

Documentation of Advocacy Work on
Comprehensive Sexuality Education
in Nepal



Foreword

Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN), a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), is promoting sexual & reproductive health and rights as fundamental human rights since decades. The continuance of this attempt brought in 2008 the 'Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) Project' funded by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark)

The education system can play a crucial role to ensure reproductive well being of countless young people by imparting comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). Comprehensive sexuality education promotes a holistic, rights-based gender sensitive approach ensuring that contents and methods of facilitation are conducive to learning about human sexuality and sexual rights. Comprehensive sexuality education, together with reproductive health & rights education is vital in a country like Nepal for promoting equality, empowerment as well as conflict prevention and resolution. In brief, it is a means to develop societies where the human rights of all are respected, protected and fulfilled.

This report documents major activities carried out by the CSE Project for two years from 2008 till 2010. This documentation captures Nepal's CSE situation, policy environment for sexual and reproductive health of young people. It describes strategies and techniques adopted for political change, challenges encountered in the process, consolidated lessons learnt as well as the key achievements. I hope that the advocacy efforts documented here will inspire new initiatives for Comprehensive Sexuality Education and encourage further implementation of those already in place, while enhancing co-operation and partnership at all levels.

We are grateful to all the partner agencies and individuals for being part of the advocacy efforts on CSE. Their involvement was outstanding and proved to be instrumental for the success of CSE advocacy in Nepal.

Family Planning Association of Nepal

Drafted by: Archana Singh

Edited by: Arushi Singh, Baishali Chatterjee, Francesca Barolo, Upama Malla

Designed by: discoverdesign@gmail.com

Photos by: FPAN and IPPF CO

Contents

Abbreviations	02
1 About the Project	03
2 Nepal Country Situation	05
3 Policy Environment for Youth Reproductive Health	07
4 Strategies Adopted for Political Change	09
a. Sensitization of Government Ministries	09
b. Involvement of Parliamentarians	11
c. Involvement of other key stakeholders	11
i. Teachers	11
ii. Media mobilisation	13
• Radio Programme for young people	14
• Journalists' field visit	15
• Featuring in VOW Magazine	16
iii. Parents	16
iv. Religious leaders	17
d. Use of IEC materials	17
e. Evidence generation	18
f. Integration of CSE into Branches and Projects of FPAN	19
g. Gaining extra mileage through celebration of events	20
h. Development of effective tools as groundwork for advocacy	21
i. Developing advocacy networks in Nepal for CSE	25
j. Youth involvement	25
5 Challenges, Lessons Learnt and Key Achievements	28
6 Appendices	32
a. CSE in the media	32
b. Interviews conducted for this documentation	33
c. Bibliography	34

Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
CBO	Community Based Organization
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
GT	Girl Trafficking
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
FPAN	Family Planning Association of Nepal
IEC	Information Education and Communication
INGO	International Non-government Organization
IPPF SARO	International Planned Parenthood Federation South Asia Regional Office
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
NCASC	National Centre for AIDS and STD Control
NCED	National Centre for Educational Development
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NGOCC	Non-Government Organization Coordination Council
NHIECC	National Health Information Education Communication Centre
RHIYA	Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia
RHCC	Reproductive Health Coordination Committee
SISO	Scale Information Society Nepal
SOLID Nepal	Society for Local Integrated Development Nepal
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STEP Nepal	Society for Empowerment, Nepal
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TU	Tribhuvan University
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VDC	Village Development Committee

1 About the Project

The Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN), IPPF's Member Association in Nepal, has been working in Nepal since 1959 and is a leading national NGO in the field of sexual and reproductive health.

FPAN's current programs are focused on the IPPF Strategic Framework 2005-2015, also known as the 5 'A's i.e. Adolescents and young people, Abortion, HIV and AIDS, Advocacy and Access. FPAN, while implementing its other projects in 2007, noticed that in the context of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), Nepalese young people were not getting adequate information and education. A study was then conducted to explore whether the curriculum in school was sufficient and what the young people's perceptions were on the inclusion of CSE in school curricula. The findings of this review were that sexuality education, although covered in the curriculum, was not given any priority in school. This was evident from the fact that no specific teachers were assigned for this subject. The students felt that information, illustrations and pictures were not adequate (e.g. size of picture of sexual organs were not explicit and visible) and the sequence of topics also needed to be revised, so that topics like menstruation were covered in grade six, when the information would be useful. The teachers also felt that they needed to have more information and skills so that they could teach SRH more effectively.¹

FPAN has implemented the Comprehensive Sexuality Education project, funded by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark), for two years from 2008 till 2010.

The goal of the project was 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 focused on the creation of sustainable advocacy networks with stakeholders to promote CSE and undertake a national advocacy campaign. It worked with key stakeholders to adopt a broad based sexuality education curriculum and build skills to ensure its effective implementation.

The project focused on the need to promote CSE to achieve sexual and reproductive health outcomes, as well as counter the numerous religious, moral and other challenges to CSE which exist at community, national and international levels. The project's objectives were as follows:

1. To establish a sustainable advocacy network to promote CSE
2. To work with key stakeholders to adopt abroad based sexuality education

curriculum and build skills to ensure its effective application

3. To advocate on CSE through campaigns and programs
4. To document and disseminate CSE project experience with stakeholders such as MoE, MoY, young people, teachers, technical and steering committee members, concerned group/NGOCC, donor community

Among other activities, the project conducted a review of government education policies and programmes related to CSE in Nepal, developed a teacher's Reference Manual and Training Guide for comprehensive sexuality education in schools, organized a variety of events, developed strong partnerships, and lobbied with relevant Government departments (Health and Education) to promote CSE.

FPAN developed promotional materials for distribution to young people, and trained youth volunteers from 28 FPAN branches, school students and teachers on the new model CSE curriculum, covering the seven key elements of CSE as per the IPPF CSE Framework of gender, sexual and reproductive health and HIV, sexual rights and sexual citizenship, pleasure, violence, diversity and relationships.

The project provided an opportunity and a platform to deal not only with SRH, but also with many social issues like violence (through its components) that directly contribute to the sexual well-being and improved SRH status of young people. The involvement of young people at all stages of the project, not only as recipients, but also as facilitators, program implementers and researchers is another important aspect of this project. Similarly, the project advocated directly on the need for CSE with high level policy makers in the health and education sector in Nepal.

¹Dr. Chhatra Amatya, *Review of Existing School Curriculum on Health including Sexual and Reproductive Health at Lower Secondary and Secondary Level*, FPAN, July 2007.

2 Nepal Country Situation

In Nepal, there are approximately 9 million young people between the age of 10 and 24. According to the population census of 2006, about 33 percent of the population is under 15 years.² The average age of the Nepalese population is young at 20 years.³

Studies of adolescent and young people's health in Nepal are limited in number. However, data indicate that one in five Nepalese are sexually active before the age of 15.⁴ One in five adolescent women between the ages of 15 and 19 are already mothers or pregnant with their first child.⁵ One fifth of these women report that the pregnancy was unintended.⁶ One of the major reasons behind this is that women and girls in general have very low social status compared to males and they depend on their husbands and parents for any decisions. In Nepal, women are generally less educated than men at all levels of education and 68% of women, even if they work, are either not paid or are paid in kind.⁷

Nepal's young people are characterized by low school enrolment, early marriage and early entry into childbearing.⁸ Even though the literacy rate of Nepalese women has increased by 32 percent in the past five years, 53 percent of women are still illiterate, based on the data published by Demographic Health Survey (DHS) 2006.⁹

However, the use of contraceptives has increased

significantly, by 70 percent, in the past ten years from 26 percent in 1996 to 44 percent in 2006. According to the Nepal DHS 2006, nearly one in two currently married women is using a method of contraception, with most women using a modern method (44 percent).

Despite the noticeable increase in the use of contraception in Nepal, there are still unmet contraceptive needs of currently married women. Nearly three in four Nepalese women have a demand for family planning, and only two thirds of their demand is currently met.¹⁰ This unmet need translates into unplanned pregnancies and the risk of unsafe abortion and maternal morbidity and mortality, in addition to exposure to sexually transmitted infections (STI) including HIV.

