World AIDS Day is a time where we remember those friends of us, fellow teachers and family members, who have passed away. We also look at those affected and want to tell them that there is still hope, there is still life, depending on behavioral change once they know their statuses.

Evart DLAMINI
EFAIDS Coordinator
SNAT-Swaziland

Introduction

World AIDS Day (WAD) is celebrated every year on 1st December. In 2007 Education International (EI) and its affiliates marked the day on 30th of November, the 1st of December being a Saturday. EI acknowledges the effort made by unions to carry out activities in classroom mainly but also in union meetings and anti-AIDS Clubs.

In collaboration with Education Development Centre (EDC) and its affiliated teachers’ unions, EI launched a brand new initiative for WAD 2007 encouraging teachers to spend ‘One Hour on AIDS’ with their students to learn about HIV and AIDS and take action.

The pandemic continues to pose a critical threat to the provision of quality education. Through education, students become better equipped with the skills needed to protect themselves, their families and wider communities. Consequently timely and relevant education can be termed as a social vaccine against the spread of HIV and AIDS. World AIDS Day is an opportunity to emphasise the crucial role of teachers and their unions, to recognise their contribution as educators to achieving universal treatment, care and support and ultimately universal prevention.

EI affiliates were provided with an Activity Kit to be used in schools, classrooms, anti-AIDS clubs, and union meetings. Taking ‘One Hour on AIDS’ as their guiding theme, teachers around the world were asked to lead their colleagues and learners in a lesson on AIDS with the help of the adaptable EI Activity. The intention of last year’s campaign was not to limit learning about HIV/AIDS to one hour a year but rather to use this as a point of departure for activities throughout the year.
The kit provides a succinct introduction and background to aid teachers facilitating the activity. It contextualises AIDS and highlights how teachers and learners across the world are affected by AIDS. The activity’s objective was to increase participants’ knowledge and awareness and to encourage them to participate in the campaign against the pandemic. The kit also included a poster on the theme ‘Take the Lead’ listing ways that individuals can respond to AIDS. These included: starting with oneself by taking universal precautions, not stigmatising others who have the illness; making changes in the school (advocating for classes on HIV and AIDS to be taught and advocating for anti-discrimination policies; increasing awareness (performing a drama, holding a poster competition); getting involved in the community (volunteer at an AIDS service organisation, donate food or clothing); taking global action (write to politicians and newspapers to support universal treatment, attend/organise a rally).

The planning schedule for WAD 2007 was brief and as a result some affiliated unions did not receive resources sufficiently in advance of the day to adequately prepare their activities.

Nonetheless, the inaugural ‘One Hour on AIDS’ initiative proved to be a successful promotional and advocacy tool. In 2008 EI will make every effort to ensure that the resources and materials are delivered well in advance of World AIDS Day.

Again, EI wants to thank its affiliates for their contribution to and activities on World AIDS Day last year. Teachers joined a movement of global solidarity, and showed their commitment to supporting colleagues and learners affected by HIV and AIDS, to countering stigma and lobbying for HIV/AIDS policies. Ultimately, it is the inspiration, energy, and actions of millions of people that will have an impact on this shared challenge.

EI hopes that this report may inspire its affiliates worldwide to take the lead on AIDS in 2008, not only on World AIDS Day, but through the course of the year!

Fred Van Leeuwen

General Secretary
Education International
Description of activities by country

Education International invited and encouraged teachers and their unions to organise “One Hour on AIDS” activities and develop action pledges based around the distributed poster entitled “Take the Lead”. The following sections are summaries of those activities. The report comprises the activities of those unions who reported their WAD experiences to EI.

Argentina

Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina (CTERA)

To publicise World AIDS Day, CTERA held a press conference to announce joint events on the theme of AIDS along with the new initiative of “One Hour on AIDS”. This was attended by EI’s Regional Coordinator in Latin America, CTERA’s General Secretary, CTERA’s Secretary for International Relations and the national EFAIDS Program Coordinator. To further inform about WAD a poster was produced and distributed throughout the country. The programme of events was also publicised through CTERA’s “Canto Maestro” radio programme, this proved a highly effective strategy thanks to its 80,000 base if listeners nationwide. In this respect, a HIV testing campaign at CTERA’s Prevention, Advice, and Testing Centre was initiated. The Centre sought to complete the testing of 50 people, and offered a variety of consultations linked to the theme of HIV for 60 people.

