



The World Starts With Me: A successful CSE programme for in- and out-of-school youth in Africa and Asia

The World Starts With Me:

- is comprehensive
- has a positive approach
- has a human rights perspective
- targets young people in the age of 12-19

WSWM is available:

- for in- and out-of-school settings
- on CD Rom
- Internet
- printed format



The World Starts With Me (WSWM) is a comprehensive sexuality education programme with a human rights perspective for in- and out-of-school youth. WSWM is computer-based, available on CD Rom, Internet and in printed format. It targets young people in the age bracket of 12-19 years.

WSWM was developed in Uganda in 2003 by Rutgers in collaboration with Butterfly Works, SchoolNet Uganda and teachers and students of pilot schools. Today, contextualized WSWM versions are used by numerous schools, youth clubs and other out-of-school settings in a number of countries in Africa and Asia.

Aim

WSWM is an innovative interactive curriculum on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). It combines SRHR education with skills covering creative expression and, when computers are used, IT skills as well. WSWM helps young people to make their own decisions about their sexuality and sexual life, whenever the latter commences. WSWM aims to contribute not only to the improvement of the sexual and reproductive health of young people, but also to their social and economic development.

Logical sequence of lessons with a learner-centred approach

When using WSWM, virtual peer educators guide young people through a learner-centred learning process, relieving teachers and other educators of the task to initiate sensitive discussions themselves. Computer- or manual-based learning with small groups of students offers privacy and is combined with interactive didactic methods such as small group assignments, class discussions and skills exercises including role plays.

WSWM has a deliberate order of lessons. The 14 lessons start with building self-esteem, exploring personal values and norms and gaining insight into one's own emotional, physical and sexual development as a basis for learning to make well-informed decisions. The next section addresses how the social environment can influence and support decision-making: relationships with parents, friends and peers; gender equity; sexual diversity and sexual and reproductive rights. The core lesson is about sexuality and love; sexuality and love are presented as beautiful and powerful sources in life.

Only after discussing this is the prevention of sexual health problems addressed and how to cope when confronted with these issues: unintended pregnancy, early motherhood, (unsafe) abortion, STIs/HIV, the stigma of AIDS and sexual harassment and abuse, while keeping up a positive view on sexuality. Finally, after considering the lessons learned when planning for one's future

WSWM is currently running in 12 countries:

- Bangladesh
- Burundi
- Ethiopia
- Ghana
- Indonesia
- Indo-Papua
- Kenya
- Malawi
- Pakistan
- Thailand
- Uganda
- Vietnam

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The World Starts With Me: using intervention mapping for the systematic adaptation and transfer of schoolbased sexuality education from Uganda to Indonesia



and learning how to apply these in peer education, WSWM ends with an exhibition which further educates the young people themselves, their peers, parents and the community.

From contextualized version Uganda WSWM programs to local context and needs

Since the start of WSWM in 2004 in Uganda, the WSWM programme has been adapted to in- and out-of-school youth. To reflect local context and meet local needs, WSWM has been contextualized to each country and setting. Today WSWM is running in more than 10 countries in Asia and Africa.

Guided by an Advisory Board with key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education and Health, the Family Planning Association, the AIDS Commission and UNESCO, a coordinating implementing agency in each country contextualised the WSWM programme through a Working Group of teachers and young people. Based on the local situation analysis and needs assessment, relevant issues, objectives, content, didactics and lay out were identified and put in place in the local draft of WSWM. Trained pilot teachers used the pilot draft of WSWM and adjusted it accordingly. Pilot teachers then were trained as master trainers who could train new teachers. The final WSWM version was then implemented and up-scaled and embedded in the school policy on sexual and reproductive health.

Contextualization of WSWM always follows Intervention Mapping, a protocol for the development of evidence-based behaviour change interventions. The adaptation of the Ugandan pilot programme into the first Indonesian programme was thoroughly monitored, and documented; see the article Using Intervention Mapping for systematic adaptation of SRHR education for young people (2011).

WSWM programmes in more than 10 Countries

Today WSWM programmes are running for in- and out-of-school youth in more than 10 countries in Asia and Africa: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Indo Papua, Pakistan, Thailand and Vietnam; Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Uganda.

In most countries - in Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Indo-Papua, Kenya, Pakistan, Thailand, Uganda and Vietnam - WSWM is taught in secondary schools.

In Uganda, Ethiopia and Burundi an adapted, paper-based WSWM is taught in primary schools. In 2014 the Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports officially recommended a revised WSWM as one of the national curricula secondary schools can use.

In Vietnam and Malawi, WSWM programmes are being developed and implemented in teacher training colleges, while in Indonesia special WSWM programmes are being used in schools for students with hearing or visual impairments. For out-of-school youth, contextualized WSWM programmes target young people in informal settings (slums) in Kenya, in correctional institutes/ youth prisons in Indonesia, and children and youth living with HIV in counselling centres in Uganda.

Effectiveness

With its positive, explicit, rights-based approach towards sexuality, WSWM proves to be an effective and attractive tool, adaptable to different settings,

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The World Starts With Me: A multilevel evaluation of a comprehensive sex education programme targeting adolescents in Uganda

countries and cultures. The cross-cultural evaluation in 2009, carried out among more than 9,000 young people in Uganda, Kenya, Indonesia and Thailand revealed some significant effects such as:

- Increased knowledge and risk perception
- Intention to abstain from sex
- Intention to avoid forced sex
- Positive attitudes towards condoms
- Self-confidence in condom use in the future
- The intention to consult health services when needed

See also the article: *The World Starts With Me: A multilevel evaluation of a comprehensive sex education programme targeting adolescents in Uganda* (2011).

Appreciations

Feedback in recent years indicates that students and teachers experience WSWM as a complete, thoroughly developed tool. Young people highly appreciate WSWM, while teachers and educators find it is easy to use.

WSWM is also globally appreciated. The design won the Global Nica Award in 2004, a prestigious annual prize for electronic art, digital community, culture and music. In addition, in 2010 UNESCO's International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education recommended WSWM as a model programme for comprehensive sexuality education, out of 18 sexuality education programmes worldwide.

Challenges

The main challenges of WSWM concern the implementation. WSWM promotes young people's rights and acknowledges that young people are sexually active before marriage. It touches upon sensitive issues such as the use of condoms and other contraceptives for unmarried young people, masturbation, sexual diversity and abortion, while using an open and explicit approach to sexuality.

Despite thorough training, there are teachers who still feel uncomfortable discussing sexuality in the class. Some assume - contrary to research findings - that parents would oppose education on sexual and reproductive health in schools. They therefore limit their teaching to certain lessons or only parts of the lessons. Furthermore, participatory methods are often new for teachers, resulting in some of them leaving out the more complex didactic methods like role plays. Finally, because WSWM is taught as an extra-curricular activity in most countries, many teachers experience difficulties in finding the right time and place, while teaching WSWM in free time also requires huge intrinsic motivation.

Scaling up and rolling out

Making this education tool available to as many young people as possible requires rolling out to more regions and countries and up-scaling within countries. In 2013, rolling out started in Ethiopia, while a pilot on up-scaling is currently running in Kenya and Uganda.

In the pilot on up-scaling WSWM, a model and guidelines will be developed. Using a 'whole school approach', the pilot aims to find out how to timetable WSWM, how to reach more students within one school and how ownership by schools and communities improves chances of sustainability.





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