Young people's access to sexual and reproductive health information is a crucial first step towards their practicing safe behaviours, although information itself is not adequate for behaviour change. The findings of the United National Population Fund (UNFPA)/Reproductive Health

Initiative for Youth in Asia's (RHIYA) baseline and end line surveys conducted in 2004 and 2006 respectively, are to a certain extent encouraging in terms of access to information. The survey report shows that more than 96 percent of the young people in the baseline survey and almost all in the end line survey said that they had knowledge of at least one contraceptive.¹¹ Similarly, according to the DHS 2006, only 28 percent of women and forty-four percent of men of ages 15 to 24 have comprehensive knowledge about HIV and AIDS. Another study conducted on the knowledge and use of condoms by young people in Nepal found that about two-thirds of the young people of Nepal have actual knowledge of condoms. Among ever sexually active males and females, 25.2 percent and 10.4 percent respectively, reported currently using condoms.¹²

² UNFPA website <http://nepal.unfpa.org/en/statistics/>

³ UNFPA/RHIYA website: <http://www.asia-initiative.org/nepal.php?area=2&page=4&option=1>

⁴ What Works for Children in South Asia: HIV/AIDS Prevention Among Young People, UNICEF, 2004.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Baseline study on EU/UNFPA Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia Program in Nepal (RHIYA) (Findings on Quantitative Research), European Union, and UNFPA, 2004 (Unpublished draft report submitted to UNFPA Nepal.)

⁷ Nepal Demographic Health Survey (DHS) 2006, Ministry of Health and Population; New ERA; Marco International Inc., 2006.

⁸ Thapa S, Acharya LB, Aryal RH. Schooling, Marriage, Work, and Childbearing among the Youth Population of Nepal: Emerging Insights and Challenges Report prepared for the Workshop on Youth across Asia. Kathmandu: FHI, 1997.

⁹ Ministry of Health and Population; New ERA; Marco International Inc, Nepal Demographic Health Survey (DHS), 2006.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Valley Research Group, RHIYA End line Comparative Report, RHIYA/UNFPA, January, 2007

¹² Thapa S, Shrestha B, Do young people in Nepal know about and use condoms?, International Conference on AIDS, Thailand, 2004.

3 Policy Environment for Adolescent Reproductive Health

The overall policy environment for Adolescent Reproductive Health in Nepal is in general conducive.

The policy that restricted the access to reproductive health services only to married couples has been abolished through new service delivery guidelines and service providers no longer need to ascertain marital status.¹³ Similarly, the Interim 3 Year Development Plan (2007-2010), for the first time, has a separate chapter on young people to address their specific needs and states that the government's Youth Reproductive Health Service Program up to the village level, and rural clinics, will be strengthened by mobilizing local bodies and other organizations.¹⁴ The Ministry of Health also developed a national strategy in 1998 that is specific to adolescents as part of its overall reproductive health strategy.¹⁵ The Adolescent Health Strategy, which was adopted in 2000, is considered a key component of integrated sexual and reproductive health services and aims at increasing the availability of and access to information on adolescent health; provide opportunities to build skills among adolescents, service providers, and educators; and increase accessibility and utilization of health and counselling services among adolescents.¹⁶

Along with the enabling policy on SRH, Nepal has been able to integrate topics in its school curricula through which many young people get information, although the subject might be

avoided by their teachers. The historical development of CSE related elements or contents in the curricula go back to 1953. At that time, a curriculum from grade three onwards was started and included a subject by the name of "Health and Hygiene." Although this subject merely included basic knowledge about body physiology and tips on healthy living, this initiative marks the beginning of health education in Nepal.

Today, there are two national curricula, namely - Health and Physical Education and Health, Population and Environment (HPE) - taught in the lower secondary and secondary schools in Nepal. These curricula, which have created a means for many young people to know about SRH, include physical changes during adolescence, the reproductive system, pregnancy and birth, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and AIDS and safe motherhood. These materials were approved by the Ministry of Education and Sports in 1998-99. However, not much is known about the extent to which this material is covered in classes in private or government schools in urban or rural areas except for one or two studies conducted. One such study was conducted in 2006 to look into school based sex education in western Nepal and found evidence that the quality of sex and reproductive health education was poor because of inadequate preparation of teachers for such

instruction, inadequate teaching materials and lack of school and community support for teachers to provide these lessons.¹⁷

Moreover, the content on sexuality education, including SRH issues, under the existing school curriculum has not sufficiently addressed the concerns of young people. The curriculum focused heavily on the bio-medical perspective of SRH, like explanation of the function of reproductive organs, without considering the impact of social norms on individual SRH. Although SRH is a very important topic of sexuality education, such education should encompass biological, socio-cultural and psychological dimensions of sexuality. Gender disparity and a lack of communication skills between sexual partners are risk factors for sexual violence, which can be mitigated through CSE. Thus, components such as gender, violence, sexual citizenship/rights, diversity including sexual orientation, sexual pleasure and relationships, including SRH, is still lacking within the current sexuality education curriculum. Besides this, more effort is also needed to build parental and community support to change their perception towards sexuality education.¹⁸

However, despite the lack of effort in the implementation of SRH in school curricula, it is an important achievement that a foundation has

been laid among civil society organisations for the support of sexuality education. For this reason, in 2008, when the government was planning to make Health Population and Environment an optional subject for secondary school, many stakeholders, including the NGO coalition, of which FPAN is a member, lobbied extensively to reinstate this course as mandatory in the school curriculum. As a result of this lobbying, the government did not remove the course from the mandatory list and held consultations with stakeholders to seek their opinions, on the importance to keep the subject in the curriculum.

¹³ FHI/USAID, Assessment of Youth Reproductive Health/HIV Programs in Nepal, September, 2004

¹⁴ National Planning Commission (NPC), Three Year Interim Plan 2001-2010, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2007

¹⁵ Nepal Ministry of Health, Family Health Division, National Adolescent Health and Development Strategy. Kathmandu, 2000.

¹⁶ FHI/USAID, Assessment of Youth Reproductive Health/HIV Programs in Nepal, September, 2004

¹⁷ Shreejana Pokharel, Kulczycki A., Shakya S. School-Based Sex Education in Western Nepal: Uncomfortable for Both Teachers and Students. Reproductive Health Matters, 2006.

¹⁸ Ed Scholl, et. al, Assessment of Youth Reproductive Health/HIV Programs in Nepal, FHI/USAID, September, 2004

4 Strategies Adopted for Political Change

Different approaches and strategies have been executed to advocate and raise awareness at all levels, from policy makers to young people themselves, to successfully bring about a change in the national curriculum.

Besides, the project has also been able to build capacity of various stakeholders.

The project, in July 2008, conducted an Advocacy Planning Workshop involving young people and other stakeholders like the Curriculum Development Centre (Ministry of Education), the National Health Education & Communication Centre (Ministry of Health & Population), the Family Health Division (Ministry of Health & Population), Professors from Tribhuvan University (Department of Health & Physical Education) and different sections of FPAN. The workshop objective was to develop an advocacy plan. Activities in the plan included (1) handing over a memorandum composed by the Concerned Group¹⁹ members of Nepal Non-government Organization Coordination Council (NGOCC)²⁰ to the Ministry of Education (MoE) to include the CSE curriculum in schools, (2) a signature campaign to advocate for the retention of the Health Population and Environment (HPE) curriculum as a compulsory school subject, and (3) media campaign through press conferences, broadcasting programs about CSE on FM radio, talk programs on CSE on special occasions, and carrying out other ongoing awareness raising and sensitization activities.

The CSE project used the platform created by the NGOCC to form the "Concerned group for

National Curriculum Structure 2063", chaired by the Director General, FPAN, to advocate for the reinstatement of the HPE curriculum. Advocacy campaign initiatives, such as handing over a memorandum to the Minister of Education, were carried out by the Concerned Group followed by a press conference. This particular activity pressurized the MoE to look into the curriculum before finalizing it.

a. Sensitization of Government Ministries

Policy advocacy has been carried out through joint efforts of youth volunteers and members of the Concerned Group of NGOCC. Apart from this, the formation of a Steering and Technical Committee to develop a CSE Reference Manual and Training Guide for teachers led to the involvement of government institutions like the CDC, NCED and NHIECC/Ministry of Health and Population. This provided an opportunity for the government to build a better understanding on CSE.

The approach taken during the implementation of the project has been to advocate directly with various Ministry representatives, including the Joint Secretary of the MoE, the Director of the CDC/MoE, Director of the NCED/MoE, the Director of the NHIECC/Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Department Head of Health Education at

Tribhuvan University (TU). The advocacy-related activities were done in partnership with other civil society organisations (CSO), affiliated to NGOCC, that we also interested in CSE in Nepal.

In the advocacy process, the Concerned Group held regular meetings to plan for advocacy activities. They submitted a memorandum to the Minister of Education asking for the continuation of HPE, which the Minister took positively and committed to discuss with the concerned persons in the MoE, such as the Secretary of MoE and the Director of CDC. Following the memorandum, another letter was sent to the CDC requesting for a dialogue with the coalition.

