UNESCO ABUJA,

Initiative On HIV/AIDS Preventive Education

STRATEGIC PLAN OF ACTION

UNESCO ABUJA PUBLICATION
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FOREWORD

More than two decades have passed since the discovery of HIV/AIDS, a deadly disease which if left to run its natural course would cause devastation of an unprecedented scale. The spread of the pandemic across Asia and Africa has gone beyond what the health sector could manage.

Nigeria is facing an HIV/AIDS crisis similar to that eastern and southern Africa a decade ago. The estimate median HIV prevalence was 5.8% among antenatal clinic attendees in Nigeria at the end of 2001, with over 3m HIV positive adults. However, the epidemic is complex, with some states having prevalence over 10% - among the highest levels in the world. Youths are the most vulnerable group and also the worst hit by the epidemic.

In the past three years we have witnessed unprecedented levels of political and institutional effort aimed at reversing the course of the epidemic in the country. Political leadership has improved significantly, and as a demonstration of its commitment towards addressing the HIV/AIDS problem in the continent, Nigeria hosted the OAU Special summit on HIV/AIDS in June 2001 during which the Abuja declaration was made.

In spite of recent efforts, so far, the response to the epidemic is limited and the coverage of core HIV/AIDS activities remains critically low. It is well established that other key elements necessary for a successful response to HIV/AIDS include: a multi-sectoral approach, effective mobilization massive resources, a concerted effort to put the HIV/AIDS agenda into major development instruments, and scaling up of interventions based on the best available evidence.

The declaration of commitment by the United Nation General Assembly Special Session of June 2001 emphasized a multi-sectoral approach in which preventive HIV/AIDS education and empowerment of youths is an important strategy. The timely call by the Director – General of UNESCO to all its field offices to integrate preventive education as a tool to stemming the spread of
HIV/AIDS is a reflection of this emphasis. The current UNESCO initiative on preventive education is therefore most welcomed.

The UNESCO Abuja HIV/AIDS Preventive Education initiative is complementary to the global fight against HIV/AIDS and requires the support of all stakeholders involved in the global alliance against the pandemic.

It is my hope that the initiative will signal the emergence of a revolutionary educational process that will integrate the formal and non-formal sectors with customized curricula that will address all the ramifications of the epidemic in a comprehensive manner.

Realizing that the battle against AIDS will not be won without the necessary resources, I call on governments, the organised private sector as well as developmental partners to give the plan the backing it deserves, by mobilizing the necessary resources required.

Finally, let me repeat the words of the United Nations Secretary General ‘...and in the war against AIDS, there is no us and them, no developing countries, no rich and poor – only a common enemy that knows no frontiers and threatens all people. But we must all remember that while HIV/AIDS affects both rich and poor, the poor are much more vulnerable to infection, and much less able to cope with the disease once infected...’

It is no this note that I present the plan to all stakeholders for popular support and implementation.

Dr. Berhe Costantinos
UNAIDS
Abuja-Nigeria
# List of Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>NTI</td>
<td>National Teachers' Institute</td>
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<td>NUC</td>
<td>National University Commission</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children's Fund</td>
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UNESCO’s Initiative on HIV/AIDS Preventive Education: Strategic Plan of Action.

The mission

United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural organisation (UNESCO) is mandated to contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further universal respect for justice, rule of law and human rights and fundamental freedoms. In line with this, UNESCO identifies the fight against HIV/AIDS as fundamental to it achieving its goals.

UNESCO’s overall mission in the global fight against HIV/AIDS, in line with the overall aims of the UN is to “support communities and countries to reduce risk and vulnerability to infection, to save lives and alleviate human suffering, and to lessen the epidemics overall impact on development.”

Within this general framework, UNESCO’s key mission in Nigeria will be to engage in advocacy, information sharing about the epidemic, capacity building to reduce risk, and lessening of the institutional impact of the epidemic, through intensified preventive education.

Background

Within a period of two decades, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has become a global development disaster, with implications for health, human development, food production, economy, national security and so on. Global trends indicate that infection rates are rising exponentially. In the year 2000, it was estimated that 40 million people were living with HIV or AIDS globally. In Nigeria, HIV/AIDS became a reality around 1986 when the first case was diagnosed. Since then the rate of infection has continued to increase at an alarming rate. The 2001 sentinel survey reported a high record 5.8% increase amongst the age group 15-49. This translates into over 2.8 million people living with HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that by the year 2004 over 4.5 million will be living with HIV/AIDS.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has been particularly devastating for development by destroying productive capacity and widening the gap between the rich and the poor. Furthermore, it disproportionately affects young adults, especially women – the group most vital for development. The epidemic has an exceptional
impact on the economy in two ways. Firstly, by loss of productivity due to the loss of the most productive; secondly, the burden of caring for the sick and tending for orphans sap human and other resources which would have been used for other productive endeavours. AIDS is wiping out decades of investment in education and in human development.

