

Member States. The UPR provides an opportunity for all States to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to overcome challenges to the enjoyment of human rights. The UPR also includes a sharing of



CSOs UPR meeting in Accra.

best human rights practices around the globe. All countries go through a UPR review every four years. During its 3rd review in 2017, Ghana received a number of recommendations related to sexual and reproductive health rights. Although some specific recommendations on CSE were only 'noted' by Ghana, a recommendation to "Adopt a sexual and reproductive health policy for adolescents and develop a policy to protect the rights of pregnant teenagers, adolescent mothers and their children and combat discrimination against them" made by Iceland was accepted, reflecting a positive outcome of CSOs efforts at promoting SRHR using the UPR process. The UPR processes has therefore contributed to coordinating the efforts of CSOs on SRHR to work towards a common national agenda of ensuring access to CSE by all young people. The continued efforts by CSOs to galvanise support for the implementation of the age-appropriate CSE guidelines and other SRHR programmes have contributed to creating a favourable political and policy environment at the national level for CSE implementation in the country.

### Stakeholder engagements

Notwithstanding the present favourable political and policy environment for CSE, successful translation of the CSE guidelines into an age-appropriate CSE programme that is integrated into the school curriculum and with the necessary TLMs to facilitate its implementation will require sustained efforts by all stakeholders. In particular, continued advocacy to change community norms and values and to prepare parents, teachers and healthcare workers to adopt and implement the programme when it is ready is necessary. In line with this, the National Population Council (NPC) which spearheaded the development of the national guidelines on CSE has already begun engaging religious and traditional leaders on the need for CSE for young people and on the plans to implement CSE in basic and high schools. At the same time, the NPC is also in talks with the NYA regarding the implementation of the out-of-school programme. These laudable steps taken by the NPC is very essential for acceptability of the CSE programme at the school and community levels where the actual implementation of the programme will take place.

### Call to action

The ongoing review of curriculum of Colleges of Education presents a window of opportunity for CSE to be included in the curriculum. The TWG and other key stakeholders should therefore begin to advocate for the inclusion of CSE into the new curriculum that is being developed.

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This work is funded by RFSU (Sweden)



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Programme update

Ghana's road to implementing Age-appropriate  
Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Basic and High schools



October, 2018

**Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana  
(YHFG)**

## Introduction

As part of the implementation of a five-year project titled “**Evidence to Action: Sexual Health Education Advocacy project**” the Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana (YHFG), is committed to updating the key stakeholders on Ghana’s progress towards incorporating comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) into the national education curriculum. The goal of the project is to produce the necessary data and evidence to support the Ghana Education Services to adopt and implement a national CSE guidelines as an integrated curricular activity in basic and high schools within 2018 and 2022.

This programme update, planned as a regular activity, is meant to ensure that the processes leading to the roll-out of the national CSE programme is well documented for future references as well as keep all stakeholders in the youth development sector informed of these on-going processes. It is believed that keeping all stakeholders informed will prevent duplications of efforts and further ensure that all programmes and projects aimed at promoting the health of young people will take the on-going developments regarding CSE into consideration.

Following a national level consultative process to seek the support of key stakeholders for the implementation of the Evidence to Action project and to ascertain the status of the national guidelines on CSE, the first programme update was published in June 2018 (see <http://www.yhfg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Ghanas-road-to-implementing-CSE-in-schools.pdf>).

This second programme update is to inform of the progress being made by the national Technical Working Group (TWG) towards the adoption and implementation of age-appropriate Comprehensive Sexuality Education as an integrated programme in basic and high schools in Ghana.

## The Technical Working Group (TWG)

Following a meeting of national key stakeholders, led by the R3M Consortium (Comprising National Population Council, Marie Stopes Ghana, Ipas, and Willows Foundation) and PPAG, with the Minister of Education, (Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh) to discuss CSE in Ghanaian schools, a TWG on the implementation of the CSE guidelines was constituted. Initially, the TWG was made up of 17 members as follows;

- Ministry of Education (1)
- GES –SHEP, NaCCA, Girls Edu, Basic, Guidance and Counselling, Special Education Unit, (6)
- R3M Consortium –Marie Stopes International Ghana, Ipas, Willows International, National Population Council (4)
- Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (1)
- UNFPA (1)
- UNICEF (1)
- UNESCO (1)
- Palladium (1)
- Ghana Health Service (ADHD) (1)

They held their first meeting in July, 2017. Later when the TWG got to know about the YHFG’s Evidence to Action initiative which is also focused on supporting the process of rolling out the national CSE programme, the YHFG was invited to be a member of the TWG in May, 2018.