Some of the policy makers were sceptical about CSE. For example, the ex-Director of CDC initially felt that CSE education was appropriate for teachers but not for students. FPAN interacted with him repeatedly and provided him with evidence on the need for CSE, which brought him to change his opinion.

Many rounds of lobbying at institutional and individual levels were carried out to sensitize Government bodies such as the MoE, CDC and NCED, before they agreed on the development of the Reference Manual and Training Guide, as CSE was an entirely new topic for them. Regular correspondence through letters and visits to the Director of CDC/MoE were undertaken along with the formation of a curriculum writing committee. The inclusion of representatives of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health in the manual development workshop and Steering and

Technical Committee meetings also played an important role in sensitizing the policy makers. The National Health Education, Information and Communication Centre (NHEICC) was also consulted in the development process of various IEC materials.

Furthermore, the Director of the CDC participated in a teacher's training workshop in June 2009, organized in Namibia, where he was trained on CSE. Few months later, under a new director, the CDC started consulting with civil society on the importance of the inclusion of topics on sexuality and reproductive health in the HPE textbook at the school level.

The students of Masters of Education in Health & Physical Education at Tribhuvan University also advocated to reinstate the HPE curriculum. The joint efforts of students and the Concerned Group/NGOCC resulted in the re-instatement of the HPE curriculum for the time being.

Government representatives have also participated in various events like International Youth Day and ASRH Talent Show.

¹⁹ Amongst the members of the NGOCC working on CSE-related topics, an eight-member coalition of I/NGOs and universities was formed at the national level by the name of Concerned Group for National Curriculum Structure 2063, aiming to jointly advocate for the reinstatement of the HPE Curriculum (that covers CSE related topics) as a compulsory subject in Nepal's secondary and higher secondary schools. This coalition also advocated for the inclusion of CSE in the school curriculum.

²⁰ The NGOCC is a network established with the objective of facilitating discussion on various reproductive health and family planning issues in Nepal. It is an informal group of Kathmandu-based national NGOs and I/NGOs working in the area of reproductive health and family planning.

“I knew about all of this (sexuality education) beforehand but this project helped bringing scattered information together and gave me confidence to make a bigger impact. Moreover, the enthusiasm expressed by the teachers during the pilot testing gave me more hope.” [Dr. Dhruva Shrestha, member of CDC’s Population and Environment Subject Committee]

“We at Ministry of Health have been thinking that sexuality education should start in school because in this way, those who join the government, including the Ministry of Health will already be aware on this topic and hence it will be easier for them to work on the topic. I am therefore happy that this is being addressed by the curriculum on CSE.” [Mr. Sanjaya Dahal, NCASC/MoH]

b. Involvement of Parliamentarians

Involving Parliamentarians who influence the national policy environment is key for any advocacy initiative. The project, therefore, worked with Parliamentarians to make them champions for CSE in the Constitutional Assembly. The project worked closely with two Parliamentarians in particular - one of them being a young person himself, Mr. Gagan Thapa, and the other a women’s rights advocate, Ms. Sapana Malla Pradhan.

The Honourable Gagan Thapa is one of the most popular young Parliamentarians who supported the project’s cause and spoke on “The role of young Parliamentarians in promoting CSE” on the

occasion of International Youth Day. There were approximately 400 young people and other stakeholders present at the event. He stated that CSE is not limited to the responsibility of the government and civil society groups, but rather is a future investment that everybody should think seriously about. He also stressed that if CSE were made accessible, then gender-based violence would definitely plummet. He further emphasized that efforts should be geared towards creating a platform to discuss issues related to CSE, not only in schools, but also at home among family members.

Similarly, on the occasion of the 20th World Population Day, the Honourable Sapana Malla Pradhan, spoke on sexuality and sensitized the participants on sexual rights and responsibilities. She highlighted the unequal status of women as a hindrance to exercising their sexual rights. She also touched upon the issue of sexual orientation and said that we should not pre-condition ourselves to think of it exclusively in terms of heterosexuality. She further explained that there should be a clear demarcation between rights and violations.

c. Involvement of other key stakeholders

i Teachers

The project has had a significant impact on the lives of individuals involved in the CSE project. From the initial stages of the project, teachers were identified as important stakeholders and were involved as participants in trainings, interaction programs as well as members of the

writing team for the teacher’s Reference Manual and Training Guide on CSE. Teachers also participated in various studies, including the *Review of school curriculum on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, for which, data was collected from them on what content should be included on sex, sexuality and SRH.

Furthermore, teachers were involved in the *Workshop on manual for CSE content finalization committee* in November 2009. Following this workshop, the draft was given to teachers for their feedback during the pilot testing. Their feedback was incorporated to finalize the content of the guide. They also provided feedback on methodologies that could be used to facilitate each topic.

Teachers were also part of the celebrations of the International Youth Day and the Human Rights Day. They participated in the rally, signature campaign and workshop organized to mark the days. They were also invited to an interaction programme with parents, teachers, adolescents and other volunteers, conducted by FPAN youth volunteers. During this program, teachers requested FPAN to conduct CSE classes in their schools. They expressed support for advocating for CSE in schools, and requested for IEC materials on CSE. Action plans were developed to fulfil their demands.

Besides these activities, teachers were part of the district-level work carried out by FPAN’s branch offices. In Rupandehi District, 105 college teachers from different parts of Nepal received orientation on CSE. The participants expressed

their support to the need to include CSE in the school curricula. In Kapilbastu District, the teachers were invited to an Oratory Competition on the importance of CSE. Likewise, orientation to teachers on CSE was also provided in the Nawalparasi Branch where they were sensitized on the roles of teachers and students in promoting maternal health, SRH and CSE.

School teachers, who went through the pilot testing training of the CSE manual, shared that they learnt different methodologies to deliver CSE, which gave them tools to facilitate SRH topics in school. One teacher said that at the beginning of the training she had felt uncomfortable to hear the facilitators talking so freely on sexuality, but at the end she understood that it is important to take sexuality as a natural phenomenon and to feel comfortable with it in order to be a good SRH educator. In one of the exercises in the training, all female and male participants were separated and they were asked to write down as many questions they had on sex and sexuality related to the opposite sex. After this exercise, some teachers expressed that even as an adult they had so much curiosity and so many questions about the sexuality of the opposite sex, therefore it was natural that adolescents would also have curiosity and questions on this topic.

One of the teachers involved in one of the trainings decided to celebrate “Condom Day” in his school. At the event, he was able to answer a lot of questions from the students and made students feel comfortable in asking any questions they wanted to.

Teachers who initially resisted teaching those chapters now have different attitudes towards the subject:

“Following that training I realized that I knew nothing about sexuality though I have been teaching HPE for nearly 10 years. I also realized how little I knew about gender issues. Earlier, I would be more embarrassed than my students to teach sexuality education. Now I feel confident.” [58-year old female teacher of HPE]

“I have three children aged 15, 19 and 24. I never talked to them on sexuality issues when they were really young. But now whenever I start they feel really embarrassed and stop me. I tell them that I will not give up. I do feel that if I started earlier, they probably would have had healthier communication with me. I left the CSE materials on my coffee table and I saw my eldest picking those up. So I am sure they find those interesting.” [47-year old female teacher]

Teacher's capacities have also been built with the help of FPAN youth volunteers. One of the teachers expressed:

“We feel comfortable to conduct this class due to the help of the youth volunteers and now have adequate information. We were also updated on violence, abortion, etc.” [Teacher from Alpine School]

Similar to the school teachers, university professors were also involved in the project. The Professors from the Department of Health and Physical Education, Tribhuvan University, Dr. Ram

Krishna Maharjan (Professor, Health & Physical Education, TU) and Dr. Ram Saran Pathak (Central Department of Population Studies, TU) have been involved from the beginning of the project and they have been lobbying with the Ministry of Education for the inclusion of CSE in curriculum. As the Department of Education also trains teachers for the Ministry of Education, CSE has been included in the curriculum of those enrolled in the Bachelor of Education program.

“The tools and methodologies I learned from the Regional Workshop have solved my dilemma of how to deliver these sensitive topics to the students.”

I, along with other teachers really liked the way youth volunteers work. We liked the openness they showed and liked the style with which they handled the sharing session. The session on how to handle sensitive topics was my favourite. The group was divided into two groups and questions were asked to each other confidentially. The answers were then given in non-judgmental way without questioning.” [Dr. Ram Krishna Maharjan]

“The barrier to inclusion of CSE is mainly because planners do not get a chance to understand this topic. If we catch them early during their education, then it will be easier to work with them on this.” [Prof. Dr. Maharjan]

ii. Media mobilization

The young people, involved in the project, had proposed extensive media mobilisation and a media campaign at the Advocacy Planning

Workshop held in July 2008. As the media is a strategic partner for advocacy, the project focused on mobilization of media as an approach to reach policy makers as well as the general public.

