



# POSITION PAPER

Provision of  
**Comprehensive Sexuality  
Education to all young  
people in Nepal**



RIGHT HERE  
RIGHT NOW



This paper has been published with technical support of Right Here Right Now Nepal platform, which is a strategic partnership between fifteen likeminded youth-led and youth-serving organizations<sup>1</sup>, that are advocating for enhanced experience of young people on sexual and reproductive health, focused on three thematic areas - provision of age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education, legalization of marriage equality and provision of stigma-free, youth-friendly safe abortion services.

Visible Impact, which is a partner organization of Right Here Right Now, is a young women led organization that aims to bring visible impact on the lives of every women, every girls and every youth by unleashing the social and economic leadership of girls, women and youth through human centered approaches.

**Support for this project was provided on behalf of the Right Here Right Now Partnership. The partnership is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.**

### **Authors for Second Edition**

Medha Sharma  
Laxman Bhattarai

© Copyrights Reserved

First edition: (1000 copies), June 2018  
Second edition: (600 copies), March 2020

### **Layout Designer**

Saurav Thapa Shrestha

For further information please contact:



### **Visible Impact**

212/48 Dhapasi Marga, Basundhara  
01-4016563 || [mail.visim@gmail.com](mailto:mail.visim@gmail.com)  
[www.visim.org](http://www.visim.org)



**RIGHT HERE  
RIGHT NOW**

### **Right Here Right Now Nepal**

#### **Secretariat: YUWA**

310 Krishna Dhara Marga, Maharajgunj  
01-4419489, 01-4418747  
[info@yuwa.org.np](mailto:info@yuwa.org.np) || [www.yuwa.org.np](http://www.yuwa.org.np)

<sup>1</sup> Association of Youth Organizations Nepal (AYON), Beyond Beijing Committee(BBC), Blue Diamond Society (BDS), CDS- Park Mugu, Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN), Federation of Sexual and Gender Minorities Nepal (FSGMN), Human Development and Environment Protection Forum (HUDEP), LOOM Nepal, Restless Development, Rural Women's Network Nepal (RUWON), Visible Impact, Youth Action Nepal (YAN), Youth Development Center (YDC), YUWA, Yuwalaya.

# CONTENTS

---

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	1
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
CALL FOR ACTION	4
PROVIDE EACH AND EVERY YOUNG PERSON WITH AGE APPROPRIATE COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS	5
DEVELOP THE CAPACITY OF TEACHERS TO DELIVER THE CSE CURRICULUM EFFECTIVELY AND MONITOR IT BY STRENGTHENING MONITORING MECHANISMS.	7
PROVIDE EACH AND EVERY YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE OUT OF SCHOOL WITH AGE APPROPRIATE COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION	8
REFERENCES	11

---

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

---

AYON	Association of Youth Organizations Nepal
BBC	Beyond Beijing Committee
BDS	Blue Diamond Society
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
CEHRD	Center for Education and Human Resource Development
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DEO	District Education Office
FPAN	Family Planning Association of Nepal
FSGMN	Federation of Sexual and Gender Minorities Nepal
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HUDEP	Human Development and Environment Protection Forum
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
ITGSE	International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
NCED	National Centre for Educational Development
NFEC	Non Formal Education Center
NLSS	Nepal Living Standard Survey
RUWON	Rural Women's Network Nepal
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
YAN	Youth Action Nepal
YDC	Youth Development Center

# Acknowledgements

—

This position paper is financially and technically supported by RHRN Nepal. We would like to thank all the RHRN platform members for their valuable support and more specifically to the RHRN thematic group members on Comprehensive Sexuality Education.

We express our gratitude to Rajendra Maharjan, National Coordinator for RHRN Nepal and Kamal Gautam, Former National Coordinator for RHRN Nepal for providing us linkages and networks to experts and providing guidance throughout. Also, thanks to Samreen Shahbaz from Asian Pacific Research and Resource Center for Women for providing us guidance and feedback for this paper.