AIDS attacks not only the human body, but the body politic as well. For instance, in many countries, it already has an unprecedented institutional impact, not only on the organisations most needed for development, but also on those most needed to prevent the spread of the epidemic itself. The high rate of the disease amongst teachers, health workers and other trained professionals will make replacement increasingly hard to find – and there will be fewer to educate and care for them. It will erode access to education, and interfere with the capacity of key institutions to function. Governance itself may be threatened by decimation.

In response to this global epidemic, the United Nations has declared the fight against HIV/AIDS one of its top priorities, with the Secretary General regarding the epidemic as “the most formidable challenge of our time”. To overcome this, the Secretary General thus recommends that the Millennium Summit adopt as an explicit goal:

- The reduction of HIV infection rates in persons 15-24 years of age – by 25% within the most affected countries before the year 2005 and by 25% globally before 2010;

- And to that end, he also recommended that governments set explicit prevention targets: by 2005 at least 90 percent, and by 2010 at least 95 percent, of young men and women to have access to the information, education and services they need to protect themselves against HIV infection

To help meet this monumental target, UNESCO is mapping out below its strategic plan for combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nigeria.
The Goal of the Strategic Plan:

The overall goal of UNESCO’s strategic plan of Action for HIV/AIDS Preventive Education in Nigeria is to reduce the spread of infection by providing preventive education to school-based youth and technical support to the institutions most relevant to the education of adults using appropriate resources in its areas of competence: education science, culture and communication.

An additional goal is to provide an effective and pioneering leadership in HIV/AIDS interventions in Nigeria

Objectives
Specific Objectives of the Action Plan are:

- To support the accelerated development of national and state education services in the area of HIV/Preventive education.

- To protect children and school-based youth people from the epidemic and its impact.

- To affirm and strengthen the capacity of communities and institutions to respond to the epidemic.

- To reduce the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS and to protect human rights through personal, political advocacy and the promotion of policies that prevent discrimination and intolerance.

- To ensure an extra-ordinary response to the epidemic including the full engagement of top-level leaders to achieve measurable targets.

- To actively support the development of partnerships required to address the epidemic, in particular those required to improve access to essential information and services.

- To strengthen human resource and institutional capacity required to support service providers engaged in the response to the epidemic, in particular those in education.
• To contribute to the development of enabling policies, legislation and programmes that address individual and societal vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and mitigates its socio-economic impact.

• To support the development of school curricular that address sexuality education.

UNESCO’s Response to HIV/AIDS in Nigeria

Core Activities

UNESCO’s priority in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Nigeria is narrowed to the particular area of preventive education. In this regard, its core tasks include:

- Consolidating UNESCO’s in-house capacity
- Advocacy at all levels
- Empowering of journalists,
- Facilitation of study/reflection among education personnel regarding prevention strategies
- Customising and delivering the message using cultural resources
- Preventing risky behaviour
- Teacher Training for more effective preventive education
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Technical support to the Federal Ministry of Education
- Research and Evaluation

Action Plan

Consolidating UNESCO’s in-house capacity

To ensure that UNESCO Nigeria’s office is equipped to meet the goals of its strategic plan, it will:

- Increase its in-house HIV/AIDS personnel
- Improve its in-house material and information on HIV/AIDS
- Ensure that all staff have relevant information on preventive education
- Increase its in-house capacity to meet the public’s needs for information on HIV/AIDS
- Work with the education communities in order to generate strategies and prevention methods
- Generate and publish relevant materials.
Specific Tasks

- Establish a Task Force of education and health specialists
- Appoint a capable Nigerian resource person to support Federal Ministry of Education’s HIV Desk as well as NGOs involved in preventive education
- Appoint an international Expert on HIV/AIDS
- Support the provision of at least 10 additional Information Education and Communication (IEC) print, audio and visual material for its library
- Support the FME in creating and advertising an in house helpdesk and hotline for the public on HIV/AIDS Preventive education, which will also:
  - Generate a database in the public’s HIV/AIDS Preventive education information needs
  - Document most frequently asked questions for research and planning purposes.
  - Work towards the inclusion of youth friendly facilities in education institutions and learning centres