Press conferences and media coverage were organized during the project's major advocacy initiatives, like handing over the memorandum to the Minister of Education. A press conference was held by the Concerned Group on National Curriculum Structure/NGOCC to give information about the meeting with the Minister of Education. This meeting was covered by many newspapers as well as television channels and was broadcast by Sagarmatha National Television.

Another event where media coverage was significant was during the Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) Talent Contest. The talent contest was successful in delivering messages on SRH while holding the attention of the audience through entertainment. This contest was covered by the media and articles and photographs were published in the Rajdhani Daily newspaper of 26 October 2008.

The celebration of the International Youth Day was also extensively covered by the Nepali media. Likewise, CSE was highlighted through a talk program, “Our reproduction, our rights,” on Kantipur National FM radio. An interview recorded with FPAN, which stressed on the importance of CSE, received an excellent response from the listeners.

Orientation on CSE for journalists was also organised by FPAN, which successfully translated into articles being regularly positioned in the Nepali media on CSE-related topics. A total of 38 articles have been published in the two years of the project in national print media, including magazines. Besides such regular coverage in the media, the project implemented three concerted activities that contributed to the advocacy campaign. These included:

- **A Radio Programme for young people**

Conducting a radio programme was identified as an effective strategy to share positive messages on CSE with a wide audience. The main criterion for identification of the radio station was the acceptance of direct involvement of young people in the broadcast. Radio Audio also agreed to make their own contribution of six free episodes out of a total of 18 episodes to be broadcast. The young people trained in CSE were involved in designing, collecting broadcast material, and hosting the radio program along with two radio jockeys of Khulduli.com.

The objective of the radio program was to extend the concept of CSE to a large mass of young people and address their myths and misconceptions related to SRH. This program was broadcast on 106.3 MHz and relayed through 11 radio stations located in different parts of the country. Thus, the program had coverage over 40 districts²¹ of Nepal. It was a one-hour weekly program, broadcast every Saturday from 10 to 11

²¹ Kaski, Tanahu, Syanja, Baglung, Nawalparasi, Chitwan, Dhading, Lamjung, Gorkha, Myagdi, Beni, Dolpa, Parwat, Surkhet, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Acham, Bajhang, Kalikot, Dailekh, Salyan, Pyuthan, Rolpa, Rukkum, Jajarkot, Siraha, Saptari, Udaypur, Sindhuli, Khotang, Bhojpur, Sunsari, Morang, Dhankuta, Terathum, Pachthar, Illam and Jhapa.

pm, and part of a youth program known as khulduli.com.

The program dealt with SRH and sexuality, touching upon all the components of CSE, and addressed misconceptions regarding sexuality as well as the personal queries of the listeners. It was constituted of several sections such as interviews with experts and youth groups, discussion forum, sharing of success stories, etc. To make the program more participatory, there was a contest in which the audience was to send answers through text messages/SMS to questions related to CSE that were asked in the program. The winning answers were then rewarded with mobile recharge balance worth NPR 100. Feedback from the SMS was quick and huge. It also relayed the voices of young people from different districts to a wider audience. This need-based and participatory program was one of the most popular programs for young people.

Sharing the evolution of the radio program, one of the hosts, Ms. Shreejana Bajracharya said, *“We had no blue prints when we started making radio programs. We improved it based on our objectives, limitations and feedback from the audience. We sat in the meetings for improvement on the day the first episode was broadcast. We explored various levels of improvements and shaped the program accordingly”*

For the radio jockey, sharing the time on air with young people was a first time experience:

“It was the first time that Khulduli.com had young people’s participation which was a refreshing experience. Each week, we had different experts covering all the components on CSE. Previously we mostly received SMS on masturbation, menstruation and abortion. When the CSE program started we received a variety of messages on love, difference between love and infatuation, on healthy relationship, etc. We even received feedback from other FM stations. After we aired FPAN’s episode on the third gender we received feedback from Mr. Jas Kumar Rai, Managing Director of Bijayapur FM, Dharan where he said that he never would have thought that kd.com would cover the third gender issue in such a polite manner. He told us that the information provided was totally clear, it was good job and we should keep it up.”

• Journalists’ field visit

The journalists’ visit was one of the most effective activities implemented jointly by FPAN’s CSE project and another youth focused project, called Improving the Sexual and Reproductive Health Status of Young Women in Nepal (funded by the Finnish Government), as part of building the media campaign. Journalists from national print media like Kantipur, Nagarik Daily, Kathmandu Post and The Rising Nepal took part in the 4-day field visit to the eastern and western districts of Nepal. During the visit, they interacted with the FPAN branch staff and members of youth groups. They also collected success stories among the young people who at

first had limited knowledge and were now serving as peer educators on CSE. The visit was successful in demonstrating field realities and highlighting the importance of CSE to the journalists. They got a chance to learn that young people participating in the programme did not hesitate to talk about condoms and they were aware about dealing with relationships and sexuality. Many of the journalists are now covering stories related to CSE and are also more open to include sexuality-related words in their writing. One such example is an article named Talk with Friends on Sex in the Nepali monthly magazine “Nari” that was published in June 2010.²²

• Featuring in VOW Magazine

Voice of Women (VOW), one of the popular magazines of Nepal, featured CSE issues in an article called, *Sex in the school syllabus - A Debate*, under its *My Cup of Tea* section in April 2010. The article published views of eight people, including teachers, young people, FPAN staff and parents, on CSE. This feature openly talked about why CSE should or should not be included in the school curriculum. The voices of the speakers are as follows:

Ms. Barsh Hada, student said, *“...I think there are still some vital issues which can be addressed in the class and which should be properly taught. I have never discussed sex at home with my parents. For people like me, I think school is the best place to learn about it.”*

Another speaker, Mr. Ranjit Gupta, FPAN’s youth central working group member said, *“Often in your teens, you tend to feel that the sexual feelings which you experience are unnatural and that you are alone in that experience. The education helps break that isolation.”*²³

iii. Parents

Similar to teachers, parents were also identified as key stakeholders without whose involvement, advocacy for CSE would be incomplete. Parents participated in sensitization workshops, regular meetings, interaction programs and events.

Parents participated in the interaction program with teachers and young people organized by FPAN youth volunteers. They were also involved in another interaction with students on CSE and life skills, on the occasion of the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) felicitation program held at the FPAN Valley Branch. During this program, parents got an opportunity to learn about dilemmas related to SRH faced by young people in their lives.

Parents also took part in the ARSH Talent Show. This event gave them an opportunity to learn about SRH and also helped them learn to create an environment at home where such topics could be discussed openly. The parents of the participants were impressed with the knowledge of their children on SRH and the comfort level and confidence with which they delivered their messages.

²² Laxmi Bhandari, Oli, D., “Saathi Sanga Yaun ka Kura (Talk with Friends on Sex)”, Nari Monthly, June, 2010, Kathmandu, Nepal

²³ Sharmila Gurung, Chaudhari, S., Sex in the School Syllabus-A Debate(My Cup of Tea column), Voice of Women (VOW), Vol 6, Issue 7, Kathmandu, Nepal

iv. Religious leaders

Traditional/religious leaders were involved in workshops at FPAN Valley Branch on CSE during the Women's Health Day and Human Rights Day celebrations. Generally, the religious leaders in Nepal have expressed that religion does not take sexuality negatively but some interpretations are made with negative connotations. A successful approach used by FPAN in collaborating with religious leaders, was to find common ground between religious philosophies and the principles of CSE like non-tolerance of violence and respecting other's views. In this way, not only the religious leaders were more open to receiving the message, but they were also more comfortable in becoming a voice for facilitating the acceptance of imparting CSE in the community.

d. Use of IEC materials

Since CSE was a new concept in Nepal and there were a limited number of IEC materials available, the project developed various materials to fulfil this need. Relevant existing materials that were available in English were translated into Nepali so as to have a greater reach. IEC materials produced by the project include brochures, booklets, notebooks, flipcharts, pens, t-shirts, greeting cards, bags, fact sheets and toolkits on sexual rights and CSE. A documentary on CSE advocacy, "Importance of CSE for Youth Development in Nepal," was developed and is being broadcast through television to reach the masses.

These IEC materials have been designed in consultation with young people, in language that is

easily understood by them and is creative. Messages for some of the IEC materials were selected from those written by young people during a slogan competition. These materials were disseminated through various fora and through FPAN Branch offices to young people and other stakeholders.

