

Module 2: Evidence based approaches to sexuality education for adolescents - Adolescent health and development with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health - Assignment

Chandra Thapa

MITRA Samaj, Sanepa, Lalitpur, Nepal

Key barriers to expanding or improving sexuality education in Nepal

1. Socio-cultural setting since most of social norms and values restrict open talking on matter of sexuality. This situation hinders the expansion of sexuality education in Nepal.
2. Poor budget allocation by ministry of education and other external development partners to implement sexuality education in Nepal. UNICEF has taken noteworthy strides to scale up life skills education to 32 districts (out of 75 districts in Nepal) in 2007-2008. However, so far it covers only one-twentieth of the total number of schools. Contents on life skills and HIV and AIDS are introduced into the education curricula.
3. Inadequate human resources, lack of capacity. Inevitably, difficulties encountered in the implementation of sexuality education will reflect broader systemic problems within the education sector: limited resources; teachers who are over-burdened and insufficiently trained and supported; crowded curricula that inevitably lead to the prioritization of subjects that are examined over those that are not.
4. Political will at the national level - Sexuality education is a sensitive issue and is most likely to be effectively introduced and implemented when sufficient political will exists to support it; however, there is not always a strong political will among the policy makers to push the agenda forward.

Suggestions on overcoming these barriers

1. Advocacy for deconstruction of thought. Massive awareness raising activities by the government and development partners on sexuality education need to be organized. Developing ownership on the sexuality education by the Nepal Government is a crucial step for expanding the sexuality education. Creating wider social approaches that are practical, socially and culturally acceptable and scientifically sound. Networking and coordination has to be strengthened among stakeholders, including teacher unions, school associations (Private and Boarding Schools Organization of Nepal), student unions, parent associations, youth organizations, teacher training institutions and health institutions.
2. Developing strong political will at different levels - High political will of the policy makers and social influencers helps to remove the social barriers. Even in settings that are socially and culturally conservative and where discussion of sexual matters has traditionally been taboo, it is possible to introduce sexuality education if the social and political will is high.

3. Policy development - School Sector Reform Program and Periodic Plan for Education should clearly spell out sexuality education needs and propose process for improvement and expansion. Clear policy should be developed to mainstream sexuality education through formal and non-formal education. This is necessary to allocate needed resources (internal and external) to expand the sexuality education in all over the country for providing training, education and development of resource materials (guidelines and tools on sexuality education to be adapted or developed, specific to the context of Nepal).
4. Institutional arrangements- Proper structure for program planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation for sexuality education is needed. Capacity building to develop a group of key resource persons.

Assignment documents

1. [IPPF. From evidence to action: Advocating for comprehensive sexuality education. London: IPPF; 2009.](#)
2. [UNESCO. International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education. Volume I. The rationale for sexuality education. Paris: UNESCO; 2009.](#)
3. [UNESCO. International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education. Volume II. Topics and learning objectives. Paris: UNESCO; 2009.](#)
4. [UNESCO. Levers of Success. Case studies of national sexuality education programmes. Paris: UNESCO; 2010.](#)