We would also like to thank Mr. Devi Ranjan Humagain, Vice District Education Officer (Kathmandu), Ms. Shova Khanal, GESI unit coordinator (CTEVT) and Mr. Dinesh Ghimire, Information Officer (NFEC) for their support and cooperation.

Special thanks to all the people who have been advocating for age appropriate Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Nepal and around the globe.

Authors

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper aims at highlighting the importance and current gaps in addressing comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) for young people, and to call the Government to fulfill the needs, and other stakeholders to support the Government in doing so. This paper will serve as a basis for evidence based advocacy for all the advocates and activists of CSE.

Plethora of literatures exist that highlight the importance of teaching comprehensive sexuality education to young people, and the result have shown that integrating CSE in school curriculum enhances the quality of life of the individual for lifetime. Introducing sexuality education in the school curriculum was a great achievement in 2013, that has gone through several amendments, but there are still several structural and implementation challenges - the bulk of course is taught in class 9 when the students would have already known through other sources, the focus is on sexual and reproductive health and less on rights, inadequate capacity of teachers to deliver the content appropriately, the lack of monitoring framework to assess the quality of delivery of CSE sessions, and leaving behind the most vulnerable group of out of school children.



Hence, the following actions have been called upon:

○ Though the current curriculum is progressive, there are gaps and inadequacies that need to be fulfilled immediately. We urge the Curriculum Development Center to address these gaps immediately to make the curriculum comprehensive and age appropriate as per the UNESCO, International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE). Besides the current curriculum for class 6-10, it should be expanded to include students of class 3-5 and 11-12 as well.

○ The teacher's training is crucial for effective delivery of CSE. In fact, building teacher capacity to deliver age-appropriate CSE, is proven to support the development of learners' life skills. Thus, we stress on the importance of stronger teacher training programs at all levels that is owned by the Government, including monitoring mechanism in place.

○ The Government should mobilize alternative education as a gateway to providing CSE to out of school students. A curriculum tailored for out of school children should be developed and implemented immediately.

# Call for Action

—

We, the platform members,  
urge our Government and  
its allied bodies -  
Ministry of Health, Ministry  
of Education, Ministry  
of Youth, Department  
of Education, Center for  
Education and Human  
Resource Development,  
Youth Council at all levels  
to fulfill the following  
and; youth activists and  
advocates, civil society  
organizations, media and  
young people to support  
the Government to :

—

# 1. Provide each and every young person with age appropriate comprehensive sexuality education in schools

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

Plethora of literatures exist that highlight the importance of teaching comprehensive sexuality education to young people, and the result have shown that integrating CSE in school curriculum enhances the quality of life of the individual for lifetime. According to data from World Bank, European countries tend to have the lowest rate of teen pregnancies, and progressive approach to sexuality education has been accounted for this.<sup>1</sup>

Sexuality education was formally introduced in the school curriculum in Nepal for students of class 9 and 10 in 2003, as a mandatory lesson under Environment, Population and Health subject. Though it was a milestone, it was far from being comprehensive and age appropriate. With decade long advocacy effort of civil society organizations, an attempt to make it comprehensive and age appropriate led the curriculum to be amended in 2013 to include the subjects for class 6, 7 and 8 as well.<sup>2</sup>

However, the current curriculum still has several structural and implementation challenges. The curriculum is not age appropriate yet, as bulk of the course is introduced in class 9, when the students would have already known much more from other sources than the course book, or have already gone through experiences, Eg: menstruation. The curriculum focuses on reproductive aspect more than the sexual health and

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) based life skills aspects. Also, it does not include adequately about where to refer to for further information, nor does it promote discussing SRHR at home with parents or siblings. The public schools usually do not go beyond what is in the curriculum, though some private schools have made an effort to include several topics out of the syllabus as well.<sup>2</sup> According to the research conducted by International Planned Parenthood Federation in 2016/17, both young people and service providers emphasized that they are in need of access to more comprehensive,

**Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) 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 knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to: realize their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others; and, understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives. (International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education)**

relevant, and in depth advice and information.<sup>3</sup> CDC (Now CEHRD) has also announced that Environment, Population and Health will be an optional subject for grade 9 and 10, which can become a major set back. With this, students will probably not opt for this subject as parents may insist for more technical subjects, and also the students might feel shy to opt for a subject that talks about SRHR.<sup>4</sup>

Through platforms such as CSE Technical Working Committee formed by UNFPA (United National Fund for Population Activities), CSE Advocacy Group formed by FPAN (Family Planning Association of Nepal), and Right Here Right Now platform, civil society have been advocating for comprehensive sexuality education at schools from class 3 to 12. There is a demand for the revised curriculum that includes 6 component (a. Family life education (FLE), b. Population education, c. Sex and relationships education, d. SRH education and e. Life skills education, and f. Sexuality education) of comprehensive 6 different subjects – namely, Moral sexuality education distributed over Science, Social Studies, Health and Physical Education and Environment, Population and Health.

However, the big challenge is that the curriculum is only revised every five years and thus there is a chance of missed opportunity to include emerging issues with respect to life skills of young people's sexuality and SRH.

Nepal is a signatory of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and has been an active supporter of it. Nepal has endorsed the ICPD beyond 2014 review document, where the need for CSE is highlighted,<sup>5</sup> making it important for policy makers to fulfill the commitment they have made at the international level.

Recently at ICPD +25 Nairobi Summit, Nepal has committed to invest in young people including their health and well-being by ensuring that they are able to exercise their reproductive rights through upscaling adolescent-friendly services and comprehensive sexuality education.<sup>6</sup>

As such, there is a pressing need to provide age appropriate comprehensive sexuality education in schools to ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people is adequately addressed.



## Call for Action

Though the current curriculum is progressive, there are gaps and inadequacies that need to be fulfilled immediately. We urge the Curriculum Development Center to address these gaps immediately to make the curriculum comprehensive and age appropriate as per the UNESCO, International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education. Besides the current curriculum for class 6-10, it should be expanded to include students of class 3-5 and 11-12 as well.

## 2. Develop the capacity of teachers to deliver the CSE curriculum effectively and monitor it by strengthening monitoring mechanisms.

---

### SITUATION ANALYSIS

Though sexuality education is a mandatory subject in school, the teachers often do not have enough capacity to deliver to youth the information they need to make informed choices about their sexual health and life. Some schools argue that sex education causes more harm compared to benefits; the innocence of children might be affected because of sex education as they have a curiosity to explore things and even their body which could lead into unusual circumstances.<sup>7</sup> A study conducted in Kathmandu suggested that students' needs and expectations regarding HIV and sexual health education are not being met through their schools.<sup>8</sup> The subject matter is usually skipped by the teachers and the students are asked to review it on their own, or taught with boys and girls separately, or taught only to boys during girls' only holidays.

This raises a serious question regarding the quality and capacity of the teachers to deliver lectures on such life skills based subject. A monitoring mechanism is in place, that sends Government resource persons to each school to comprehensively assess their teaching ability and attendance, but no monitoring framework exists to assess the quality of materials delivered during CSE classes. In order to ensure quality delivery, a monitoring mechanism is a pressing need. Also, frequent change of teachers and the issue being directly related to life skills, there is a need to

continuously provide refresher training as well.

Also currently, the teachers training is being done through initiatives of civil society organizations, that is not able to cover the training for all the teachers. One of the Vice District Education Officer expressed that he neither provides nor knows about any formal training for the teachers on CSE.<sup>9</sup> UNFPA, the UN reproductive health and rights agency, in collaboration with the National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) and SISO Nepal, developed this teachers' training package on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). The teachers training package includes a five-day training module on six key concepts of International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education along with the resource material for teachers on CSE.<sup>10</sup>

Also the teachers' training guide and teachers reading materials has been formulated for public school which are included in the curriculum of Education Training Centers.<sup>11</sup>



## Call for Action

The teacher's training is crucial for effective delivery of CSE. In fact, building teacher capacity to deliver age-appropriate CSE, is proven to support the development of learners' life skills. Thus, we stress on the importance of stronger teacher training programs at all levels, that is owned by the Government.

