

# 10 THE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE NEXT

Now that you have gotten an overview of the situation and understand the impact that HIV/AIDS may have on your country's educational system if no action is taken, you may wonder what your next steps should be. We trust that you know best whom to address in your Ministry and which issues to focus on. However, there are some general ideas you may find very helpful.

## Look for additional information

Find out more about the (potential) HIV/AIDS situation in your country and its specific needs; gather materials such as research reports, policy documents, strategy formulations, and scientific papers on HIV/AIDS and education in your country so that you get acquainted with existing ideas and goals.

## Look for potential partners & allies

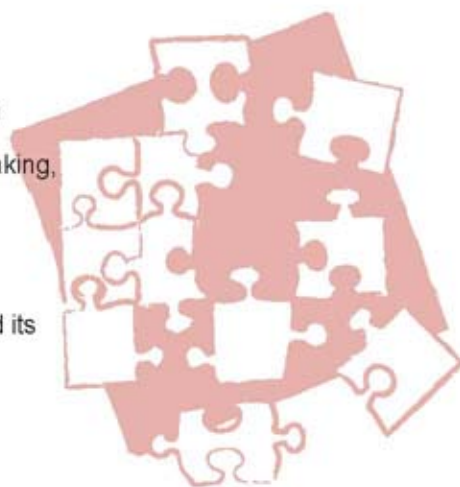
Look for partners inside the Ministry/Department that may share your interest of furthering the response to HIV/AIDS by the Education Ministry/Department.

Keep in mind that action needs to be taken now. Convince fellow Ministry officials that it is crucial to:

- ❑ Provide committed and informed political and educational leadership
- ❑ Provide well-funded, politically supported, and comprehensive prevention programmes
- ❑ Ensure consistent political commitment
- ❑ Advocate for decentralisation – promote the involvement of education stakeholders at the provincial and district levels in planning, policy making, and implementing activities related to HIV/AIDS
- ❑ Act before the epidemic takes hold
- ❑ Ensure common understanding about the nature of the pandemic and its impact on education
- ❑ Establish guidelines, regulations, and codes of conduct which clarify responsibilities of implementers
- ❑ Not allow efforts to stagnate



- Look for additional information
- Identify potential partners
- Draft a list of next steps



Look for partners *outside* the Ministry/Department that share your interests and help you reach your goals such as representatives from the National AIDS programme/Ministry of Health, UN agencies (UNESCO, UNAIDS, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, etc), NGOs (Education International, CARE, Family Health International / FHI, AIDS Alliance, or others), other government sectors and departments (Ministry of Gender or Women's Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Planning), teacher unions, parent associations, the private sector, etc.

*Draft a list of next steps jointly with partners inside and outside the Ministry / Department*



Use the Checklist from the Kit to determine what steps should be taken next and by whom.

*Remember to focus on preventive education and on the mitigation of the epidemic's impact*

To stabilise the system, departments and providing agencies must assure that the system keeps working so that teachers are teaching and children enrolling and staying in school, that managers are managing, and that finance and professional development systems are performing adequately.

To mitigate the epidemic's potential and actual impact on the system as a whole, efforts must be made to make the system fully inclusive by challenging all forms of AIDS-related stigma and discrimination. The participation by persons living with HIV/AIDS is important.

Remember that preventive education is the most important tool to fight HIV/AIDS, and that the Ministry/Department of Education is the lead agency to ensure access to preventive education by the population of your country.

*"Intervention efforts made early in the growth of an epidemic have a much greater effect in reducing the total size of the epidemic than similar efforts made late during the time course of its development."*



Can we reverse the HIV/AIDS pandemic with an expanded response?  
The Lancet, Vol 360, July 6, 2002