

COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION (CSE) PROVISION

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WHAT IS CSE?

- CSE is a curriculum-based process of teaching & learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical & social aspects of sexuality.
- CSE aims to equip children & adolescents with:
 - (i) knowledge, skills, attitudes & values that will empower them to realize their health, well-being & dignity,
 - (ii) develop respectful social & sexual relationships,
 - (iii) consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing & that of others, &
 - (iv) understand & ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

RATIONALE

- **Adolescents need CSE:** Adolescents need knowledge & skills to make well-informed choices about their lives, learn how to avoid & deal with problems, & know where to seek help if necessary.
- **CSE has shown to be effective:** There is strong evidence for the positive effects of CSE. There is no evidence that CSE increases sexual activity, sexual risk-taking behaviour, or rates of HIV or other STIs.
- **Access to & provision of good-quality CSE programmes need attention:** Many countries that have implemented large-scale CSE programmes struggle with ensuring quality and fidelity. Furthermore, the ability to access CSE is often based on being in school.



HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS

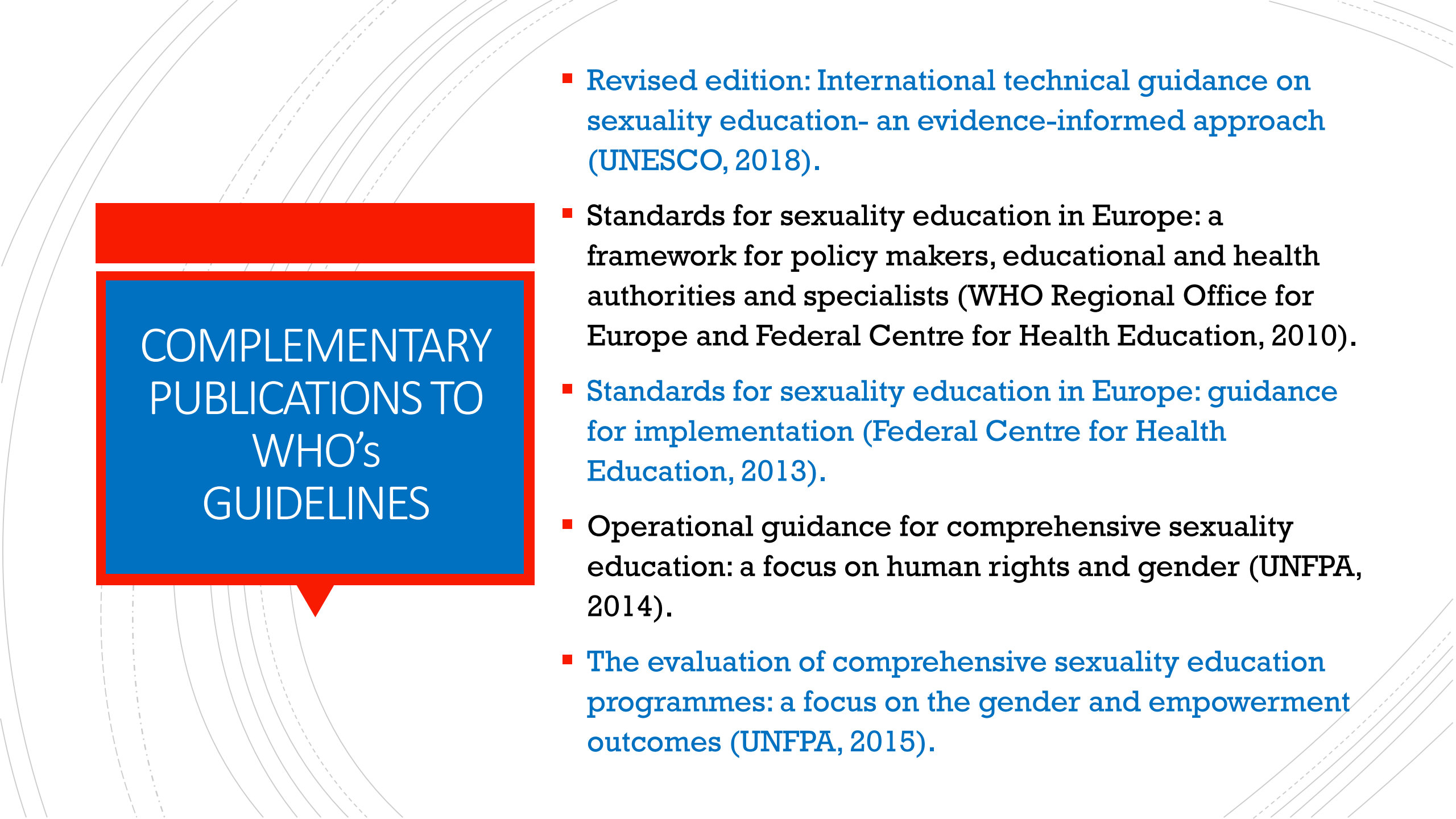
- CSE is part of the core obligations of states to uphold the right to sexual & reproductive health.
- CSE should address self-awareness & knowledge about the body, sexual health & well-being.
- All children & adolescents should have access to CSE which should be free, confidential, adolescent-responsive & non-discriminatory.
- CSE should be available both online and in person. It should be age-appropriate based on scientific evidence, comprehensive & inclusive.
- CSE curricula should be developed with adolescents & be part of the mandatory school curriculum.