### 3. Provide each and every young people who are out of school with age appropriate comprehensive sexuality education

#### SITUATION ANALYSIS

The current effort of the Government has been majorly focused on providing CSE to in school children. However, the more vulnerable groups of out of school children are still left out.

According to a flash report 2012-2013 published by the Ministry of Education, only 69.4 percent of the students enrolled in grade 1 make it to grade 8. According to the Nepal Living Standard Survey (NLSS) 2010/2011, the percentage of population aged 6 years and above that never attended school is a staggering 34 percent, and this problem is not limited to rural areas.<sup>12</sup>

The out of school children are usually more vulnerable to early marriage, adolescent birth, and limited access to sexual and reproductive health services that lead to life threatening conditions. They are at double trouble because, firstly limited education opportunities curbs them from several life opportunities, and limited access to CSE leads them to problems related to deciding on their life,

marriage, children, reproduction and sexuality. There have been efforts to provide alternative education to school drop-out children. Center for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) is running Chelibeti Siksha Karyekram (Girls Education Program) and also provides short term as well as long term courses to school drop-outs. With respect to CSE, gender inclusion and workplace violence are included in these courses. A model related to gender roles and violence is being implemented which currently are



**The out of school children are usually more vulnerable to early marriage, adolescent birth, and limited access to sexual and reproductive health services that lead to life threatening conditions.**

not included in study credit hours. The teachers are oriented on gender inclusion and work place violence who are supposed to teach the students later on.<sup>13</sup>

Ministry of Youth's Youth Information Centers in all 75 districts and employment generating skills based trainings by civil societies are some of the examples of attempts to provide alternative education. District Education Office organizes door to door program at the start of academic year to encourage students to take admission in school.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in collaboration with Department of Women and Children conducts Social and Financial Skills Package (Rupantaran) in 19 districts of Nepal engaging adolescent girls; providing them with practical skills and knowledge on gender equality, human

rights, reproductive health, gender based violence, etc.<sup>14</sup> Non Formal Education Center (NFEC) provides literacy opportunities (4 months course) for school drop-outs aged 15 and above, mostly participated by females through community learning centers established in all the districts of country. However, only general information in regards to CSE is provided.<sup>15</sup> While few learning options are available for the out of school children, majority of efforts are directed towards the school children.

These alternative education efforts could be a gateway to providing CSE to out of school children. However, in the situation where the curriculum for out of school children is lacking, the first step towards availing out of school children with their right to SRHR would be to develop a curriculum targeted to them.

## Case Story

— Archana Dahal, 14 years from Kathmandu shared that she had her first menstruation at the age of 11, the time when she was the only girl in her class to have started menstruating. Since she had lost her mother at early age, she didn't know whom to talk to about it. She was shy to talk to her father or younger brother, and could not receive information from friends who were as ignorant as her. She use to have severe cramps and did not know what to do about it. Two years later she learnt in school that mild exercise or using hot water bag would have easily reduced her pain. She hopes that she had known this earlier so that she did not have to suffer two years of pain.<sup>16</sup>



## Call for Action

The government should mobilize alternative education as a gateway to providing CSE to out of school students. A curriculum tailored for out of school children should be developed and implemented immediately.

