Comprehensive Sexuality Education for All: Evidence and Learnings from Around the Globe.

**Date:**
10 April 2023
13.15 - 14.45 hours / 1.15 pm - 2.45 pm New York time (EDT)

**Venue:**
UN HQ Room CR5- Conference Room 5

**Hosts:**

**Co-Sponsors:**

**Contact Points:**
- Tor-Hugne Olsen, Sex og Politikk (IPPF Norway): torhugne@sexogpolitikk.no
- Ingeborg Skov Høye, Sex og Politikk (IPPF Norway): ingeborg@sexogpolitikk.no
- Katja Isaksen, Plan International Norway: katja.isaksen@plan-norge.no
- Ronit Cohen, Plan International Norway: ronit.cohen@plan-norge.no
- Levi Singh, SRHR Africa Trust: singh@satregional.org

**Event registration details:**
Registration Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe5uRhYVcdQf-d-JxljOSN5a_LWDCO4c9vIFYsigX_3bilqEA/viewform

**Background and Rationale**

CPD is amongst the most important UN fora discussing the realization of SRHR. The 56th session on the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) titled “Population, education and sustainable development”, provides an opportune moment to highlight and advocate for the importance of and need for Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) for adolescents and youth.

The concept of comprehensive sexuality education is embedded in and guided by the UN International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE): “Comprehensive sexuality education is a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality. It aims to equip children and young people with the
knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to realize their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider the well-being of others that are affected by their choices; and understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.”

Despite the positive aims of CSE, certain groups spread disinformation about it, claiming that it encourages sexual promiscuity amongst adolescents, encourages homosexuality and is a direct threat to traditional family and religious values. However, the evidence on CSE is clear: Sexuality education has positive effects on young peoples’ knowledge, health and well-being – particularly when it is comprehensive, age and gender-responsive and tackles harmful norms and practices. Research shows that CSE programming delays sexual debut and reduces sexual risk taking.

Access to CSE is related to the fundamental human right to education, and is a right to information, as highlighted in both the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 24) and the ICPD Program of Action (1994).

The need for CSE is not particular to any specific country, region or age group. Children and young people all around the globe are vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence, early and unintended pregnancy, HIV, misinformation about sex, gender roles, relationships, sexuality and much more.

An increasing number of countries are recognizing the benefits of CSE. 85% of countries have policies, laws or legal frameworks that specifically address sexuality education. However, there remains a significant gap between policy and the implementation on the ground. Too many young people do not have access to accurate and reliable information and services that enable informed decision making.

An increasing number of positive examples and experiences of implementing CSE, both in- and out-of-schools have been documented in various countries. It is important that these experiences and strategies are shared between countries and relevant actors in order to ensure that as many youth as possible have access to accurate and correct information required to decide over their own bodies and lives.

The 56th CPD provides an opportune moment to arrange a side event which can showcase evidence and experiences on the effectiveness of CSE – from the perspective of governments, civil society organizations and youth themselves, from a variety of different contexts, including reducing unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and sexual and gender-based violence among other benefits.
The aim of the side event is to contribute to the discussion on inclusion of CSE in the final document at the CPD through showcasing the benefit and impact of CSE from educational, health, rights and economic perspectives.

The target audience is participants at the CPD, in particular member states delegations.

Objectives

- Provide a space for multi-stakeholder dialogue on the evidence of CSE, with the perspectives from governments, civil society organizations, UN agencies and young people themselves.
- Promote and share country CSE best practices and learning as evidence of impact.
- Highlight the importance of youth led CSE initiatives.
- Highlight strategies to address barriers against CSE.

Speakers/Panelists:

- Ms. Bjørg Sandkjær, State Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway
- Representative from Government of South Africa
- Ms. Thabile Ngcobo, Deputy Director: Population Programmes and Capacity Building, Department of Social Developments, South Africa
- Dr. Safeena Abdul Aziz Noorjahan, Principal Secretary - Minority Welfare Department Government of Bihar, India
- Dr. Fouzia Khan, Additional Director and Head of Curriculum Wing, School Education and Literacy Department, Sindh (SELD), Pakistan.
- Ms. Diene Keita, Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA
- Dr. Sajeda Amin, Senior Associate, Population Council
- Dr. Abdellatif Elmor, Professor of Public Health, faculty of Medicine, Zagazig University, Egypt
- Ms. Fernanda Vazquez Rojas, Advocacy Officer in Elige Red / RedLAC (Latin American and Caribbean Youth Network for Sexual and Reproductive Rights)
- Ms. Alice Bumanzi, SRHR Program manager, Plan International Rwanda

Facilitator

- Mr. Levi Singh - Senior Policy Advisor, SRHR Africa Trust