Moreover, these materials have been useful tools for the project's advocacy activities by convincing people on the importance of CSE. The youth volunteers have particularly found the tool kit useful as it is handy for them while explaining and advocating on the topic. The use of greeting cards with messages on CSE was an innovative creation of the project that reached various stakeholders including policy makers.

e. Evidence generation

The project conducted two studies which contributed to a better understanding on the CSE-related policy situation and the perception of young people towards sexuality.

The first study conducted was a Review of Government Education Policies and Programs Related to Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Nepal in 2008/2009. The aim of this study was to document government policies, identify major strengths and areas for improvement, regarding CSE-related policies, plans and programs. The study incorporated a literature review of the policies and programs and quantitative data from four schools (a total of 408 students were

involved) in Kathmandu and Dhading districts. The highlights of the study findings were:

- The education on sexuality is incomplete for students up to secondary level and there is a need to draw attention of policy makers and program implementers to expand the coverage of CSE in the school curriculum.
- The students want to know more about sexuality for their age for which there is also the need to expand sexuality education in schools.
- CSE should be extended beyond the school curriculum, so that changes in culture and traditions is brought about to create receptivity in society.

Another study carried out in 2010 on Perceptions of Students and Teachers on Content and Classroom Environment on School Based Sex Education in Nepal, was conducted among 338 students of class IX, X and 118 teachers belonging to more than 30 schools from the rural, semi-urban and urban areas of 15 districts of Nepal.

The study aimed at understanding the perception of students and teachers on sex education and its importance in the formal education system.

It further explored the existing classroom environment while teaching and learning the sex education curriculum. The study applied quantitative methodology and involved young people at different stages of the research. The major findings of the study were:



- Most of the schools cover sexual and reproductive health education, but more than 50% teachers and students feel it is insufficient.
- 98% of the teachers and students feel CSE must be included in the school curriculum because it reduces sexually transmitted infections and gives right information. It makes teenagers knowledgeable in the present context, resulting in cultivation of positive attitude toward sex and sexual health.
- More than half of the teachers interviewed stated that they feel uneasy to explain details of the subject in class and more than half felt they need proper teaching materials
- 32% teachers say that the students do not cooperate in the classroom when this topic is being taught.
- More than 95% of teachers and students say these topics should not be excluded from the current curriculum and it should be extended with some modification which will help adolescents make decisions in their lives that create a happy and safe life.

This study recommends that CSE should be implemented, taking into consideration social norms and values. It suggests that the curriculum should be more focused on gender, sexual pleasure, satisfaction, diversity and relationship issues. It also says that it should not just focus on biomedical aspects but should also look into developing self confidence of adolescents and

empower them to take on responsibilities in society. Lastly, according to the study, appropriate training and education material is essential for teaching comprehensive sexuality education.

f. Integration of CSE into Branches and Projects of FPAN

Integrating some aspects of the CSE project with the ongoing activities on adolescents and young people proved useful in mainstreaming CSE within FPAN. The following existing projects in FPAN have integrated, in various degree, components of CSE:

1. Improving the Sexual and Reproductive Health Status of Young Women in Nepal project, supported by the Finnish Government
2. Girls' Trafficking (GT) project, supported by the Department for International Development (DFID), UK
3. Hotline Services on HIV & AIDS, supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The project took the opportunity to introduce CSE and integrate its subject matter into these projects through trainings and joint activities. Furthermore, the project mobilized the already existing structure of youth volunteers and the institutional set up of FPAN, which contributed towards the efficiency of the project and cultivated cooperation from various stakeholders.

Two capacity building workshops were organised for FPAN staff at headquarters and for 28 FPAN Branch²⁴ Managers, followed by training to youth volunteers from each branch. The objectives of these trainings were to familiarise other projects managers and FPAN branches on the contents of CSE and to explore the possibilities of integrating CSE in their programs. Following the trainings, the youth volunteers, in partnership with the Branch Managers of all 28 branches, conducted 40 different activities including street drama, oratory contest, debate, putting up hoardings, etc.

Girls' trafficking was identified by the staff as a form of sexual violence, strongly linked with the lack of CSE. As a result, information on CSE was integrated in the GT project's flip chart used for peer education. Similarly, the hotline counsellors were further oriented to deal with the sexuality related problems of callers from the perspective of CSE.

Besides this, 3-day training on "Life Skill Based CSE" in the intervention areas of the Finnish funded project was organized. This training was for youth volunteers and branch supervisors. The trained young people were further mobilized for other districts to provide cascade training to youth volunteers on Life Skill Based CSE.

The introduction and integration of CSE in the branches of FPAN and other projects has opened

the door to sustainability, as this will expand the reach of advocacy to other districts and increase the number of advocates beyond those trained through this project alone.

g. Gaining extra mileage through celebration of events

To gain extra mileage, CSE was integrated in various celebrations or event observations. Besides the directly linked International Youth Day celebration (12 August), these events included the celebration of Human Rights Day (10 December) and Women's Health Day (12 May).



In 2008, on the occasion of Human Rights Day, in collaboration with FPAN Valley Branch, stakeholders comprising of religious leaders, representatives from women's organization, sociologists, Village Development Committees (VDC), Community Based Organization (CBO) members, young people and school teachers,

²⁴ Baglung, Banke, Bardiya, Chitwan, Dang, Dailekh, Dhankuta, Dhanusha, Doti, Ilam, Jhapa, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Kaski, Kapilbastu, Makwanpur, Morang, Nawalparasi, Palpa, Rupandehi, Saptari, Sarlahi, Sunsari, Surkhet, Kathmandu, Baitadi and Mahottari.

were sensitized on reproductive and sexual rights and the importance of CSE and its components. They were also briefed on how CSE education contributes to the right to information and what roles and responsibilities they had on this. Participating in this event also helped the project to expand its network for its advocacy activities.

In addition to Human Rights Day, the project celebrated Women's Health Day, in collaboration with member organizations of the Reproductive Health Coordination Committee (RHCC) and the FPAN valley Branch. As a result of this, all member organizations belonging to the RHCC were sensitized on CSE and its role in the promotion of women's health.

h. Development of effective tools as groundwork for advocacy

In the beginning, the project had among its success indicators, the inclusion of CSE in the school curriculum. However, as minor changes in the curriculum take place only once in five years and major ones once in ten years, the project had to change its approach and to focus on including CSE in the teachers' training curriculum instead. This was a good alternative since some CSE related topics were already included in the existing curriculum and training teachers on CSE would have more of an impact, as the students would be taught by teachers who had the knowledge and the skills to impart CSE.

The process of curriculum development commenced with consultations with experts in the Curriculum Development Centre, the University Curriculum Development Centres and experts on sexuality. A Steering Committee was formed thereafter, chaired by the Executive Director of the CDC. It had ten members, including FPAN, representatives from different relevant departments of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, TU and Society for Local Integrated Development Nepal (SOLID) Nepal - a local NGO. The Steering Committee had the role of deciding on content and approving it when submitted to them. Under the Steering Committee, a Technical Committee was formed to directly work on writing the Reference Manual and Training Guide, based on the content decided by the Steering Committee.

Following the formation of the committees, a detailed plan of action was drafted for the development of the manual and guide. The CSE manual and guide were then divided into eight chapters²⁵ and the draft was written by representatives from the NCED/MoE, CDC/MoE, TU, MoH, NGOs such as SOLID Nepal and FPAN, a school teacher and the subject committee Head of the HPE Curriculum. After drafting the contents of the different topics, feedback was provided by the Steering Committee.

As the work of the Technical Committee progressed, the Steering Committee realized that the content prepared by the writers with different writing styles needed extensive editing, including re-writing of some chapters. A five-member editorial team by the name of Content Finalization Committee was formed to review and edit the draft prepared by the Technical Committee. The Content Finalization Committee members were from NCED, TU, SOLID Nepal and FPAN. The finalization process, therefore, went through several rounds of discussions.

Furthermore, to incorporate the opinions of students and teachers, a post manual development workshop and a pilot test training with the manual were carried out in November and December 2009 and the participants' feedback incorporated. The manuals also included illustrations that made it easier for teachers to learn about the topics. This manual is now in the process of being distributed to all secondary government schools in the country. It will also be used to train teachers to impart CSE to students.

²⁵ Unit 1- Introduction of CSE, Unit 2- Sex & Sexuality including relationships & 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 Misconceptions related to CSE

Voices of Committee Members on Teacher's Reference Manual and Training Guide Development

"I have been involved in the development of the manual as a representative from CDC. I was already aware of the importance of the subject because I participated in similar programs when I was posted in Dang. When I got posted to Kathmandu, as I was responsible to look after Health Education, it automatically fell under my responsibility.

