

Rutgers Case – The ban on CSE in Uganda

Rutgers shared information on the situation concerning Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in Uganda. After several incidents throughout the year, in October 2016 the government announced a ban on CSE. This ban will be into effect until a new Sexuality Education Framework is developed. This means that CSOs working on CSE cannot implement their programmes the way they normally would. Therefore they are looking for new ways to get information on sexual and reproductive health to young people, within the criteria of the government. Next to that, CSOs are finding ways how to lift this ban altogether. Some are working with the government on the revision of the Sexuality Education framework, while others are suing the government on the grounds of that they are failing to issue a comprehensive sex education policy in schools.

These are obviously very different ways of working, which may feel a bit conflicting. In the table discussion participants suggested different strategies how to maneuver within this situation in Uganda and discussed these seemingly conflicting strategies.

Main outcomes of the table discussion were:

- Consider to rephrase and reframe the issues we are working on: what is acceptable within the country context? In Uganda, CSE is associated with sensitive issues (and often also false information), while it encompasses so much more. Maybe phrasing it differently takes away a fear around the subject.
- If SRHR is not a priority of the government, or if it is too sensitive to work on as a stand-alone topic, try to incorporate it in other topics the government prioritizes, like in the health agenda.
- Using different strategies (speaking out to media, working with the government) can work complimentary to each other.
- Work not just with the usual suspects but also approach the 'unusual' suspects, like the Ministry of Finance.