



LASALLECUNMUN

LASALLECUNMUN 2024

UNICEF

(United Nations
Children's Emergency
Fund)

“Comprehensive Sexuality
Education (CSE) for Youth:
Empowering Adolescents
for Healthy Relationships
and Well-being”

Background Guide

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Dear delegates

It is my privilege to welcome you to this committee that will be taking part of the ULSACUNMUN 2024. My name is Mauricio Bolio Lutzow, and I will have the honor to take the role of President of The United Nations Children's Fund along with the moderator of this chair, Camila Lisseth Arguez Iracheta and its conference officer, Hanna Nicole Navarro Dozal. This is my second time participating on a Model of the United Nations, the first time I participated as a delegate of General Assembly representing The United Mexican States. I enjoyed a lot being a delegate but after that model I set a goal, to become the president of a committee in the MUN of the following year.

Currently, I am 16 years old, studying the third semester of high school, precisely on the Business Administration area. One of my biggest passions now is music, I have never played an instrument before but this year I started learning how to play the guitar and I immediately fell in love with it, feeling like it complements my personality on a fantastic way. My favorite subjects at school are Mathematics and Biology. I have always been a believer in the power of words to solve problems without having to resort to solutions that involve any kind of violence, empathizing and uniting with people, and creating an environment where everyone can be heard and corrected without feeling attacked. On MUN I found that environment, I found a place where a prepared collective joins to listen to ideas that are used for solving global problematics. I believe that this program is part of what the world needs to prepare youth to develop these diplomatic skills that will undoubtedly have positive repercussions on their future and hopefully on the future of the world.

I am profoundly excited to start this journey with all of you and hopefully, I will be able to transmit to you this passion that I feel for the model. My hope is that we embrace the difficulties that will come both in your preparation and on the day of the event itself. Please feel free to reach out to me in case you have any doubts, thoughts, ideas or if you simply need someone to talk to.

Sincerely,

**Mauricio Bolio United Nations Children's
Fund (UNICEF)**

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COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is dedicated to the welfare and rights of children worldwide. Established in 1946, UNICEF operates in 190 countries assisting children in areas like health, education, nutrition, and child protection. It comprises 36 members, representing the five regional groups of Member States at the United Nations.

Topic: “Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) for Youth: Empowering Adolescents for Healthy Relationships and Well-being”

INTRODUCTION

A Comprehensive Sexuality Education is not just talking about the sexual act, but it is a multifactorial phenomenon that from an early age, children can begin to learn certain issues that in the end are part of how we interpret sexuality in a more conscious stage of life. The idea that comprehensive sexuality education is just about talking about sex is partly what has led the topic in general to become a global taboo, normalizing the fact that wanting to know or obtain information about things related to sexuality is frowned upon.

CSE extends beyond the conventional boundaries of sex education. While it does encompass critical components such as the understanding of human anatomy, reproductive health, contraception, and sexual health risks like sexually transmitted infections (STIs), it goes further. CSE places a profound emphasis on promoting emotional intelligence, communication skills, and respect within relationships. It also strives to foster an environment that embraces the diversity of gender identities and sexual orientations, challenging stereotypes and myths.

CSE aims to empower young individuals to make informed decisions regarding their bodies and relationships. It serves as a proactive measure to reduce the risk of unintended pregnancies, STIs, and sexual repression among adolescents. Furthermore, it contributes to the creation of a culture characterized by respect, consent, and inclusivity.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) emerged in response to the need for ageappropriate, scientifically accurate and culturally sensitive sexuality education programs designed for young people. Through history, sexuality education has been influenced for several cultural, religious and political factors, which has led to a huge extension in both, biological and social approaches and content.

The origins of CSE can be tracked to the early 20th century, when sexual education had an approach based particularly on scientific facts about reproduction, using animals to portray

the sexual act as a powerful interaction between two living beings. There were no human representations used as examples while teaching.

