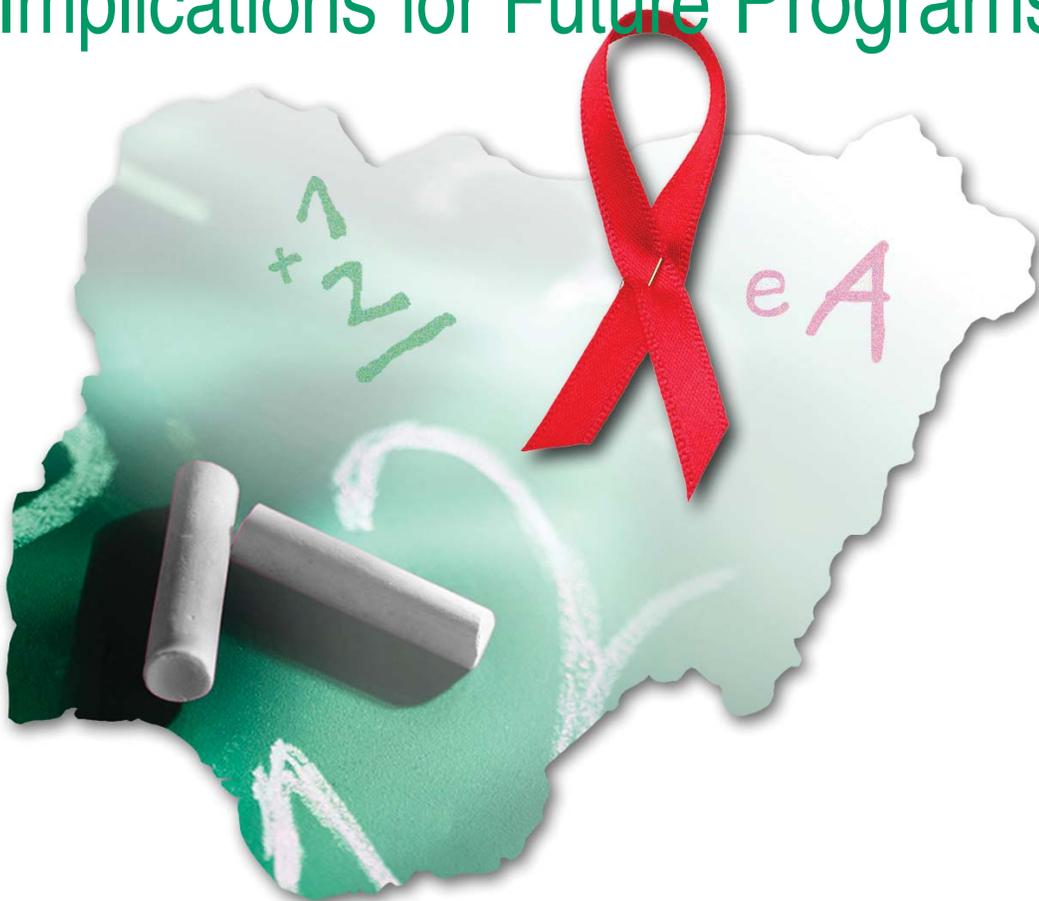


Assessing Educators' Views on the Impact of HIV/AIDS on Primary Education in Nigeria

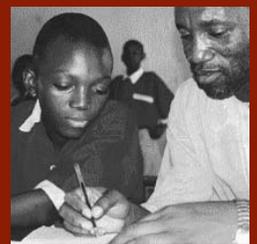
Implications for Future Programs



Summary ♦ November 2004

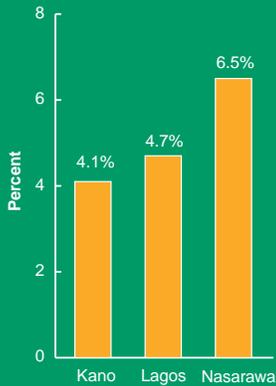
A USAID-funded HIV/AIDS impact study on primary education completed in 2004 indicates that Kano, Lagos, and Nasarawa states have practical opportunities to restrain the increasing vulnerability of their primary education system to HIV/AIDS.

The study, which was conducted among 1,350 of the states' stakeholders—public sector school administrators, teachers, educational planners, parents, and community leaders—assessed the impact of HIV/AIDS on primary education and explored feasible interventions that can be introduced in primary schools.



The study results suggest that while the impacts of HIV/AIDS on primary education have not yet become pronounced, now is the most opportune time to scale up HIV/AIDS interventions in primary schools.

Estimated adult HIV prevalence in 2003



Adult HIV prevalence in the three states

Limited epidemiological and clinical data exist on HIV/AIDS-related illnesses in Nigeria.

However, available sentinel survey data inform that levels of HIV infection vary among adults in the three states and that the rate of HIV infection has been on the rise over the past 10 years.

