



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

EMERGING EVIDENCE, LESSONS AND PRACTICE IN  
COMPREHENSIVE  
SEXUALITY  
EDUCATION

A GLOBAL  
REVIEW

2015

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Published in 2015 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,  
7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

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ISBN: 978-92-3-100139-0

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Designed by Aurélia Mazoyer

Printed by UNESCO

*Printed in France*

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report on the current status of sexuality education was prepared for and first presented to the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). It was produced by the Section for Health and Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in consultation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the UNAIDS Secretariat.

UNESCO would like to express appreciation to everyone who contributed to the report's development: the report's authors, Helen Parry in collaboration with Grace Wilentz (consultants); members of the UNAIDS PCB, who received the report during the board meeting of June 2015 and provided useful feedback; Elizabeth Benomar, Mona Kaidbey, and Matthew Cogan of UNFPA, New York, along with Morten Ussing of UNAIDS, Geneva, who all contributed technical comments and suggestions in the review of the draft report.

We are grateful for the input of the UNESCO Regional HIV and Health Advisors and their teams: Justine Sass (Asia and the Pacific); Tigran Yepoyan (Eastern and Central Europe); Patricia Machawira, with Victoria Kisaakye and Mwansa Njelesani (Eastern and Southern Africa); Mary Guinn Delaney (Latin America and the Caribbean); and, Xavier Hospital (West and Central Africa).

Thanks are also due to colleagues in the Division for Inclusion, Peace and Sustainable Development at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, headed by Soo-Hyang Choi, Director; contributions from Joanna Herat, Marina Todesco, Jenelle Babb, Ariana Stahmer, Chris Castle, Christophe Cornu, Scheherazade Feddal, Yong Feng Liu and Scott Pulizzi were invaluable in the finalization of the report.

This report was made possible through the generous financial support of the Governments of Sweden and Norway.

# ACRONYMS

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>BZgA</b>	German Federal Office for Health Education	<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and evaluation
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women	<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>CPD</b>	Commission on Population and Development	<b>PCB</b>	Programme Coordinating Board (UNAIDS)
<b>CSE</b>	Comprehensive sexuality education	<b>POA</b>	Process-oriented approach
<b>DHS</b>	Demographic and Health Survey	<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>EECA</b>	Eastern Europe and Central Asia	<b>SERAT</b>	Sexuality Education Review and Assessment Tool
<b>EMIS</b>	Education Management Information Systems	<b>SRH</b>	Sexual and reproductive health
<b>ESA</b>	Eastern and Southern Africa	<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
<b>EVA</b>	Education as a Vaccine	<b>STI</b>	Sexually transmitted infection
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence	<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>ICASA</b>	International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa	<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>ICPD</b>	International Conference on Population and Development	<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communication technology	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>IPPF</b>	International Planned Parenthood Federation	<b>WCA</b>	West and Central Africa
<b>ITGSE</b>	International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education	<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
		<b>YWCA</b>	Young Women's Christian Association

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the status of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) implementation and coverage on a global level. It draws on specific information about the status of CSE in 48 countries, generated through analysis of existing resources and studies. The report examines the evidence base for CSE and its positive impact on health outcomes, takes stock of political support for CSE, and examines how the various global and regional commitments have had an impact at national levels on the delivery of CSE in practice. The current review represents the first in a series of periodic reports that aim to monitor the global implementation of CSE.

**Comprehensive sexuality education is recognized as an 'age-appropriate, culturally relevant approach to teaching about sexuality and relationships by providing scientifically accurate, realistic, non-judgmental information'** (UNESCO, 2009). Across the world there are many different names for, and approaches to, comprehensive sexuality education. The objective of CSE is to ensure that young people are receiving comprehensive, life skills-based sexuality education to gain the knowledge and skills to make conscious, healthy and respectful choices about relationships and sexuality. Core elements of CSE programmes share certain similarities: CSE's firm grounding in human rights – including the rights of the child, and the empowerment of children and young people – and a reflection of the broad concept of sexuality as a natural part of human development. Effective sexuality education starts early in childhood and progresses through adolescence and adulthood, building knowledge and skills that are appropriate for each stage through a carefully phased process over time, like any other subject in the curriculum.

**There is clear evidence that CSE has a positive impact on**

can delay sexual debut and increase condom use (UNESCO, 2009; Fonner et al, 2014).

Global momentum around CSE has resulted in increased political commitment worldwide. In 2008, ministers of education and health from Latin America and the Caribbean signed the *Preventing through Education Declaration*<sup>1</sup> committing to delivering sexuality education and health services. Similarly, in 2013, 20 countries across Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) endorsed a Ministerial Commitment on CSE and SRH services for adolescents and young people, setting specific targets to ensure access to high-quality, comprehensive life skills-based HIV and sexuality education and appropriate youth-friendly health services for all young people. UNAIDS and the African Union have recently cited comprehensive, age-appropriate sexuality education as one of five key recommendations to fast track the HIV response and end the AIDS epidemic among young women and girls across Africa. Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region, West Africa and Europe are also revising their policies and approaches to scale up sexuality education.

**Young people are increasingly demanding their right to sexuality education**, as evidenced by the 2011 Mali Call to Action; declarations at the 2011 International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA); the 2012 Bali Global Youth Forum Declaration; the 2014 Colombo Declaration on Youth; youth delegates' inputs to the post-2015 development agenda through the 'Have you seen my Rights?' coalition; as well as the advocacy efforts of the PACT coalition of youth organizations.

The political momentum has led many governments to scale up delivery of CSE and to seek guidance on best practice. Ministries of education are working in collaboration with ministries of health

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