This changed around 1947 to help students learn more about moral laws and habits of society and connect with sexuality to their own lives instead of the animals in nature which do so purely for reproductive purposes. This new teaching model would be focused on educating people for personal growth, by implementing the concept that students learned to make informed decisions.

In the 1960s, sexual education faced opposition from conservative and religious groups who thought it might encourage risky behavior in teens. Even though data showed that comprehensive sexual health education helped teens make better choices, it was criticized. Then, in the 1980s, given the growth of feminist ideas, she began a critique of sex education programs and pointed out how such programs sometimes actually reinforced gender inequalities. There began to be a growing appreciation of how frequently the discourse of sex education served to perpetuate the belief that male self-control, although possible, could not be relied upon, and that women, through their behaviors, should help men to act responsibly.

During mid-1980s, a new sexually transmitted agent, HIV, was spreading at an alarming speed in many countries around the world. There was near panic in some quarters with the realization that many, perhaps most, people infected with HIV would develop AIDS and subsequently die. Also, that a person that was infected with HIV could spread it for many years without realizing it or having any symptoms of infection, and that there was no treatment for either HIV infection or AIDS itself. Various circumstances, including the controversy over the 1985 Gillick case, which focused on whether parents always have the right to know if their children receive contraceptives when they are under 16 years old, and the growing strength of the lesbian and gay movement, led to a division of opinions on sexual education among politicians at the local and national level. The result was a numerous amount of laws and government educational circulars, which continue to this day, and it was strongly recognized that there cannot be a sexual education program without values.

The evolving role of international organizations significantly influenced the development of CSE. Throughout the late 20th and early 21st centuries, international organizations like the United Nations, UNICEF, and UNESCO played an essential role in advocating for comprehensive and age-appropriate sexuality education. Landmark conferences, such as the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994 and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, emphasized the importance of sexual and reproductive health education, gender equality, and women's rights. These international gatherings marked a crucial turning point in the recognition of CSE as a fundamental human right.

As the 21st century progressed, the global dialogue on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) continued to advance. The influence of international organizations and the lessons learned from past conferences paved the way for a broader recognition of CSE as an essential component of human development and well-being.

CURRENT SITUATION

Implementation of CSE at the regional and national levels varies, with different regions showing leadership in promoting comprehensive sexuality education and demonstrating political will to invest in such programs.

In Western Europe, by pioneering the implementation of school-based sexuality education programs over 50 years ago, countries such as Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands, which have a rich tradition of including sexuality education in their school curricula, exhibit significantly lower rates of teenage pregnancies compared to countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In these regions, getting into topics related to sexuality and sexual and reproductive health rights in schools remains a more delicate matter. In Europe, the WHO Regional Office has taken the initiative to establish standards for sexuality education, offering a valuable framework for policymakers, educational and health authorities, and various stakeholders to uphold high-quality standards in sexuality education across the entire region.

In West and Central Africa, most of the evaluated countries have established policies within the realm of HIV and AIDS education in the education sector. These policies are complemented by strategies aimed at creating an enabling environment for delivering competency-based education on HIV and sexuality. Research from the Sexuality Education Review and Assessment Tool (SERAT) studies reveals that 12 out of 13 countries possess plans that support the implementation of sexual education programs.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, an important highlight occurred in 2008 when the ministers of health and education jointly declared their commitment to sexuality education through the ministerial declaration for prevention through education. Governments committed to integrating strategies, ensuring interdepartmental coordination, and agreed to implement and strengthen "multisectoral strategies for comprehensive sexuality education and sexual health promotion, including HIV and STI prevention". This commitment reinforced the national mandate for sexuality and HIV education in schools and aimed to improve the availability of reproductive health services specifically targeting adolescents.