In addition to ongoing work on the EFAIDS programme, CTERA dedicated one hour in schools all over the country to provide information about HIV/AIDS and its prevention. Other activities, such as information stands which were set up in the street had a positive impact on the local community. Local radio stations also helped give visibility to the events of World AIDS Day.
Brazil

Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores em Educação (CNTE)

CNTE participated for first time on World AIDS Day with a focus on the national lesson (One Hour on AIDS) on HIV-AIDS prevention in public schools. Public schools in 18 states participated in WAD activities, which were held on 30 November. In São Paulo state alone, 5,000 school children were taught about prevention. In Alagoas state, all regional and municipal Trade Union offices engaged in the WAD initiative. The activities targeted people between 14 and 24 years old, especially women, homosexuals and persons living with HIV/AIDS.

The national lesson was the result of collaboration between the HIV-AIDS programme of the Ministry of Health, CNTE, and EI. The Director of the Ministry of Health's HIV-AIDS programme publicly stated that the best place for raising awareness of the virus is in schools. The 30 November activities followed on from the seminar organised by CNTE in Brasilia, in which many affiliates were trained so that they could take back knowledge about the virus and prevention to their constituencies.

For Fatima Aparecida of CNTE, while it may have been the union's first participation in WAD, "it was the first of many more to come".

Dominica

Dominica Association of Teachers (DAT)

The programme of events in Dominica was very hands-on and classroom based. Forty-six students from grade 6 were divided in groups for discussing various AIDS statements. Afterwards, the groups joined together and misconceptions were clarified by the teacher. Pupils from grade 4 to 6 then produced AIDS posters and participated in a poster competition. The five best posters were exhibited at school.

Another school reported that students debated the importance of protecting oneself against HIV/AIDS, and the various ways in which this could be done. The students also focused on how they could share this information with others. Finally, an AIDS walk was organised to raise awareness in the community. They pledged to help AIDS victims through fund raising activities, and to continue informing themselves and educating others about HIV/AIDS.

Students created several slogans demonstrating their action pledges such as: “We will tell our friends what we know about HIV/AIDS!”, “We will wait until we are adults to have sexual intercourse!”, “When we have sex we will use a condom!” and “If someone we know has AIDS we will not laugh at him/her!”
Dominican Republic

Asociación Nacional de Profesionales y Técnicos de la Educación (ANPROTED)

Photos from the Dominican Republic show that ANPROTED organised various activities attended by workers, teachers and students. Hundreds of children marched in the streets carrying posters and banners on which they had written slogans. Many participants also wore a red ribbon in solidarity with people affected by HIV/AIDS. Students got the opportunity to spend “One Hour on AIDS” in classrooms where they shared and received information about the pandemic. The World AIDS Day was furthermore an opportunity for politicians, teachers, union members and other stakeholders in education to meet and discuss the important role of schools for HIV/AIDS education. The events were well covered by the media.

The union created a customised flyer with a call for more participation in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The flyer was very informative as it explained the nature of HIV/AIDS and invited people to remember that a good instrument for fighting the disease is to show solidarity with persons already affected. The union also produced posters, flyers and t-shirt which carried a message saying: “Education is the best prevention”. This material was distributed throughout the country and was actively used on World AIDS Day.

Gabon

Syndicat de l’Education Nationale (SENA)

EI’s Gabonese affiliate SENA embraced World AIDS Day 2007 with a series of activities based on the slogan ‘One Hour on AIDS: take the initiative.’ Following the instructions given in kit, SENA affiliated teachers involved their students in reflection and debate around the issue of HIV, prompting students to come up with wonderfully creative thinking. Amongst other things, students discussed the use of condoms and the importance of abstinence, and the dissemination of the lesson's messages outside the classroom.

SENA also used the One Hour on AIDS concept on the deferred government celebration of World AIDS Day on 8 December, highlighting the excellent work the union is doing in highlighting the AIDS crisis.
Guatemala

Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Educación de Guatemala (STEG)

STEG held several meetings to celebrate the World AIDS Day attended by many union members, the Minister of Education, STEG’s General Secretary, EI’s regional coordinator in Latin America, and other local stakeholders. They highlighted the importance of education as a preventive measure for HIV/AIDS and illustrated the central role of schools for spreading such knowledge to all members of society. During informative sessions participants received statistical data about the current HIV/AIDS situation in Guatemala. Union members campaigned for World AIDS Day in public by wearing campaign t-shirts especially produced for the occasion. The theme for World AIDS Day in Guatemala was: “Education is the only vaccine for preventing HIV/AIDS”.