Perceived impact of HIV/AIDS on primary education among stakeholders

Most stakeholders interviewed do not view HIV/AIDS as having had a major impact on primary education in Nigeria, so far.

- About 10% of the school administrators thought that the HIV/AIDS situation in their communities was bad; 19% said they were not sure because they “couldn’t tell who is infected and who is not;” and 71% reported that HIV/AIDS was very rare or non-existent.
- Among teachers, 47% in Nasarawa reported that HIV/AIDS has negatively affected primary education in their areas, compared with 12% in Kano and 11% in Lagos.

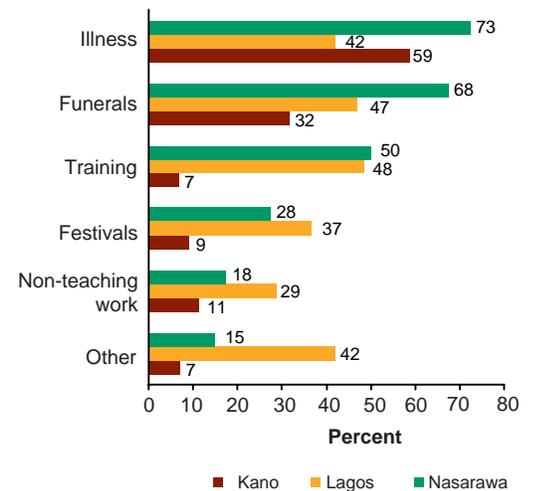
Indications of HIV/AIDS impact on the supply and demand for education

Teacher Supply. HIV/AIDS can affect the performance and productivity of educators through increased deaths, absences, and the financial and emotional burden of caregiving for relatives and friends. Results from this study show state-level differences in reported direct impact.

- About 18% of teachers in Nasarawa believed they had been exposed to HIV infection in the past compared with 7% in Lagos and 3% in Kano.
- Over 75% of Nasarawa teachers knew or had known someone infected with HIV—a much higher proportion than the 45% of teachers in Kano and 23% in Lagos.

- One in every five Nasarawa teachers (20%) reported having cared for someone infected with HIV over the past five years, compared with 8% of teachers in Kano and 4% in Lagos.
- Less than 7% of school administrators reported a teacher death from any cause in their schools during the past two years.
- Illnesses (of self, relatives, or friends) and funerals constituted the major causes of teacher absences in the last term in all three states. The percentage of reported absences was highest in Nasarawa state. Although all of these absences were not HIV/AIDS-related, Nasarawa, which had the highest estimated adult HIV prevalence among the three states over the past decade, also reported the highest rate of absenteeism and funerals.

Reason for Teacher Absenteeism in the Last Term According to School Administrators, by State (2004).



School administrators currently have limited operational guidelines on how to handle teacher absences. Usually, they have another teacher take over the class, merge classes, or send children home early.

- HIV/AIDS-related illnesses tend to be chronic, and as the HIV/AIDS epidemic spreads among the teaching corps, this could lead to longer-duration absences that exacerbate the problem of teacher supply.



Educators' and parents' views about the HIV/AIDS situation are important because they can play a critical role in the implementation of HIV/AIDS-related interventions in primary schools.

■ Since most health, demographic, and social impacts of HIV/AIDS lag HIV infection, the study's observed impacts will likely increase, at least in the near future, given the increased estimated HIV prevalence over the past decade.

Demand for Education: Pupil Attendance and Performance at School. HIV/AIDS can affect the performance of pupils, especially through emotional and/or psychological distress following the loss or illness of a relative, or through increased absences or drop-outs to care for ill relatives, or due to inability to pay for tuition and scholastic materials.

■ Only 2.2% of school administrators reported having children affected by HIV/AIDS (CAAs) in their schools over the past two years. Another 6.7% were not sure if any of their pupils had been affected.

■ About 3% of teachers in Nasarawa reported having taught CAAs over the last two years, compared with 1.7% in Kano and 1% in Lagos.

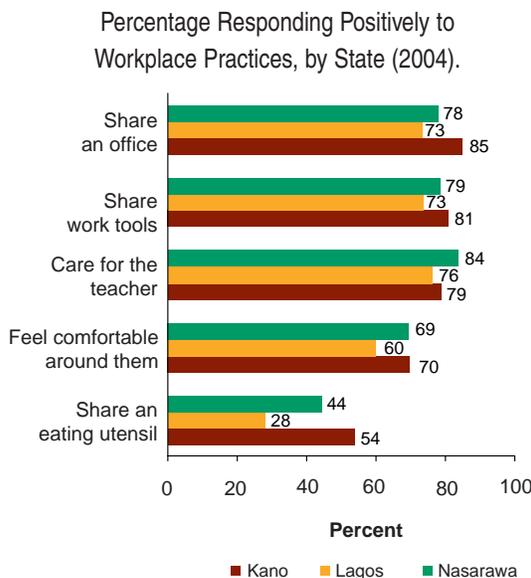
■ The majority of respondents interviewed (including those who did not have CAAs in their schools/classes over the past two years) concurred that CAAs are worse off than their peers in overall health, nutrition, and emotional well being; school attendance; affordability of tuition and textbooks; and overall class performance.

HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination

Negative attitudes toward persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWA) and those affected by the disease could negatively affect their (both those infected and affected) performance in school

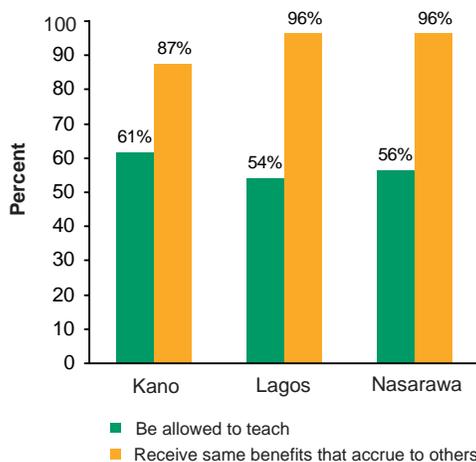
and in other spheres of life. In some cases, such attitudes lead to discrimination against PLWAs.

Teachers' Views on How They Would Treat Fellow HIV-Infected Workers.



Teachers Were Divided in Their Opinions of Whether HIV-Positive Teachers Should Be Allowed to Teach.

Percentage Responding to Teacher Management Practices, by State (2004).



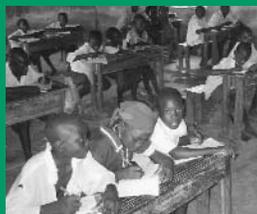
Enhancements to the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and teacher management policies could enable consistent and sustainable ways to address teacher absenteeism.



HIV/AIDS still carries strong stigma. Teachers and school administrators are reluctant to talk about HIV in the workplace. Almost half of teachers interviewed reported that HIV-positive teachers should not be allowed to teach. Also, most parents would not support having HIV-infected teachers teach in their schools.



The Federal Ministry of Education (FMOE), together with implementing partners, recently produced a draft *National HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy for the Education Sector in Nigeria* that will be crucial to preventing the spread of HIV, mitigating its impact and addressing HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination within the primary education system.



The unanimous support for HIV/AIDS education in upper primary schools among all stakeholders presents an opportunity for implementation of the Family Life and HIV/AIDS Curriculum that was developed by the Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) and the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC).

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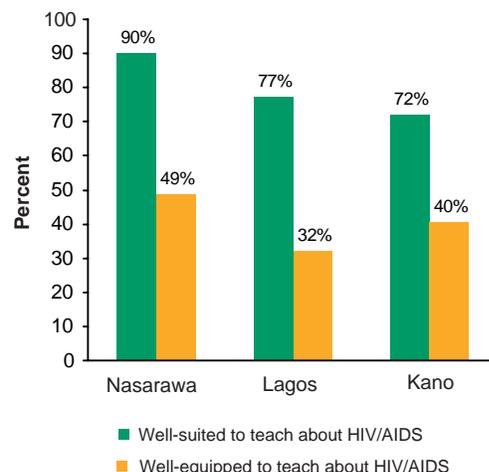
HIV/AIDS interventions in primary schools

The most supported HIV/AIDS intervention in primary schools identified during this study is HIV/AIDS education in upper primary classes. According to respondents, little HIV/AIDS education in primary schools is currently occurring in the three states.

However,

- Most teachers interviewed indicated that they were not currently well-equipped to conduct HIV/AIDS education.
- Effective implementation of the curriculum would require investment in the distribution of HIV/AIDS resource materials.
- Most parents would not support education on, the use of, and/or distribution of condoms.

Percentage Responding to Whether Teachers Are Well-Equipped and Well-Suited to Teach About HIV/AIDS, by State (2004).



Next Steps to Be Considered

- ◆ There is a need to finalize and implement the draft *National HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy for the Education Sector* recently developed by FMOE, in the near future. It is also necessary to develop HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation programs that specifically target educators in primary schools.
- ◆ Ongoing dissemination of the Family Life and HIV/AIDS curriculum that was developed by NERDC and UBEC should be supplemented with capacity-building workshops on HIV/AIDS issues for primary teachers.
- ◆ Dialogue with teacher training institutions should be developed to incorporate life skills training into Primary Education Studies (PES) teacher pre-service training curricula to ensure that all teachers entering the teacher corps are equipped.
- ◆ More culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive resource materials on HIV/AIDS should be distributed to primary schools.
- ◆ Local government-organized community meetings to increase awareness about the curriculum at the local level and to obtain stakeholder buy-in should be considered.

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