

# Comprehensive Sexuality Education Project (CSEP)

## Summary

This project forms part of the implementation of IPPF's Adolescent Strategic Objectives. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (DANIDA) funded the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), central office London to start Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) project in four countries, including Nepal. IPPF is working with Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN) on this project since March 2008.

Its focus reflects both the need to promote the important contribution that comprehensive sexuality education makes to health outcomes, as well as counter the numerous religious, moral and other challenges which such education continues to face at national and international levels.

Socio-cultural taboos associated with sex and sexuality are still prevalent in our country. There are no subject specific teachers to teach sexuality education in school. The teachers who are teaching SRH need training and appropriate IEC materials to facilitate such topics. However, there is a growing interest among teachers and students on adolescent SRH and there is an emergence of NGOs working on adolescent SRH in the country. An attempt is being made to introduce CSE, as it goes beyond SRH and considers "the various inter-related power dynamics that influences sexual choices"

The project aims to move the sexuality agenda forward and develop a new model that will strengthen the evidence-base and further the global agenda on advocating for Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). This project is being implemented by FPAN central office and most of the program activities are being implemented in the capital city - Kathmandu for CSE advocacy.

## The goal

The goal of the project is to ensure the integration and implementation of comprehensive, gender sensitive and rights-based sexuality education through the national curricula (primary and secondary) in Nepal. The project focuses on the creation of sustainable advocacy networks with stakeholders to promote CSE and undertake national advocacy/campaigning activities. The project works with key stakeholders to adopt a broad based sexuality education curriculum and build skills to ensure its effective allocation. Its objectives are as follows:

1. Establish sustainable advocacy network to promote CSE
2. Work to adopt a broad based curriculum and build skills with key stakeholders
3. Project Implementation: campaigns and programs
4. Documentation and dissemination



## Major Achievement

1. Capacity building of youth volunteer, Branch Managers and other staffs of FPAN for CSE awareness:

Capacity building and involvement of FPAN Branch managers and youth volunteers from 28 districts was done through 2-day training on CSE to each groups. CSE training to Central Youth Working Committee & Valley Sub Committee of FPAN was also facilitated by CSE staffs and youth volunteers. Also the youth volunteer and youth volunteers who have come of age (who crossed age 25) were involved to facilitate 2-day training on CSE to youths from 28 districts of Nepal, and to youth of Central Youth Working Committee & Valley Sub Committee of FPAN. CSE orientation was also given to staffs of FPAN including Girls Trafficking Project and hotline counsellors.



Exercise to understand pain, pleasure and shame

2. Youth involvement:

Young people were involved in developing as well as in implementing CSE program related awareness raising, advocacy and research activities. This is one of the major achievements because young people played a major role to organize and conduct awareness and advocacy activities related to CSE in almost all the branch of FPAN and in Kathmandu Valley. More than 40 sensitization, awareness raising and advocacy activities were conducted outside Kathmandu. Youth volunteers from Central Youth Working Committee & Valley Sub Committee played a major role to organize International Youth Day in Kathmandu. Also, 16 youth interviewed students and teachers for research related to CSE. This way we have involve youths not only as receipts of program but also as facilitators, program implementers and researchers.



Flyers with CVE message distributed on International Youth Day Celebration Program

3. Integration of CSE issues with other projects and section of FPAN.

Integration of CSE issues with Finnish Project-CSE issues were integrated with Explore training conducted by Finnish Project because Finnish Project has included CSE issues in its entire program for youth and Explore training was one of them. CSE Project and Finnish Project jointly organize three days training on "Life Skill Based CSE" in the district areas of Finnish Project to youth volunteers and branch supervisors. These trained youth went to other districts to give cascade training to youth volunteers on Life Skill Based CSE. This is a major achievement because integrating CSE issues through Finnish Project allowed CSE issue to be integrated most intensely, in other districts of Nepal.

Integration of CSE issues with hotline counseling-CSE orientation to staffs of hotline counselors was given and they understood that the calls they handled are related to components of CSE. This is an achievement because Hotline counseling is focused on giving service. Integrating CSE issued within hotline counseling means addressing demands / questions on CSE through service. This is more comprehensive way to promote CSE.

