not contain any images and, therefore, a 'n.a.' was given. Language and examples used are gender sensitive.

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Criterion VII	Promoting human rights and overcoming stigma and discrimination	mean score : <u>2.6</u>	Rating
	1. Human rights:		
	a. The material provides key elements on universal human rights		3
	b. The material addresses children's rights		3
	c. The right to physical integrity is explained		3
	2. Coercion and abuse:		
	a. The issues of coercion, sexual harassment and abuse are addressed and challenged		2
	b. Strategies to fight sexual abuse and coercion are given		2
	c. The possible steps to take in case of sexual abuse or coercion are explained		3
	3. Stigma and discrimination:		
	a. The material explains that HIV and AIDS can affect everyone		3
	b. The material explains how and why stigma and discrimination can have negative effects		3
	c. The material explain strategies to combat prejudices		3
	d. The material explains the importance of empathy and ways to show empathy are explored		4
	e. The materiel provides opportunities to test and experiment how to avoid stigmatizing and discriminating		3
	f. The materiel explores how to respond to stigmatization, discrimination and prejudice		2
	4. Language used is non-discriminatory and non-judgemental towards:		
	a. People affected or infected by the virus		4
	b. Orphans and vulnerable children		n.a.
	c. Sex workers		n.a.
	d. Homosexuals		4
		Total score	42

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES (in relation to the items with higher ratings and lower ratings)

The manual does not itself contain specific information on universal human and children's rights, but refers the educator to specialist materials on these topics. It does recommend educators discuss these topics with learners, however. The manual addresses the right to physical integrity (of children) and provides an in-depth study section on the subject of sexual abuse for educators. The manual recommends teachers find out more about how to recognise possible signals of sexual abuse and reminds them of their obligation to report cases to social welfare services. The exercises themselves do not specifically address sexual coercion or abuse, however. The manual explores contains activities which explore how HIV prejudice may affect people and how a person can counter prejudices (relating to HIV and AIDS). The language used is non-judgemental, and homosexuality (and bisexuality) is a central topic in sections dealing with sexuality, relationships and society. There is no reference to orphans or sex workers, hence the 'n.a.' (which contribute to a lower rating).

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Criterion IX	Teaching methods & strategies and teacher guidance (mean score:) <u>3.5</u>	Rating
	1. Several teaching-learning methods are proposed and clearly explained in the material:	
	a. Icebreaker/building trust exercises	4
	b. Classroom discussion/debates/brainstorming/case studies	4
	c. Group work/co-operative project	4
	d. Games	4
	e. Role play	4
	f. Creative work (posters, songs, story-telling, poetry, theatre plays)	4
	g. Interviews/fieldwork/homework involving parents or the community	3
	2. Detailed & clear instructions are provided to teachers for each lesson / unit on :	
	a. Learning goal and objectives	3
	b. Time required to complete the lesson/unit	2
	c. Which activities should be used (questions, role play, group work, etc.)	4
	d. How to facilitate specific activities, e.g. role play, field work	4
	e. Definition of key words and (sources of) background information & support	4
	f. List of necessary materials (scissors, paper, etc.)	3
	3. Are the activities and exercises:	
	a. Suitable and sufficient considering the objectives of the unit/lesson?	4
	b. Suitable considering the age group and literacy level of the target group?	4
	4. Are supporting materials for learners provided, e.g. worksheets, puzzles?	n.a.
	5. Is formal training required to use the material?	5
	Total score	60

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES (in relation to the items with higher ratings and lower ratings)

The manual describes and makes use of a wide range of active learning exercises. Involvement of community members, including parents in the education programme is not frequently mentioned. Clear explanation is given on how to carry out activities, though educators will need to be familiar with active teaching-learning activities in order to be able to conduct the different types of activities. Sometimes the objective of an exercise is stated explicitly, sometimes this is implicit in the introductory text to the activity. In the case of some activities an indication is given of the time that will be needed to conduct lessons, but quite often this information is left out. Where particular materials are needed to conduct the activities, a list of what is needed is given.