During the development of the manual the working environment was cooperative. Strong evidence brought by the team and practical topics convinced us that it is important for us to develop a manual on these topics for the teachers. We also shared the contents that came from the writers at the teacher's workshop. The training however took place earlier than expected so feedback on the illustrations was not collected. Overall, working through partnership has been beneficial to both FPAN and the government." [Mr. Dinesh Shrestha, Deputy Director, CDC]

"I, along with a teacher, was responsible for developing the Reproductive Health (RH) component of the manual. My involvement from the Ministry of Health's viewpoint was good since we were always advocating for students to know about these topics. Overall, the writing process was interactive and contents were agreed on after discussion. It would have however benefited if each topic was discussed extensively to incorporate input on each, from all the experts of the team. The process has been good. Let us see if the same applies for the implementation." [Mr. Sanjaya, Public Health

Officer, National Centre for AIDS and STD Control (NCASC)/MoH]

"I chaired the Steering Committee when I was the Executive Director of CDC. In fact I was involved in the formation of the committee. We decided who will be the experts to be included and assigned who will do what. The interaction with teachers during my trip to Namibia exposed me to the technology (methodology) involved in this and I thought this would be important also for Nepal. I am convinced about the need for this information to be provided in school as it is technically important, but we also need to pay attention to how the society will take it. The approach that FPAN is taking is good as this needs to be implemented phase-wise where teachers first need to be trained." [Mr. Hari Bol Khanal, Director, Department of Education]

"I was invited to be part of the manual development as Chair of Population and Health Subject Committee. The material we have developed is a complete package and will have mass impact. I was motivated because I thought this topic had practical usage. I knew about most of the topics but this process helped me to bring all the scattered knowledge together. I feel we followed a good process as it went through so many discussions and had involvement of so many experts. During the pilot testing, the teachers seemed enthusiastic. However, the process for manual development could have been shorter." [Dr. Dhruba Shrestha, Population and Health Subject Committee, CDC]

"As an organisation, SOLID Nepal had been

discussing the topic of CSE for some time and this project came with the agenda of curriculum development. Being an expert in this field, I shared my knowledge with the team and acted both as resource person and a member. I was involved in reviewing and providing feedback on the clinical aspects. I also facilitated sessions to create common understanding on topics that were vague to some members within the team. There was a huge involvement of government in this activity. Except for a teacher and NGOs, all the other members were from the government." [Dr. Khem Bahadur Karki, SOLID, Nepal]

"I got to know about this project from the Regional Workshop on "Advocating for Comprehensive Sexuality Education: A South Asia Exchange" and later became a member of the Steering Committee. When I participated in the regional workshop, my attitude changed and I also came to know about various methodologies to impart knowledge on this kind of sensitive topic. I have taken a closer look at the risk behaviour of young people through my profession, and now I know about the importance of making them knowledgeable on the topic. I am happy that with the inclusion of CSE in teacher's manual, this knowledge will reach all school children." [Prof. Dr. Ram Krishna Maharjan, Education Department, TU]

Case Study: NCED's Involvement in CSE Manual Development

Mr. Shiva Kumar Sapkota, Deputy Director of the National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) had been involved in the process of the development of the teacher's Reference Manual and Training Guide, not only because this is one of the responsibilities of NCED, but also because of his keen interest in knowing more on the subject.

Following his participation in the manual development, his attitude towards sexuality education changed. The topics of sexuality, which he had earlier considered not so significant and something that could not be integrated in school education started to look important and urgent.

"When I first got involved, I thought we did not need such extensive coverage on sexuality at the secondary level. Then, as I got to learn from the team and got a chance to look at international references, I realized that what we were discussing to include in the curriculum was not as problematic as I thought it to be. The topics that Comprehensive Sexuality Education covers have practical use in the daily life of young people and delaying the access to this knowledge will rob them from benefiting in real life. I realized that we are already late in imparting this knowledge and therefore I am impatient to include CSE in the teacher's manual.

What I liked most about this was that the whole process was expertise driven and consultative. FPAN had formed the committee to facilitate the process of manual development and the committee served the purpose. I appreciate FPAN's effort in taking up this subject in the government system which will reach the masses and have long term effects."

The project was also able to include CSE in the curriculum of the Tribhuvan University. This became possible because of the involvement of university professors from the beginning of the project, which gave them a chance to understand the importance of CSE and they advocated for CSE to be included as one of the chapters in the Human Sexuality subject in the Masters in Education, Health and Physical Education course. This inclusion aims to open avenues for integration of CSE at other levels and will have long-term effects as these students are going to be future health teachers in schools and if they are sensitized on sexuality and CSE, they can teach SRH and sexuality more effectively in their classrooms.

1. Developing advocacy networks in Nepal for CSE

The initial approach of the project was to develop advocacy networks in Nepal for CSE. Instead of working with a large network, FPAN decided to work with a smaller group built on the bigger alliance with NGOCC. The 'Concerned Group on National Curriculum Structure (NCS) 2063' was therefore formed. This group worked in partnership to conduct activities to reinstate HPE as a compulsory subject in schools of Nepal and advocated for the inclusion of CSE in school curriculum. The members of this group further played a key role in developing the teacher's Reference Manual and Training Guide.

In addition, FPAN was able to create partnerships with various organizations to advocate on CSE, including Society for Empowerment (STEP) Nepal, RICORD, Marie Stopes and Youth Vision. Jointly with these organizations, programs such as the

Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) Talent Show, celebration of Human Rights Day, International Youth Day, and a signature campaign were organised.

Similarly, a strong alliance was built with one of the NGOs, namely SOLID Nepal. They have been involved in jointly advocating for the inclusion of CSE. A SOLID Nepal representative was a member of the Technical Committee and the writing team responsible for preparing the contents of the teacher's manual.

j. Youth involvement

Involvement of young people in all phases of the project formed the basic working principle and strategy. Young people came out of their traditional roles of passive recipients to being major stakeholders in developing, designing, implementing and evaluating the project and its activities.

Young people were part of the Concerned Group and were involved in all decision making. They participated in activities meant for sensitization, awareness raising and advocacy, including the signature campaign, street drama, slogan competition, oratory competition, ASRH talent contest, radio programs and handing over the memorandum to the MoE for amendment of the National Curriculum Structure 2063 and reinstating HPE in the school curriculum.

The multi-dimensional role played by young people as a target group, facilitator, activist and advocate resulted in a group of confident and empowered young people. Furthermore, young people, who were trained on life skills based CSE went to various districts to give cascade training



that helped raise awareness and involve more young people from different parts of the country.

One of the participants at the ASRH talent contest, studying in grade eight, discussed the training received on CSE with her teacher. As the teacher appreciated her confidence in answering questions related to SRH, she was asked to facilitate her entire class on SRH with the support of the teacher.

Young people were also encouraged to conduct research related to CSE as part of their academic requirements. One youth volunteer of FPAN, for her Bachelor level thesis entitled, "Perception of premarital sex among adolescents of selected 10 plus school colleges in Kathmandu Valley", found that CSE is important to young people and the rate of acceptance for premarital sex had increased in both genders. The project also trained 16 young people on research, who interviewed students and teachers on CSE.

Young people's journey on CSE

"I thought contraceptives are for boys only - because I only saw [male] condoms before. I did not know about emergency contraception. Now I feel protected and empowered after taking CSE training." [21-year old female client]²⁶

"I was told by my grandmother and my mother not to touch my sister during her menstrual period. I could see her in a lot of pain and wanted to give her a hug - but I thought it was better not to cross the limit. In the CSE training we talked about myths and misconceptions around sexuality issues. I acknowledged my own shortcomings and went back home and talked to my family members. Since then, I bring her a hot water bag if she is having stomach cramps, sit by her side and touch her forehead or give her a hug."²⁷

"Sex is not a synonym to vulgarity; it is a positive natural process"

"I joined FPAN as a youth volunteer when I was 16. Since then, my fight against misconceptions on sexuality with my family has become easier as I know a lot of facts to support my view point - which I did not have earlier."²⁸

"That training was amazing. It replaced all my fears with facts."

"I can now talk about sex and sexuality issues with any one - anywhere - young or old. I feel confident"²⁹

²⁶ IPPF CO, Qualitative review of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education Project, Kathmandu, Nepal - 15-19 February 2010

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid

5. Challenges, Lessons Learnt and Key Achievements

Subhash K.C., was one of the active youth involved in CSE advocacy. He has been participating in the training of young people, conducting radio programs and sensitizing policy-makers. He came to know about CSE for the first time when he participated in the Focus Group Discussion of young people organized by the FPAN Valley Branch. He then attended various trainings on CSE including a Training of Trainers. The consultation meetings and workshops constantly kept him updated on the subject. Trainings on advocacy that he received further equipped him with skills.