Advocacy at all levels

The key to an effective preventive education strategy is the repeated and unrelenting advocacy and support of political authorities at the highest national level. In this regard UNESCO will:

- Identify key government ministries and officials with which to collaborate in its fights against HIV/AIDS
- Provide effective leadership, mobilisation and co-ordination for these key ministries identified for the purpose of engaging in high level advocacy for preventive education.
- Mobilise the Federal Ministry of Education, and other relevant ministries, schools and the media to become advocates for efforts in preventive education.
- Collaborate with non-governmental organisations and civil society to increase advocacy at all levels.
- Collaborate with other UN agencies and other interested international bodies, especially UNAIDS, UNICEF and the World Bank in their advocacy initiatives.
- Collaborate with and support organisation seeking legislation against discrimination and stigmatisation of people living with HIV/AIDS, especially of their wards.
Specific Tasks

- Organise at least one advocacy workshop for ministry officials (policy makers) and other key school authority personnel
- Organise at least one national stakeholders' workshop.
- Identify NGOs to partner with in the advocacy campaign.
- Keep abreast of initiatives in other UN agencies.

Customising the message
For preventive education to be effective, the message must be customised to accommodate all social strata, gender, educational level, cultures and languages of Nigeria. In this regard UNESCO will:

- Actively take part in the development and dissemination of curricula tailored to recipients at different levels of understanding of HIV/AIDS.
- Produce Information Education and Communication (IEC) material and do training in local languages.
- Create gender awareness in HIV/AIDS training and IEC material.
- Encourage the incorporation of gender sensitive training and material by its partners.
- Include and support the development of relevant knowledge, attitudes and skills in health and other school subjects.
- Support and promote programmes that attend to modes of communication and information, which are youth friendly.

Specific Tasks

- Undertake a survey of locally produced materials on preventive education
- Evaluate available materials on preventive education
- Produce a primary school level teacher manual on HIV/AIDS Preventive education
- Produce a secondary school level teacher manual on HIV/AIDS Preventive education
- Produce a video drama for school children on HIV/AIDS
• Produce comic books for school children on HIV/AIDS
• Translate all IEC material into the three main Nigerian languages
• Produce radio and television jingles/adverts on HIV/AIDS

Preventing Risky Behaviour
The critical test in evaluating the extent to which preventive education has been effective is the extent to which the message changes behaviour. In this regard UNESCO will:

• Investigate and introduce effective learning strategies relating to HIV/AIDS

• Encourage the production and dissemination of accurate and informative material about HIV/AIDS.

• Encourage provision of books and other information to schools and libraries all over Nigeria.

• Promote educational efforts addressing the issues that put women at risk, such as violence and powerlessness. Also support education and counselling that equip women better to cope and protect themselves.

• Engage the media and NGOs in information dissemination especially targeted at school age children.

• Advocate for the speedy dissemination of the recently approved sexuality education curricula.

• Review the sexuality education curricula for schools in Nigeria to ensure that it:
  • Focuses on helping teenagers to change their behaviour-using role playing, games, and exercises that strengthen social skills.
  
  • Advocates social learning theories as a foundation for program development, focusing on recognising social influences, changing individual values, changing group norms, and building social skills.
  
  • Utilises experimental activities designed to personalise basic, accurate information about the risks of unprotected intercourse and methods of avoiding unprotected intercourse.
• Promotes activities that address social or media influences on sexual behaviours.

• Reinforce clear and appropriate values to strengthen individual values and group norms against unprotected sex.

• Promote modelling and practice in communication, negotiation, and refusal skills.

**Specific Tasks**

- Provide at least 10 HIV/AIDS books and information to at least 10 schools and libraries per state.
- Advocate that the Federal and various State ministries of education provide HIV/AIDS books and material to all schools.
- Organise a media workshop to train journalists on disseminating youth friendly HIV/AIDS information.
- Produce a radio drama series and appropriate jingles that focus on HIV/AIDS information for youth.
- Organise at least one national conference on gender issues in HIV/AIDS relevant to teachers and schools.
- Support sexuality education for primary and secondary schools.
- Organise at least one national conference on the link between education and HIV/AIDS.
- Support at least one youth and gender friendly HIV/AIDS information help desk and telephone hotline per state for school age children.
- Provide pupils with information on NGOs working on HIV/AIDS and support networks in their state.