## Case Story

Nirmal Jung Shahi (name changed), 21 years old from Mugu, left his schooling at class 7. His mom left him when he was just 6 years old, and because there were only three brothers in the family, two of them younger than him, the responsibility to serve his family came in the shoulder of Nirmal. Though he started taking the responsibility quite early, he was able to study till class 7 because of improved provision for preventing drop out among students of Karnali region. But when he knew that he has to appear for board exams in class 8, he decided to leave education. Nirmal got married 3 years later, and had to face problems like not being able to communicate about sexual relationship or family planning with his wife, was not clear about various methods of family planning, or knew that his wife also sought pleasure as much as him. If he needed any information, his friends would be his source of the information. Now that he has been married for almost 8 years and knows many things by doing, he laughs that many information he had earlier were myth. Furthermore, in the absence of any vocational training or other provision for CSE for out of school children, Nirmal has to struggle to receive correct and adequate information even today.<sup>17</sup>

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> Simrin J. Which countries have the best sex education [Internet]. Seeker; 2015 May 13. Available from: <https://www.seeker.com/which-countries-have-the-best-sex-education-1792604688.html>
- <sup>2</sup> Right Here Right Now. Youth SRHR in Nepal: Scoping study the Strategic Partnership Right Here Right Now. RHRN; 2016
- <sup>3</sup> IPPF. Overprotected and Underserved: The Influence of Law on Young People's access to sexual and reproductive health in Nepal. 2017.
- <sup>4</sup> Educatenepal.com. (2018). CDC changes curriculum of 15 optional subjects of Grade IX, X. [online] Available at: <http://www.educatenepal.com/news/mobile/cdc-changescurriculum-of-15-optional-subjects-of-grade-ix-x> [Accessed 17 Apr. 2019].
- <sup>5</sup> Nepal MU. Review of Curricula in the Context of Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Nepal 2016 [cited 2018]. Available from: <http://nepal.unfpa.org/en/publications/review-curricula-context-comprehensive-sexuality-education-nepal?page=0%2C0%2C4>.
- <sup>6</sup> UNFPA Nepal. Statement of the Government of Nepal at the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25. 2019. available from: <https://nepal.unfpa.org/en/news/statement-government-nepal-nairobi-summit-icpd25>
- <sup>7</sup> Ghimire A. Sex education [Internet]. The Himalayan Times; 2018 Jun 6. Available from: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/opinion/sex-education-2/>.
- <sup>8</sup> Shrestha RM, Otsuka K, Poudel KC, Yasuoka J, Lamichhane M, Jimba M. Better learning in schools to improve attitudes toward abstinence and intentions for safer sex among adolescents in urban Nepal. *BMC Public Health*. 2013;13(1):244.
- <sup>9</sup> Interview conducted with Vice District Education Officer, February 27, 2018.
- <sup>10</sup> UNFPA Nepal. Comprehensive Sexuality Education: Teachers' Resource Material. 2018. Available from: <https://nepal.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Reference%20Material.pdf>
- <sup>11</sup> Nepal UNFPA. Fact Sheet: Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Nepal 2016 [02/19/2018]. Available from: <http://nepal.unfpa.org/en/publications/fact-sheet-comprehensive-sexuality-education-nepal>.
- <sup>12</sup> Pun W. School drop-out rate in Nepal 'staggering'. Kathmandu: The Himalayan Times; 2014 Jan 30. Available from: <http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/printedition/news/2014-01-29/school-drop-out-rate-in-nepal-staggering-258675.html>.
- <sup>13</sup> Khanal S, GESI unit coordinator, CTEVT, 2018 Mar 23
- <sup>14</sup> MoYS M, UNFPA & UNICEF. Social and Financial Skills Package - Rupantaran 2014. Available from: <http://nepal.unfpa.org/en/publications/social-and-financial-skills-package-rupantaran-1-4>.
- <sup>15</sup> Ghimire D, Inoformation Officer, NFEC, 2018 May 08
- <sup>16</sup> Visible Impact. First Period Stories Series during School based Menstrual Health Management (MHM) workshops. 2017
- <sup>17</sup> Visible Impact. A Research on Experiences of out of school children regarding Comprehensive Sexuality Education 2018.