At the first meeting of the TWG, it was decided that the two main existing sexual and reproductive health education manuals - the Adolescent

Reproductive Health (ARH) Sourcebook of the Ghana Education Service (GES), and the PPAG’s ‘Know It, Own It, Live It’ CSE Manual for Young People - should be adapted and harmonized into an age appropriate programme for in-school and out-of-school youth. Following the adaptation of the two existing manuals, teaching and learning materials (TLMs) would be produced for teachers and out-of-school facilitators to deliver the programme. These CSE programme and the TLMs are expected to be developed in accordance with the national guidelines on age-appropriate CSE in Ghana.

At its second meeting on 21st November, 2017 in Accra, the TWG members affirmed their commitment to coordinating the development of the age-appropriate CSE programme and ensure that the necessary TLMs are produced for consideration by the national curricula development and review committee, as part of the on-going national curricula review exercise. The rationale is to ensure that Ghana’s CSE contents meet the internationally recommended standards and still be culturally relevant.



*Third Technical Working Group meeting in Accra.*

## Development of CSE manuals

As part of the process of adopting the GES ARH Sourcebook, and the ‘Know It Own It Live It’ CSE Manual for Young People, the TWG contracted a consultant to alongside with the literature on CSE and in accordance with the national guidelines, propose an age-appropriate CSE programme for the country. At the last meeting of the TWG in June, 2018 in Accra, the consultant gave the following updates on the adoption of a CSE programme: The review concluded that the information in the two existing manuals satisfy internationally recommended standards for CSE and is culturally relevant for Ghana. The information is factual, accurate and clearly illustrated in the manual. However, in adopting the two manuals for the national CSE programme, some aspects will require careful consideration and revision to be in line with the national guidelines. First, both manuals have very little information on ‘Values’ as a topic as recommended in the national guidelines. Second, the manuals do not address how facilitators would deal with their own values and attitudes towards sensitive topics such as abortion. Third, the two manuals are not sequentially organised and also not addressing the age-appropriateness of topics/themes.

The consultancy team will address these three issues as part of adapting the two manuals into a national CSE programme. Also, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) responsible for integrating the national CSE programme into the school curriculum will further review the consultant’s work to check the age-appropriateness and cultural relevance before its expected piloting in the school curriculum in 2019. Alongside integrating the national CSE programme into the school curriculum, NaCCA is also in the process of selecting and training teachers on the content to equip them to deliver lessons during the pilot phase in 2019.

## Development of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)

Teaching and learning materials broadly refer to a spectrum of educational materials that teachers and students use in the classroom to support specific learning objectives, as set out in lesson plans. In terms of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), TLMs constitute materials in the form of programme manuals, posters, flyers, family planning commodities and summarised booklets (readers) on reproductive health topics use by teachers to support learning. According to the consultancy team, the TLMs will include electronic and print materials, as well as brail format for the visually impaired. The availability of TLMs can facilitate a participatory lesson delivery and enable students to gain practical skills to make informed decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health.

## Programme Pilot

As part of the plans to pilot the age-appropriate CSE programme in 2019, the TWG will prepare a roadmap and share with the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service for their inputs and approval for operationalisation in schools. The piloting is planned to be carried out in the three ecological zones of Ghana – the Savannah Zone, the Forest Zone and the Coastal Zone. The YHFG and other NGOs active in the youth development sector in the three northern regions of Ghana are already making provisions in their 2019 planning to support the piloting of the programme in the Savannah zone. Whilst the School Health Education Programme (SHEP) unit will be responsible for leading the in-school programme, the National Youth Authority (NYA) is expected to coordinate the out-of-school programme. As part of the planning towards the pilot programme in 2019, the TWG will develop an evaluation plan (for both process and effect evaluation) to guide the pilot.



*Youth Sex education in school.*

## UPR and CSE agenda in Ghana

One other process that has made significant contribution to the efforts to put age-appropriate CSE in the school curriculum is the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council. The UPR is a unique process which involves a periodic review of the human rights records of all 193 UN