**Teacher Training**

For youths and adolescents, who also happen to be those greatest at risk of HIV/AIDS infection, the schoolteacher remains a main educator, role model and repository of knowledge and thus the best ally in disseminating preventive education. In this regard UNESCO will:

- Support teacher training entities including non-governmental organisations to train teachers in primary and secondary schools in all the states of Nigeria on HIV/AIDS prevention and care.
• Assess, develop and communicate effective teaching and learning methods that are sensitive to culture as well as potent in practice.
• Support and take part in the training of curricula developers, teacher training and teachers to adopt and use HIV/AIDS materials and other relevant material, in this regard assist in the establishment of a Department of Preventive education at the NTI and other colleges of education.
• Support and help improve the teaching of life skills in the education system and the wider society.
• Work to overcome teacher discomfort about addressing sexuality issues and mobilise other professions, such as health personnel to take part in preventive education programmes.

Specific Tasks
• Work towards the establishment of a Department of Preventive Education at the National Institute for Teachers Training.
• Provide international technical assistance to support the above.
• Train at least 10 teachers, especially guidance counsellors and biology teachers per state from state-owned schools in all 36 states of the federation
• Support the establishment of one help desk per state for teacher’s support and information
• Provide teachers with information on NGOs working on HIV/AIDS and support networks in their state

Gender Mainstreaming
The de facto second class status of women, especially adolescent girls in Nigeria creates both direct and indirect threats to their health and education, making them more vulnerable to the HIV/AIDS epidemic than men. In this regard, UNESCO will:
• Pay particular attention to information and programmes that target young girls.
• Promote and support the development of curricula sensitive to gender.
• Promote and support gender mainstreaming in schools, the Federal Ministry of Education and other relevant education bodies.
• Strategize and encourage ways to promote girls education in Nigeria.
• Encourage research that examines the particular problems young girls face in Nigeria that makes them more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.
• Disseminate information on the relationship between gender and HIV/AIDS.
Stimulate advocacy for the right to health and education for women.

**Specific Tasks**

- Organise at least one gender-mainstreaming workshop for schoolteachers and key personnel of the Federal Ministry of Education and other education bodies.
- Stimulate discussions and programmes with all relevant education bodies, especially the Federal Ministry of Education on ways to promote girls education and health.
- Collaborate with other UN agencies, especially UNIFEM in their gender mainstreaming efforts.
- Support at least one research and publication on the impact of gender on HIV/AIDS transmission, especially for young girls.
- Disseminate research and publication on the impact of gender on HIV/AIDS transmission to schools.
- Advocate for gender mainstreaming in government parastatals.

**Technical Support to the Federal Ministry of Education**

As the highest education decision body in Nigeria, collaborating closely and effectively with the Federal Ministry of Education will ensure speedy progress in the institutionalisation of HIV/AIDS education in Nigeria and the further empowerment of States Ministries of Education. In this regard UNESCO will:

- Sensitise ministry policy makers on the need to integrate HIV/AIDS prevention and impact mitigation into the education development plan.
- Support the ministry to become an active leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS.
- Review existing education programmes and efforts of the ministry that promote HIV/AIDS education with the aim of:
  - Supporting effective ones
  - Promoting new programmes and efforts that can better deliver an effective HIV/AIDS education.
- Evaluate the capacity and resources of the ministry and personnel to effectively deliver goals with the aim of:
  - Improving their capacity
  - Providing other needed support.
- Promote a Rights-based approach within the ministry.
- Encourage gender education and mainstreaming within the ministry.
Specific Tasks
UNESCO will support the Federal Ministry of Education in
- Organising one awareness creation workshop for ministry personnel
- Identifying training and capacity building needs of the Ministry
- Conducting relevant training and capacity building workshops for personnel
- Providing relevant material and resources for personnel
- Facilitating the appointment of an HIV/AIDS focal personnel within the ministry
- Facilitating the development of a broad based framework of preventive education for the ministry
- Developing a plan of action for the ministry, with set targets and deliverables
- Production and distribution of IEC material by the ministry for schools
- Facilitating the speedy adoption and dissemination of the recently approved sexuality education curricula for schools

Empowering Journalist and others in the media
A key agent in providing preventive education is the media. To ensure that they are effective partners in the fight against HIV/AIDS, UNESCO will:
- Engage the media in information dissemination especially targeted to school age children.
- Ensure that the information dissemination by the media is accurate, gender sensitive and youth friendly.
- Ensure that the media is up to date on current information regarding HIV/AIDS.
- Ensure that the media is informed of UNESCO’s activities in HIV/AIDS prevention.

