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Assessment life-skills based curriculum in Lao PDR

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Description:

According to the 2010 UNGASS Country Progress Report, Lao PDR is the only country in the Greater Mekong Region with a continuing low HIV prevalence. However, the report makes it clear that the country is “continuously vulnerable to an expanding epidemic” and that a key reason for this is increasing high-risk behaviour among the youth, in particular the use of drugs and alcohol. To build knowledge and encourage risk avoidance in relation to HIV and AIDS, reproductive health, STIs and drugs, the government introduced a life-skills curriculum to selected primary, lower and secondary schools in seven target provinces in 2003. By 2010, 74 per cent of the nation’s secondary schools, located in 11 of its 17 provinces, had followed suit. In 2006, UNICEF conducted a baseline survey of the programme, and in 2009 conducted a follow-up assessment in 20 schools in six provinces. Students in another nine schools in three provinces, which had not yet been exposed to the life-skills curriculum, were interviewed as a control group. The assessment made use of a questionnaire and in-depth interviews to explore Grade 11 students’ knowledge of HIV and AIDS, STIs, reproductive health, alcohol and drugs. The sample of 860 both boys and girls were also asked about their risk-taking behaviours and their sources of information, while teachers and parents were asked for their views on the curriculum.

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