



## Reducing HIV Stigma by Education - Ghana

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HIV/AIDS is having a serious negative impact on social and economic development in Africa. In the absence of an effective cure, the only logical solution is prevention, which requires the dissemination of reliable information to the entire population. Stigmatization related to HIV/AIDS is frequently spread through lack of knowledge, traditional cultural practices, and religious beliefs.

The project goal is to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and associated stigmatization through education of school children and youth. Strengthening institutional capacity to prepare teachers and community youth workers to convey the facts and discuss the issues that obscure the reality of HIV/AIDS will help reach the very population that needs to know how to survive in communities of increasing risk. To achieve this goal, the project proposes to work with three major universities in Ghana to develop effective course materials and instructional methods for school teachers and community youth facilitators.

The project impact will be achieved by building on existing communication networks and expertise to develop and implement an instructional programme to effect positive behavioural and attitudinal change in teachers and community workers. Two of the partner universities, University of Cape Coast (UCC) and University of Education, Winneba (UNEW), will deliver HIV/AIDS courses through their teacher education programmes. The University of Ghana (UG) will develop a training programme in the fundamentals of HIV/AIDS awareness, recognition, and prevention to reach out-of-school youth.

The expected outcome of the project is a critical mass of school teachers, youth workers, students, parents, and youth who understand the causes of HIV/AIDS and that the disease is not an indicator of the morality of the individuals, their families, or their communities. Increased knowledge will diminish the stigma associated with the disease.



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## **Expected Results in Ghana**

By the end of the project, the expected results include:

- Establishment of a team of HIV/AIDS specialists and educators to produce instructional materials to inform teachers, youth facilitators, students, and youth about the causes of HIV/AIDS, the stigma associated with it, and the means of preventing it.
- Increased capacity, knowledge, and skills in the application of instructional methods across the curriculum for teaching boys and girls how to prevent and recognize HIV/AIDS and how to care for people with the disease.
- 126 university lecturers and tutors from partner universities trained to teach HIV/AIDS education to teachers enrolled in the education diploma programmes and to community youth workers.
- 15,000 school teachers and 1,800 community youth workers using participatory education techniques to educate girls and boys in HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.
- 1.2 million school children and 72,000 out-of-school youth with fundamental HIV/AIDS education.
- Increased frank discussion among youth and adult women and men about HIV/AIDS to help dispel the stigma and reduce discrimination.

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