Subhash actively conducted CSE related classes in different districts of Nepal and used the radio program to relay information to a wide audience. One of the trainings he conducted, in coordination with FPAN's Dhankuta Branch, was attended by more than 40 young people and community leaders. Immediately after the training, the participants requested for IEC materials and a few months later he came to know that the training had been replicated at the local level by the same trainees.

He was also a member of the group formed to generate pressure on the government for retaining HPE in the school curriculum. Sharing his experience, Subhash said,

“We had to wait for quite some time to meet the Education Minister and faced difficulties as well. However, after we got a chance to talk, the Minister expressed interest towards retaining the HPE course and also guided us about the channels and approaches through which CSE could be introduced in the school curriculum. We indeed demonstrated skills of powerful advocates at that time.”

Challenges

Formation of committees to develop CSE Reference Manual and Training Guide: The formation of the Steering Committee was delayed due to time taken to bring key functionaries on board. This was mainly because of the dual role that the project had to play - one was to work in close collaboration with the CDC to produce a reference manual on CSE and the other one was to advocate with CDC to re-instate the HPE curriculum as a compulsory subject (which was seen as an antagonistic role by CDC). To address this issue, FPAN decided to work in partnership with CDC for the CSE manual development and conduct advocacy with other key government departments.

Change in school curricula: Major changes in the school curriculum in Nepal take place every ten years. As these were completed in 2005, even if the government were to agree to integrate CSE in the curriculum, FPAN would have had to wait till 2015 to do so. The project therefore opted to focus on the development of a reference manual and training guide on CSE for teachers through the CDC. The implication being that, even if the school curricula is not CSE specific, teachers who teach HPE and Population and Environment will be trained on CSE during their regular trainings.

Need for large public investment: Training larger number of teachers is imperative to build their capacity to impart CSE more effectively in classrooms. This will need a larger amount of

national funding from MoE. FPAN worked to build a partnership with the NCED so that an adequate number of teachers could be trained on CSE during the regular teacher's training program.

Diverse skill-set within the Curriculum Development Team: The draft chapters produced by the team, revealed very different writing styles and analyses. To ensure uniformity in the curriculum, FPAN decided to form an editing committee that reviewed and harmonised the content.

Resistance from a few Policy Makers: Discussing the need for CSE proved difficult with a number of stakeholders. FPAN addressed this by requesting a few key policy makers, such as the Joint Secretary MoE, who believed in the effectiveness and need for CSE to further convince other policy makers on the need for a CSE teacher's reference manual and training guide.

Working with teachers: Due to teaching commitments, it was difficult for many teachers to get authorisation from their schools to attend the meetings and workshops organised during school timings. FPAN moved to send them invitation letters through Government bodies to attend the meetings, which allowed them to be present without having to take leave from school.

Turnover of Government Functionaries: Frequent changes of government functionaries,

including change of four Ministers during the project period, was a major challenge as it implied having to re-start the advocacy process from scratch every time a new functionary would be appointed in a key position.

Coalition Building: The project aimed at building a large advocacy network for CSE. Difficulties in coordination and an emerging hierarchical structure brought FPAN to work instead through a smaller and more focused 'concerned group' of NGOs who were part of the larger NGOCC.

Lessons Learnt

Young people's involvement is a key to success: Young people's involvement in all phases of the project proved to be a very effective strategy. Their participation in advocacy initiatives and small group meetings with key stakeholders made a difference in their receptivity to the message. The involvement of young people as trainers created a conducive environment for open and friendly discussions on CSE and its impact on young people.

Evidence generation: Studies and reviews conducted by FPAN on the need for CSE in Nepal and the development of IEC and information material with reference to the latest national and international evidence and data were key support tools for the advocacy campaign. Many stakeholders understood the need for CSE by accessing such documents and encouraged FPAN to share them with a larger audience.

Involvement of policy makers and government officers: Involvement of stakeholders like policy makers and government officials in various project activities created in them a sense of ownership and facilitated the creation of an enabling environment for advocacy.

Media Mobilization: Involvement of journalists in activities in the field proved to be an effective way to enhance their understanding on SRH and young people. The journalists, who earlier avoided using sexuality-related words in their

pieces, are the ones who now feel that information given is inadequate if these words are not spelt out. The collaboration established with the radio station and the programme run by young people proved very popular in helping many listeners to clarify their misconceptions about young people SRH and the effect of providing CSE in schools. Wider coverage of issues related to young people and SRH and on the need for CSE in the media is supporting FPAN's efforts in breaking the taboos on these topics in Nepal.

Integration of CSE in other projects of FPAN: Integrating some aspects of the CSE project with the ongoing activities on adolescents and young people proved useful in mainstreaming the project within FPAN.

Need to review existing youth policy in Nepal: It is observed that even now, the youth policy has not given priority to CSE. There is therefore, a need to continue advocacy efforts with policy makers to ensure that this critical issue is included in the national youth policy.

Key achievements

Development of Teacher's Reference Guide and Training Manual: The Reference Guide and Training Manual on CSE have been developed in partnership with related government bodies, professors and other organizations. The process for the development of the reference manual has worked as an avenue for sensitizing policy makers and other stakeholders through discussions on CSE, backed by national and international evidence.

Health and Physical Education subject as compulsory from grades 6 to 8: The CDC has taken the initiative to discuss the draft content of the National Curriculum Framework with various stakeholders including I/NGOs, political parties, teachers, students, etc. Based on the feedback received from these actors (FPAN and TU professors were also involved in giving feedback to the NCED), we can now say confidently that this subject shall remain as compulsory in the school curriculum from grades 6 to 8. This will give ample scope to merge CSE in the school curricula in future.

Sensitization of High-Level Policy Makers: The project was able to gain the attention of high-level policy makers from various ministries. Besides the Ministry of Education, the line ministry for the project, FPAN worked with the Director of the Family Health Division, Ministry of Health and the Chief of the NHIECC (MOH).

Human Sexuality as a separate compulsory course at Tribhuwan University: Professors and students of TU were involved in the project and successfully advocated for setting up Human Sexuality as a separate compulsory course in the Masters in Education and Masters in Population Post Graduate Courses at Tribhuwan University. The inclusion of CSE at the Masters level will open opportunities to include sexuality and CSE in Bachelors and school level curricula. Moreover, a ripple effect is going to be produced as students of this course are going to be future health teachers.

Capacity building of young people: The project has been able to build the capacities of young people on sexuality related issues, advocacy and research. Young people's active role in advocacy had a major impact on many stakeholders, as it was one of the few occasions in which they had the chance to interact directly with the beneficiaries of the campaign itself.

NCED's interest in integrating CSE in regular teacher's training: More than 75 master trainers have been trained by FPAN during the project. Taking this endeavour forward, the NCED also oriented them on how to assess demand for CSE from teachers and how to integrate CSE in their training course. The NCED will allow the training hubs to utilize materials distributed, as reference materials.

Partnership development & formation of Concerned Group on CSE: The project was able to develop partnerships with various organizations to advocate on CSE. Through the NGOCC, FPAN formed the 'Concerned Group for National Curriculum Structure 2063'.

Media mobilization: The involvement of various journalists in workshops and exposure visits increased their interest to cover the topic in a sensitive way. Press conferences organized during the project period saw a good presence of journalists who took interest in promoting the issue of CSE in the country.

Incorporation of CSE as a core advocacy issue for FPAN: In order to ensure that the advocacy efforts initiated in the two years of the project do not come to an end, FPAN has incorporated CSE as one of the advocacy issues which it pursues at an institutional level with support from its core funding. FPAN also plans to focus further advocacy efforts to make the Reproductive Health subject compulsory from grades 9 to 12.

