

Training course in adolescent sexual and reproductive
health 2021

Comprehensive sexuality education provision

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Question 1

Why do adolescents need comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)? – identify one reason.

Because CSE prepares them for a safe, productive, and fulfilling life in a world where gender based violence (GBV), gender inequality, early and unwanted pregnancies, and HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) still pose serious risks to their health and well-being.(1)

Question 2

What according to you is the biggest operational constraint in the provision of CSE in your country, and why?

Opposition groups were initially one of the main barriers to the provision of CSE in Egypt. According to the 2014 UNFPA Operational Guidance for Comprehensive Sexuality Education, the first attempt to provide education on sexual and reproductive health initiated by the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood in Egypt in 2003 was not sustained because of a failure to lay the groundwork with advocacy and community outreach. This programme provoked harsh opposition. Following this incident, supporters began to raise awareness on the need for SRH education in the community, reaching out to parents and religious leaders. Although this approach has managed to overcome a few challenges, many barriers still exist to rolling out a CSE curriculum. For example, to this moment, CSE has not been introduced in Egypt in either in-school or out-of-school settings.(2)

Question 3

In what way could CSE be integrated into your country’s educational curriculum?

According to the 2014 UNFPA Operational Guidance for Comprehensive Sexuality Education, CSE can be integrated in the country’s educational curriculum through exploring new channels such as social media to disseminate sexuality education content, furthermore by engaging young people and ensuring their leadership in the whole process of carrying out a truly comprehensive programme.(2)

Question 4

Identify three strategies that Aahung and Rutgers used to build community support for CSE in Pakistan?

1. Understanding the local context as the foundation program design and development.
2. Strategically selecting issues to be included in curricula to tailor content to the program’s context.
3. Institutionalizing the programs within existing systems to draw credibility and support.

4. Engaging gate keepers at many levels through outreach and sensitization.

Question 5.1

Within the ecological framework, what are the levels of influences that need to be understood when planning to deliver sexuality education to adolescents?

1. Societal (Policies, political and religious leaders)
2. Community (Community and religious leaders)
3. Organisational (School administrators, teachers)
4. Interpersonal (parents, peers)
5. Individual (Adolescents)

Question 5.2

In the case of Aahung and Rutgers, who were the gatekeepers or influential people in the lives of adolescents that were engaged and sensitized?

Parents, community members, school administrators, and teachers.

Question 5.3

In your context, which gatekeepers or influential people would need to be engaged and sensitized to deliver CSE?

In Egypt, engaging gatekeepers is key for successful CSE delivery. According to a report by the International Institute for Global Health that explored sexuality education across selected Muslim countries including Egypt, community mobilisation is critical to programme success in conservative contexts. It aims to raise awareness in the community targeting gatekeepers and decision makers in adolescent's lives such as; parents, community leaders and religious teachers.(3)

Question 6

What strategies did Rutgers and Aahung use to overcome resistance to CSE in Pakistan?

When the media leveraged attacks, both NGOs strengthened their media presence to build positive public perception of their work and discredit false statements. Rutgers Pakistan reached out to a small group of respected and well-known journalists from print, radio, and television to facilitate dialogue with mass media personnel in the affected provinces. This stimulated public discussion of the utility of LSBE in addressing the vulnerabilities of adolescents and helping the country reach national education and health goals. As part of their media engagement strategies, both organizations relied on schools to demonstrate the positive impact of their programs on the confidence and performance of students and teachers. Aahung led sensitization and value

clarification workshops with schools and the media, in addition to creating an additional active mechanism that included organizing meetings to discuss specific issues, to provide support to teachers and school administrators when cases of opposition arose by parents or the community. Furthermore, Aahung reviewed language, increased transparency, leveraged strategic partnerships, and engaged "champions" when faced with backlash. Rutgers Pakistan. Moreover, Aahung took advantage of key positive momentum when society would be more receptive to their messages.(4)

Question 7

How is CSE different from sexuality education?

Sex education only focuses on how to avoid negative sexual health outcomes and addresses the prevailing sexual and reproductive health challenges facing young people. However, CSE focuses on a more holistic social and emotional scope within a framework of human rights and gender equality.

Question 8.1

What are the considerations that the International Technical Guidance suggests when designing a school-based CSE program?

1. The program has to follow all relevant national policies, regulations and laws.
2. Adopt clear goals, concepts and learning objectives which should then be articulated within the contents.
3. Follow the life-cycle approach
4. Ensure the curriculum will be acceptable for implementation.
5. The contents have to be practical.
6. The program needs to be effective.

Question 8.2

What did the Egyptian Family Health Society (EFHS) do to understand the needs of adolescents related to sexuality education before initiating their school-based SE program?

The scientific committee of EFHS used the “Learn through Educating” needs assessment exercise, through which they received written anonymous questions from students during biology lessons about male and female reproductive organs.

Question 8.3

What were the protocols used to respond to sensitive questions asked during the EFHS’ seminars?

The young physicians carrying out the seminars devoted enough time to answer the questions received from students. It was up to the chaperoning teacher to decide which questions would be answered while the rest of the sensitive questions were referred to the Youth Health Hotline.

Question 9.1

Describe a CSE initiative in your country that you believe has affectively promoted CSE for adolescents in or out of school.

In my opinion, Love Matters Arabic is a great CSE initiative that has effectively promoted quality CSE out of school. It is an online platform that uses comprehensive and youth-friendly Arabic language content on sexual health and well-being. It consists of a discussion board, YouTube videos and social media platforms to allow adolescents and young people to access accurate and reliable information to make informed decisions about their lives.

Question 9.2

Identify one factor that has contributed to the effectiveness of this initiative.

It uses youth-friendly Arabic language in the delivery of information. It also uses social media platforms to reach adolescents and young people.

Question 9.3

Identify 2 factors that you believe are critical for strengthening implementation of CSE in your country?

1. Engaging adolescents and young people during the development of the SRH Education Program as well as conducting a need assessment exercise to identify the needs and wants of adolescents.
2. Develop evidence-based curricula that are adapted to the local cultural and religious backgrounds, by engaging gatekeepers in the process.

References

1. UNESCO. International technical guidance on sexuality education. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization SDGs. 2018.
2. UNFPA. UNFPA_Operational Guidance for Comprehensive Sexuality Education. 2014.
3. IIGH. Sexuality Education across Selected Muslim Countries - A Review to inform Malaysia's 2020-24 National Reproductive Health and Social Education Plan of Action.
4. Chandra-Mouli V, Plesons M, Hadi S, Baig Q, Lang I. Building support for adolescent sexuality and reproductive health education and responding to resistance in Conservative Contexts: Cases From Pakistan. Glob Heal Sci Pract. 2018.