Guinea

Fédération Syndicale Professionnelle de l’Education (FSPE) & Syndicat Libre des Enseignants et Chercheurs de Guinée (SLECG)

The Guinean unions reported that students learned much about HIV/AIDS during ‘One Hour on AIDS’. They further pledged to use preventive measures such as condoms and promised to avoid contact with non-sterilised sanitary equipment.

Kurdistan

Kurdistan Teachers Union (KTU)

On the 2nd December the World Health Organisation (WHO) coordinated a gathering of teachers, government officials and civil society organisations to highlight the importance of anticipation and prevention of HIV/AIDS matters. As a contribution to World Aids Day the Kurdistan Teachers Union asked government bodies to prioritise AIDS related themes, such as spreading awareness among society and in particular highlighting the important role of education.

Malaysia

National Union of the Teaching Profession Malaysia (NUTP)

Several themes were discussed during “One Hour on AIDS” in Malaysia such as mother to child HIV transmission, transition by sexual intercourse and transmission by blood transfusion. It was further agreed on that drug users and people engaging in casual sex are at higher risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. Infection can be avoided by quitting or not starting using drugs and by not sharing needles. Students also debated the importance of having
only one sexual partner, being faithful and using condoms. Other topics debated included blood screening before transfusion, early discovery of venereal diseases and establishment of support groups to providing moral support and counselling services.

Several action pledges were undertaken by the learners: They pledged to lead healthy lifestyles, give moral support to persons affected by HIV/AIDS, form equal group support for avoiding high risk factors such as drugs and actively participate in talks, seminars and presentations about HIV/AIDS. They responded to the poster by pledging to volunteer in hospitals and health clinics.

**Mauritania**

*Sindicat National des Enseignants de Mauritanie (SNEM)*

In Mauritania World AIDS Day was marked by distributing “Take the Lead” posters and organizing the “One Hour on AIDS” in all classes. The students were informed about HIV/AIDS issues such as transmission and prevention. They also learned much by participating in sessions to produce posters and slogans targeting AIDS. Finally, the learners dramatized various themes on themes related to AIDS.

**Niger**

*Sindicat National des Enseignants de Base (SNEB)*

The “One Hour on AIDS”- lesson was given in schools throughout the country and enabled teachers and learners to know more about HIV/AIDS and get involved in the fight against the disease. In the capital city of Niamey, various civil society stakeholders were invited to participate in the classroom discussions such as the President of the National EFA Coalition in Niger.

As a response to the “Take the Lead” Poster, most of the participants decided to get involved to overcome stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS and to provide moral support. Others promised to get involved in awareness raising activities in order to reduce the prevalence of HIV infections in the country.

**Pakistan**

*All Pakistan Government School Teachers Associations (APGSTA)*

In Pakistan the material provided by EI was well received and the programme was arranged on three different dates. Most students did not know anything about HIV/AIDS prior to the World AIDS Day; hence APGSTA believes it to be important to continue the work by organising HIV/AIDS awareness raising programmes during the course of the year in schools throughout the country.
During “One Hour on AIDS”, most students were surprised to learn about HIV/AIDS and its negative impact on all aspects of human life. Initially, the students were passive. However, after a short matter of time they engaged with the topic and began to share and debate their views. The participants realised that in an HIV/AIDS context it is important to show people respect and that the focus should centre on prevention, support and treatment.

The learners’ action pledges included a plan to continue their research HIV/AIDS and to share this knowledge in their social circles. Since the school is a central institute in society and a place where students should be able receive HIV/AIDS related counselling, they also recommended HIV/AIDS Education to be included in Health Education.