6 Appendices

a. CSE in the media

Articles related to CSE published in print media - newspapers & FPAN magazines in 2008

1. National curriculum structure and health education (August 30, 2008) in Gorkhapatra by Shiva Saran Maharjan
2. Curriculum should include sexuality education (November 18, 2008) in Himalaya Times by Kishor Sapkotas
3. Comprehensive Sexuality Education: Imperative for sexual and reproductive well being of youth in Nepal (September, 2008) in FPAN golden jubilee souvenir by Upama Malla
4. The Situation of Sex Education in Nepal (December 2008) Sex Matters, Issue 4 IPPF/Danida by Upama Malla
5. Why Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) for Youth in Nepal? FPAN youth magazine by Upama Malla
6. Discussion on Reproductive Health (13th August) in Annapurna post
7. Seminar on Reproductive Health Issues (August 13, 2008) in Sandhya Dristi
8. Preparing to Remove Health Population from Curriculum (August 24, 2008) in Sikshya Paper (Today's Education)
9. Revolution to include Health & Population Subject in curriculum (August 31st, 2008 Sunday) in Sikshya (Today's Education)
10. Request not to Remove Health Education (Nov 2, 2008) in Rajdhani
11. Request not to Remove Health Education (Nov 26, 2008) in Rajdhani
12. Request not to Remove Health Education (Nov 1, 2008) in RSS (National News Network)
13. Request not to Remove Health Education (13th November 2008) in RSS (National News Network)
14. Meeting held by NGOCC on the topic of Sexual and Reproductive Health (Nov 14th 2008) in Sandhya Dristi
15. Experts deplore sex, health subjects status change (Nov 14, 2008) in the Kathmandu Post
16. Health curriculum worries groups (Nov 26, 2008) in the Kathmandu Post
17. Curriculum draft riles experts (Nov 26, 2008) in Himalayan Times
18. ASRH talent contest (26 October, 2008) Rajdhani Daily

Articles related to CSE published in print media - newspapers & FPAN magazines in 2009

1. Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Sofesh Smarika (monthly magazine) by Dr. Shyam Krishna Maharjan October 2009
2. Why sexual compatibility is necessary in married life (21 November) The Himalaya Times
3. Role of Male to promote women's health (25 November) Nari monthly magazine
4. Government Education Policy and Health Situation (Feb 27, 2009), Thimi Times
5. Sexuality Education vital for youth (February 10, 2009) The Rising Nepal
6. Rights to get sex education from school (July 30, 2009) Sandakpur Daily paper, Ilam
7. Youth Leaders commit to Campaign on

domestic abuse (August 13, 2009) The Kathmandu Post.

8. Rally at capital on the occasion of 10th International Youth Day (August 13, 2009) Kantipur
9. Participants of young people in rally on the occasion of International Youth day at Capital (August 13, 2009) Gorkhapatra
10. Youth participating in awareness rally on the occasion of international Youth Day in Kathmandu, Wednesday (13 August, 2009) Rising Nepal
11. Picture of signature Campaigning to continue sex education through curriculum (August 19, 2009) Jana Samsad
12. Sex education is must in School (22 December, 2009) Rajdhani
13. Zero tolerance policy on women rights sought in The Rising Nepal (February 7th, 2009)

CSE on television (2009)

1. Reduce HIV through CSE, workshop program broadcast on Nepal TV
2. Advocating for CSE: A South Asia Exchange, workshop highlights and voices of different Nepali stakeholders including IPPF broadcast on Sagarmatha TV

Articles related to CSE published in print media - newspapers & FPAN magazines in 2010

1. On Sex and Sex Education (February 19, 2010) Republica Daily news paper Bardiya, where sex is no taboo (February 19, 2010) The Rising Nepal National Daily
2. Laaj Manu Kina? (February 20, 2010) Nagaric National Daily

3. Nidar Asha (February 2010) Nari Monthly Magazine
4. Sex in a school syllabus - A debate (March 2010) VOW (Voice Of Women) Monthly Magazine
5. Training on Sexual Health (April 9, 2010) The Rising Nepal national Daily
6. Relation between Violence and Mental Health (May 2010), Nari Monthly Magazine
7. Sathi Sanga Youn ka kura (June 2010) Nari Monthly Magazine

CSE on television (2010)

1. CSE issues including overall FPAN's work described on National TV (approx 17 minutes) three times
2. Importance of CSE for Youth Development in Nepal, Documentary on CSE (20 minutes long) developed and is broadcasted, will finish by the end of august by Nepal TV. It has wide coverage, in all the 75 districts of Nepal

b. Interviews Conducted for Documentation

Government Representatives

1. Mr. Hari Bol Khanal, Former Executive Director of CDC and now Director of Education Department
2. Mr. Dinesh Shrestha, Deputy Director of CDC
3. Dr. Dhurba Shrestha, Subject Committee Member on HPE, CDC
4. Prof. Dr. Ram Krishna Maharjan, Department of Education, TU
5. Mr. Shiba Kumar Sapkota, Deputy Director, NCED

6. Mr. Sanjaya Dahal, Public Health Officer, NCASC, MoH
7. Dr. Lava Deo Awasthi, Joint Secretary, MoE

Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

1. Dr. Khem Bahadur Karki, SOLID, Nepal

Journalists

1. Ms. Laxmi Bhandari, Nari, Kantipur Publications
2. Mr. Deepak Dahal, Nagarik Daily

Family Planning Association Nepal (FPAN)

1. Dr. Krishna Prasad Bista, Executive Director, FPAN
2. Dr. Giridhari Sharma Poudel, Deputy Director General & Chief of the Program, FPAN
3. Ms. Upama Malla, Promoting CSE Project Coordinator, FPAN
4. Ms. Kamal Tara Bajracharya, Promoting CSE Project Officer, FPAN

Youth Volunteers

1. Mr. Prabin Khadka
2. Ms. Sumitra Twayana
3. Mr. Buddha Bajracharya
4. Ms. Sunita Shrestha
5. Mr. Sanu Babu Brahmashakha
6. Mr. Bishnu Shrestha
7. Ms. Rama Khadka
8. Ms. Anita Nepali
9. Ms. Shubha Kayastha
10. Mr. Subash K.C.
11. Mr. Bishnu Thapa
12. Mr. Pradeep Shrestha
13. Ms. Shreejana Bajracharya
14. Ms. Ritu Shrestha

c. Bibliography

Bhandari L., Oli, D., "Saathi Sanga Yaun ka Kura (Talk with Friends on Sex)", Nari Monthly, June, 2010, Kathmandu, Nepal

Chhatra A., Review of Existing School Curriculum on Health including Sexual and Reproductive Health at Lower Secondary and Secondary Level, FPAN, July 2007

European Union, UNFPA Baseline study on EU/UNFPA Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia Program in Nepal (RHIYA) (Findings on Quantitative Research), , 2004 (Unpublished draft report submitted to UNFPA Nepal.)

Family Planning Association of Nepal, Annual Programmatic Report of Promoting Comprehensive Sexuality Education Project, 2008

Family Planning Association of Nepal, Qualitative review of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education Project, Kathmandu, Nepal - 15-19 February 2010 (Unpublished Report)

Family Planning Association of Nepal, Annual Programmatic Report of Promoting Comprehensive Sexuality Education Project, 2009

FHI/USAID, Assessment of Youth Reproductive Health/HIV Programs in Nepal, September, 2004

Gurung S., Chaudhari, S., Sex in the School Syllabus-A Debate(My Cup of Tea column), Voice of Women (VOW), Vol 6, Issue 7, Kathmandu, Nepal

Lhungdim H. and Ravi K. Verma, 2005. "Risk-taking and sexual behaviours of the unmarried male youth in rural India." Paper delivered at the IUSSP International Population Conference, Tours, France, July 18-23, Session 7:
<http://iussp2005.princeton.edu/programSummary.aspx>

Ministry of Health and Population; New ERA; Marco International Inc, Nepal Demographic Health Survey (DHS), 2006.

Ministry of Health, Family Health Division, Government of Nepal National Adolescent Health and Development Strategy. Kathmandu, 2000.

National Planning Commission (NPC), Three Year Interim Plan 2001-2010, Government of Nepal, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2007

Pokharel S., Kulczycki A., Shakya S. School-Based Sex Education in Western Nepal: Uncomfortable for Both Teachers and Students. Reproductive Health Matters, 2006.

Scholl E., et. al, Assessment of Youth Reproductive Health/HIV Programs in Nepal, FHI/USAID, September, 2004

Thapa S, Acharya LB, Aryal RH. Schooling, Marriage, Work, and Childbearing among the Youth Population of Nepal: Emerging Insights and Challenges Report prepared for the Workshop on Youth across Asia. Kathmandu: FHI, 1997.

Thapa S, Shrestha B, Do young people in Nepal know about and use condoms?, International

Conference on AIDS, Thailand, 2004.

UNFPA website
<http://nepal.unfpa.org/en/statistics/>

UNFPA/RHIYA website: <http://www.asiainitiative.org/nepal.php?area=2&page=4&option=1>

Valley Research Group, RHIYA End line Comparative Report, RHIYA/UNFPA, January, 2007 (Unpublished report)

What Works for Children in South Asia: HIV/AIDS Prevention Among Young People, UNICEF, 2004.