Historically, the Asia-Pacific region has fostered a policy environment favorable to the implementation of HIV education. Most countries in the region integrate broader sexuality education into their national HIV strategies. This commitment to sexual education was further reinforced by the 2013 Conference on Population and Development in Asia and the Pacific, which focused on ensuring Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) for all, particularly for the most disadvantaged populations. Notably, Cambodia and Papua New Guinea have instituted HIV policies within the education sector, emphasizing the importance of integrating HIV education into the curriculum and enhancing teacher capacity for effective program delivery.

Despite decades of research supporting CSE, there remain obstacles to its successful implementation, particularly due to social opposition within communities. This opposition, in the form of resistance or negative responses, can impede various aspects of CSE adoption. It affects policymakers and officials' diligence in taking necessary actions, limits access to suitable curricula and training resources, influences teachers' attitudes and willingness to

create conducive classroom conditions for effective teaching and learning, impacts student motivation, and hampers parental cooperation. These challenges posed by social opposition impede the comprehensive and successful implementation of CSE programs.

Some additional obstacles include systemic challenges in education, such as the shortage of human and financial resources, poor infrastructure, and competing priorities. Replacement of key personnel within the education sector, affecting political commitment and strategy implementation, is also remarkable. Weak coordination and collaboration persist at several levels (national, regional, and local). Additionally, weak connections between schools and adolescent sexual and reproductive health services and limited demand creation in many countries impact the utilization of these services and, consequently, the outcomes for adolescents and young people in sexual and reproductive health. The shortage of financial resources results in numerous countries being unable to implement or expand CSE. External support can play a key role, but without government contributions, successful implementation and expansion, as well as long-term sustainability, are not possible.

The exclusive presentation event for the forthcoming global report on CSE was inaugurated by Stefania Giannini, UNESCO's Deputy Director-General for Education. She highlighted the growing recognition of CSE's vital role in advancing gender equality, as an increasing number of countries incorporate it into their educational curricula. The event, jointly organized by UNESCO in collaboration with UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, and WHO on June 24, unveiled the conclusions of the report "The Path to Comprehensive Sexuality Education." This report examines the status of CSE in school systems and underscores that, despite progress in some nations, many still struggle to provide children and youth with the necessary knowledge and skills for their health and well-being.

Throughout the event, several countries, including Tunisia, Sweden, Mexico, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Indonesia, and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, reflected on their transitions toward CSE. Advocates for health and sexual and reproductive rights discussed the progress made by countries in implementing CSE, while representatives from the UN, other multilateral agencies, governments, and civil society organizations deliberated on the actions required for effective, high-quality CSE that reaches all children and youth. Dr. Kilo Viviane Asheri, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Basic Education in Cameroon, pointed out that parental concerns and cultural practices could pose challenges to comprehensive sexuality education. Nonetheless, Cameroon has managed to integrate CSE into its curriculum, addressing crucial subjects like gender equality, violence against young girls, and female genital mutilation.

Despite reports that 85% of the 115 studied countries have implemented policies or laws related to sexuality education, it is often found that the education provided is not comprehensive, and many children and youth do not benefit from it. While teaching programs exist in most countries, they often lack crucial topics necessary for effective and relevant sexuality education, such as discussions around puberty, relationships, sexuality, and consent. In some countries, there are visible efforts to improve teacher training, yet educators may still lack the confidence to effectively teach CSE.

COUNTRY BOX

Arab Republic of Egypt
Federative Republic of Brazil
Federal Republic of Germany
French Republic
Independent State of Papua New Guinea
Islamic Republic of Iran
Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Kingdom of Cambodia
Kingdom of Denmark
Kingdom of Norway
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Kingdom of Sweden
Kingdom of the Netherlands
Lebanese Republic
Republic of India
Republic of Yemen
Russian Federation
State of Palestine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America

GUIDE QUESTIONS

- I. What possible solutions does your country have to solve the issue?
- II. Has your country implemented Comprehensive Sexuality Education at schools? III. What are the statistics of unwanted pregnancies in your country?

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