KEY CONCEPTS TO CONSIDER

- **There is deep-seated discomfort about adolescent sexuality which contributes to barriers to the provision of CSE:** CSE needs to be placed on national agendas, & strategies put in place to build community support and identify & address reduce resistance.
- **There is a widespread misconception that the provision of CSE leads to early or risky sexual behaviour:** There is strong evidence that CSE does not increase sexual activity, sexual risk-taking behavior or rates of HIV or other STIs. This message must be communicated widely.
- **Teachers often lack of good quality training & support on CSE content & on participatory facilitation/non-judgemental teaching:** Teachers and schools must be supported to deliver CSE effectively and to engage parents & families in this.

WHO GUIDELINES

- ***WHO guidelines on preventing early pregnancy and poor reproductive outcomes among adolescents in developing countries (2011)***
 - ❖ With regards to CSE, the guideline recommends Advocacy at **community level** involving all stakeholders through information provision, sexuality and health education, life skills building, contraceptive counselling and service provision and creation of supportive environments.
 - ❖ At the **individual level**, provision of accurate information and education, particularly CSE to increase contraceptive use.
- ***Ensuring human rights in the provision of contraceptive information and services: guidance and recommendations (2014)***
 - ❖ At the **individual level**, provision of scientifically accurate CSE programmes within and outside of schools that include information on contraceptive use and acquisition.
- ***Consolidated guidelines on HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care for key populations (2016 update)***
 - ❖ Includes the good practice recommendation that sexuality education programmes for adolescents both in and outside of schools, should be scientifically accurate and comprehensive and include information on contraceptives, including and to use and where to get them.
 - ❖ Promotes CSE as an approach to addressing social norms and stigma concerning sexuality, gender identities and sexual orientation.



COMPLEMENTARY
PUBLICATIONS TO
WHO'S
GUIDELINES

- Revised edition: International technical guidance on sexuality education- an evidence-informed approach (UNESCO, 2018).
- Standards for sexuality education in Europe: a framework for policy makers, educational and health authorities and specialists (WHO Regional Office for Europe and Federal Centre for Health Education, 2010).
- Standards for sexuality education in Europe: guidance for implementation (Federal Centre for Health Education, 2013).
- Operational guidance for comprehensive sexuality education: a focus on human rights and gender (UNFPA, 2014).
- The evaluation of comprehensive sexuality education programmes: a focus on the gender and empowerment outcomes (UNFPA, 2015).