Media Orientation with Advocacy Section-One day media orientation to sensitize 22 journalists on CSE was conducted with Advocacy Section. 300 Flipchart in collaboration with Girls Trafficking project was printed. One section of the flipchart has information on CSE and this will be used by peer educators of 4 districts where GT project is implemented. 6000 copies of Sexual rights and CSE toolkit for peer educates was developed and printed in collaboration with Youth Section.

4. Reference Manual and the Training Manual on CSE is developed in partnership with related government bodies, professors, and other organizations. Information on CSE will be made accessible through manuals to teachers of secondary government schools in Nepal and will be used to train teachers on CSE issues.

The CSE manual was prepared based on the content finalized by steering and technical committee members. Draft was written by technical committee members, reviewed and edited by Content Finalization committee members and agreed by Steering Committee members. To inculcate the opinion of student and teachers, post manual workshop and pilot testing training of the manual was done and their feedback was considered.

CSE manual is divided in 8 chapters

Unit 1- Introduction of CSE

Unit 2- Sex & Sexuality including relationship & pleasure

Unit 3 Sexual and Reproductive Health

Unit 4- Sexual & Reproductive Rights

Unit 5- Gender

Unit 6- Violence

Unit 7-Diversity

Unit 8- Myths and Misconception related to CSE



Meeting with CSE Manual writing team

After the draft was prepared it was reviewed and edited by FPAN along with members from content Finalization committee and was reviewed by Steering committee members.

5. Human Sexuality as a separate compulsory course was introduced by Department of Health, Physical & Population Education, Tribhuvan University in Masters in Education and Masters in Population Post Graduate Course:

There is one separate chapter on CSE in this curriculum. Our advocacy initiatives involved university professors from the beginning of the project and they advocated for inclusion of CSE in this curriculum. For example, one of the professors is a member of a concerned group; two other professors are in the technical committee and steering committee. This is a major achievement because inclusion of CSE in the Master's level will open avenues to include sexuality and CSE in Bachelor and school level curriculum. Also these students are going to be future health teachers in school and if they are sensitized on sexuality and CSE, they can teach SRH, sexuality subject more effectively in classrooms. This is one of the main long term objectives of this project too.

## Challenges

The change in curricula needs long term advocacy: Major changes in the school curriculum take place every ten years and minor change every five years. The most recent such changes were made recently year, which means that even if the government were to agree to integrate CSE in the curriculum, it would take another five years to do so. We are focusing on the development of a reference manual on CSE and a teacher's manual on CSE through the CDC.

Introducing & implementing CSE within national Curricula needs huge national funding: After the development of manual on CSE, there is a need to train teachers on CSE from all over Nepal; since the goal of the project is to ensure the integration and implementation of CSE education through the national school curricula in Nepal. Training larger number of teachers is imperative to build their capacity to facilitate content on CSE more effectively in classrooms. This will need larger amount of national funding from MOE. Once the student gets awareness on CSE, the referral to health service

will increase, which means provision of youth friendly services and trained health staff on CSE is required in health settings. This will also need larger amount of national funding from MOH.

Harmonizing of Ministry of Education (MOE) and Ministry of Health (MOH) needed: As mentioned above teacher's training on CSE and trained health staff on CSE needs collaboration between Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health.

Mixed reaction of policy makers: Most of the stakeholders feel that CSE should be included within the school curriculum. However some are sceptical, which may hinder the inclusion of CSE within the school curriculum.

## Lesson Learnt

Internalization of CSE issues takes intensive time and efforts: internalization with implementing agencies, FPAN, concerned stakeholders takes longer period of time and more personal efforts. People may talk politically correct languages in workshops and meetings but it is difficult to explore their attitude regarding CSE when they are out of their professional role. CSE encompass a new paradigm of looking at the young people's sexuality, which should be free from preconceived negative notion of society's view of sexuality. Internalizing CSE means that the stakeholders should be ready to advocate for CSE in their informal settings too, stakeholders should be willing to go through a process of self reflection and get in touch with their own strength, biases and prejudice regarding various aspects of CSE.

CSE advocacy in a country going through transition is difficult: MOE Minister changed abruptly during the reporting period. We developed rapport and sensitize one Ministry and she was replaced by a new person. CSE issues are yet to be in a priority list for the government of Nepal as it is in the process of writing constitution of the country. It is struggling to maintain the rule of law because of widespread impunity, frequent strike and boycott from different sectors on many social issues. We need more comprehensive strategy to advocate on CSE in the present situation.