**Senegal**

**Syndicat National de l’Enseignement Elémentaire (SNEEL-CNTS)**
& **Syndicat Unique et Démocratique des Enseignants du Sénégal (SUDES)**
& **Syndicat des Professeurs du Sénégal (SYPROS)**
& **Union Démocratique des Enseignantes et des Enseignants du Sénégal, (UDEN)**

The lesson was given in a classroom of the Secondary Education College (CEM 19), in the suburbs of Dakar which enabled students and teachers to talk about the disease and possible solutions. It emerged that there are still people who have little or no genuine information about HIV/AIDS and teachers therefore have a role to inform their students about HIV and AIDS and to encourage them to undertake actions in their community. The participants further agreed that everybody should think about how best to express their solidarity with those infected and affected.

The learners followed suggestions stemming from the “Take the Lead” Poster and promised to become informed and show their solidarity with people living with HIV/AIDS, to organise information sessions during youth activities, and to get tested themselves.
Uganda

Uganda National Teachers Union (UNATU)

In Uganda the students raised a broad spectrum of HIV/AIDS related issues for discussion. First of all, students agreed that HIV/AIDS has no social or cultural boundaries and as it may affect everyone that preventive measures are key to avoiding infection. Working to prevent sexual abuse in communities and risky sexual behaviour were highlighted as crucial factors. They also identified sexual intercourse, blood transfusion and mother to child transmission as the primary causes of HIV-infection.

Misinformation about risk of infection through hand-shaking and sharing toilets were clarified and discussion about whether or not kissing may spread HIV, was raised. One group therefore suggested that kissing may only be dangerous if the partners have wounds. Students also emphasised that stigma and discrimination should be discouraged as this causes ignorance and judgement of people affected by HIV/AIDS and they asked teachers to actively table HIV/AIDS related issues for discussion in class.

Encouraged by The 'Take the Lead' Poster students pledged numerous actions, such as abstaining from sex, avoiding exclusion of peers in and outside school and involving themselves in Straight Talk Clubs. Other actions the students were eager to focus on included promoting gender equality, avoiding risky sexual behaviour and discouraging stigma and discrimination.
LA ESCUELA ESTÁ UNIDA... A LA LUCHA CONTRA EL SIDA...

ADP
ZONA NORTE

APGSTA
PAKISTAN

HIV/AIDS
Take the Lead on AIDS
The Way forward

As illustrated in this report, World AIDS Day 2007 was celebrated by several EI affiliates throughout the world. Highlighting World AIDS Day is particularly important in countries with a high HIV prevalence such as Brazil and Uganda. Campaigning during World AIDS Day plays an important role in raising public awareness about the threat of HIV and AIDS and encouraging them to take action for prevention and education on HIV and AIDS.

Thanks to motivated teachers and their strong campaigning in many countries, learners were sensitised about HIV and AIDS and together teachers and learners encouraged each other to take the lead by carrying out similar activities, not only on World AIDS Day, but throughout the year.

Students purposefully pledged to lead healthy lifestyles, give moral support to people living with HIV and AIDS and promised to avoid high risk factors such as drugs and unsafe sex. They also promised to encourage people to seek HIV testing. The importance of talking openly about HIV and AIDS related issues and avoiding exclusion of peers in and outside school was also mentioned. Other learners promised to attend future talks, seminars and presentation about HIV and AIDS and share gained knowledge in social circles for raising awareness.

In Kurdistan and Pakistan, teachers unions translated the ‘One Hour on AIDS’ activity in local languages. Unions also reported how positive it was to see pupils adding issues on the ‘Take the Lead’ poster adapted to their national contexts.

This report shows how activities carried out in the framework of World AIDS Day have a sustained impact on teachers’ and students’ motivation to emphasise the importance of HIV and AIDS sensitisation.

The described events may give your union ideas for future activities and EI wishes to encourage all its affiliates to join the battle against HIV/AIDS and actively participate in World AIDS Day 2008.

Remember! Take the lead on AIDS throughout the year!

Note: all images have been provided by EI affiliates.
Take the lead on AIDS

Increasing Awareness
Help people learn more about HIV and AIDS, including prevention, treatment, care, and support, as well as the stigma and discrimination that occurs in different settings, including your school and community.

Protecting Yourself
Protect yourself and others in your life

Changing Your School
Advocate for changes at your school that can help address HIV and AIDS.

Getting Involved in your Community
Help people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS by volunteering at a hospital, health clinic, home-based care programme, AIDS service organisation, or AIDS action group.

Demanding Global Action
Convince politicians to take action to provide more and better HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care, and support services and to deal with stigma and discrimination.

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