Specific Tasks
- Identify at least one strategic journalist in each print, radio and television to work with.
- Provide training to these journalists.
- Organise a half-yearly brain storming session with the journalists to assess their views and identify new strategies for reaching youth.
Create a database of all articles written by journalists on HIV/AIDS in order to assess their accuracy and usefulness to school age children and advice on areas that need change.

Invite the journalists to all UNESCO’s HIV/AIDS programmes.

**Facilitation of Study/Reflection among Education Personnel Regarding Prevention Strategies.**

To engender continuous assessment of preventive education strategies agreed upon with education personnel, UNESCO will:

- Periodically evaluate education personnel’s attitude towards existing strategies
- Solicit opinion from education personnel on areas of improvement.

**Specific Tasks**

- Design, distribute and collate a bi-annual assessment questionnaire to all stakeholders
- Commission a study on the impact of preventive education in schools.
- Organise at least one brainstorming/feedback workshop a year.

**Research and Evaluation**

In order to customise information, ensure gender awareness, and engage in effective advocacy and plan intervention programmes; research and evaluation has to be key the in HIV/AIDS preventive education programme for Nigeria. In this regard UNESCO will:

- Promote HIV/AIDS preventive education research in Nigeria.
- Strengthen relationship with the NUC and select higher education institutions in promoting research
- Continually evaluate the effectiveness of its programme and technical support.
- Collate UNESCO Abuja best practice and those of other partner agencies.
- Share best practices with the Federal Ministry of Education, NGOs and the media.
Specific Tasks

- Commission an HIV/AIDS preventive education research in Nigeria, with specific emphasis on youths and adolescent girls.
- Design an in-house monitoring and evaluation system.
- Design a monitoring and evaluation system for schools and the Federal Ministry of Education.
- Document best practices.

Conclusion

The above strategic plan is the first in demonstrating UNESCO’s seriousness in tackling the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nigeria. It is hoped that the successful implementation of activities outlined in the strategy document will help provide HIV/AIDS information to at least 50% of all school-age children within the first two years of commencement of activities. It is also expected that all guidance counsellors and biology teachers of all state schools would have adequate information on AIDS prevention within this period. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education would have been adequately sensitised staff trained to provide HIV/AIDS Prevention information on their own schools without the assistance of UNESCO. Finally, it is hoped that the research and evaluation studies will help provide up to date information on best practices and effective education for Nigeria. An indication of the success of UNESCO’s activity will be an at least 40% reduction in the spread of HIV/AIDS amongst adolescents in Nigeria.

It is however, important to note that while the strategy documents is a guiding light for HIV/AIDS Prevention strategy for Nigeria, it is not cast in stone. Instead, it is assumed that as activities commerce there might be need to modify or even expand the scope of the strategic plan in order to accommodate the needs of stakeholders and ensure cultural sensitivity.
### Two Year Work Plan – 2002 - 2003

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<th>Activities</th>
<th>Jan – March</th>
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<td><strong>Consolidating UNESCO’s house capacity</strong></td>
<td>Appt an international Expert on HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Provide at least 10 additional IEC print, audio and visual material for its library</td>
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<td>Create an in house helpdesk and hotline for the public on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>Appoint Nigerian experts</td>
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<td><strong>Advocacy at all levels</strong></td>
<td>Identify NGOs to partner with in the advocacy campaign</td>
<td>Organise at least one advocacy leader workshop for ministry officials and key other school authority personnel.</td>
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<td>Keep abreast of initiatives in other UN agencies</td>
<td>Organise at least one national advocacy workshop</td>
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<td><strong>Customising the message</strong></td>
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<td>Produce radio and television jingles/adverts on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>Translate all IEC material into the three main languages</td>
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<td>New</td>
<td>Secondary school level teacher manual on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>New</td>
<td>Produce a comic book for school children on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>Provide pupils with information on NGOs working on HIV/AIDS and support networks in their state</td>
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<td>Support sexuality education for primary and secondary schools</td>
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<td>Identify the training and capacity building needs of the Ministry</td>
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<td>Encourage, facilitate and help develop a broad based framework of preventive education for the ministry</td>
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<td>Encourage, facilitate and help in the documentation of a plan of action for the ministry, with set targets and deliverables</td>
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<td>Encourage and facilitate the production of IEC material by the</td>
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<td>Research and Evaluation</td>
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