Europe Unite for CSE Rights!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Project Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capacity strengthening for national-level policy change: Europe Unite for CSE Rights!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b. Describe the key activities you have implemented (following ShareNet proposal Activities 1, 2 &amp; 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1: Desk Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The desk research was compiled by youth advocates who conducted an extensive literature review and situation analysis, collating information from NGO publications, Governmental statistical offices and national reports.

We started with the development of a uniform template for the desk research to ensure continuity in collation across the five countries included in the project. Local and national non-governmental organisations were central in connecting advocates to reliable resources.

In Poland obtaining official data was quite difficult, as there isn’t much information available from governmental institutions on SRHR. Whereas, in the Cyprus context the majority of data compiled through desk research was retrieved from recent reports on CSE prepared by the Cyprus Family Planning Association (CFPA), the IPPF-EN members from Cyprus and built upon through needs assessments with young people. The research was reviewed and finalized by young people working with CFPA.

The research from all five countries was then collected and presented in the form of infographics both in English (see Annex) and in the national languages of the respective countries.

The step of conducting the desk research, including the questions on the skills that need to be strengthened and the mapping of local partners and upcoming events has laid a solid basis for the project implementation. This has enabled youth advocates to strengthen their research, analysis and evidence-based argumentation skills and build the advocacy plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity 2: Capacity Building on Advocacy &amp; Policy Influencing Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The face-to-face meeting was central to clarifying the projects’ objectives, ways of working and planning the next steps. It would have been significantly more difficult to do this online. The workshop also enabled youth advocates to become familiar with the situation in other countries from Europe and has strengthened their skills for building advocacy plans.

During the November workshop, each country representative presented their country desk research to the rest of the YouAct and CHOICE advocates, this was followed by youth-led capacity development sessions on advocacy and on the development of advocacy strategies. Working in smaller groups and building on information from the desk research each country developed a national action plan. Each action involved identifying a specific problem regarding CSE implementation that you would like to address, gathering supporting facts and suggesting a solution/call to action.

*Unfortunately the Polish advocate was unable to attend the Capacity Strengthening workshop due to unforeseen circumstances.*
Activity 3: Online media campaign & outreach on CSE (Europe/ National)

The online national campaign lasted from 14/12/2017 -22/12/2017. The following hashtags were used on Facebook and Twitter to promote the infographic and other relevant posts: #Unite4CSE #RightToKnow #Right2BeSafe #Right2BeHappy

Through the use of Ads promotion, the infographic post reached good engagements levels on Facebook: over 27,000 Facebook Reach and was shared 134 times. Overall, the whole online campaign’s posts had a total of over 40,000 reach.

We focused on sharing the info-graphic as part of the 16 days of action against gender-based violence on Facebook, sharing the message (and arguments) that comprehensive sexuality education contributes to combating gender-based violence.

The online media campaign and outreach was supplemented by Country specific blogs, sharing the findings from the Desk Research (Activity 1) and outlining the advocacy objectives developed in the policy influence strategy (Activity 2).


http://youact.org/2017/12/14/call-for-action-the-right-to-sexuality-education-in-cyprus/

http://youact.org/2017/12/11/romania-cse/

http://youact.org/2017/12/13/poland-call-for-cse/

c. Describe what was achieved in terms of the (‘advocacy & Influencing outcomes’ – Activity 4) in Cyprus, Georgia, Netherlands, Poland and Romania

Cyprus:
As lack of awareness about CSE was identified as significant barrier to its implementation, our advocacy goal was focused on increasing people’s awareness about CSE, as a necessary first step before engaging them in further action. To reach the above outcome we ran a short online campaign, with the support of CFPA and the Cyprus Youth Council and held a meeting with the Cyprus Children’s Parliament, who committed to researching and documenting the extent to which sexuality education is implemented in secondary schools.

Romania:
During the project implementation the participants from Romania had the occasion to talk with many decision makers especially from the education system. They met with three parliamentarians from different political parties and with the Directorate of school counsellors (psychologists), which is an important stakeholder for this year strategy. A training on preventing sexual harassment and abuse of girls in schools with teachers is planned.
Georgia:
Recently, in Georgia there is burgeoning attention and advocacy on CSE, therefore working on that topic through the Unite4CSE project definitely encouraged civil society organizations and advocates in Georgia to strengthen their work towards CSE; local organisations supported Unite4CSE by hosting a roundtable discussion with policy makers where the country desk research was presented by youth advocates along with the call to action to implement the sexuality education curriculum.

Poland:
In light of the restrictive environment for SRHR advocacy at the national-level the advocacy strategy was developed towards the general public as a means of igniting discussions around the topic of CSE in schools; although the outreach timeline was limited, over 5000 people were reached in the eight days of the advocacy campaign and online civil society strategy sessions were hosted to align SRHR work and to call on more Polish organisations to championing CSE.

Netherlands:
Outreach was mainly focused on young people with the intent of increasing the understanding that although the Dutch Government has a relatively progressive position on CSE, the present system results in varying levels and quality of information, leaving many young marginalised people un/under-represented in the curriculum. During the influencing phase in late 2017, CHOICE was able to expand our reach in the Netherlands and credibility in championing CSE rights. The next advocacy phase will commence in early 2018 integrated into existing national advocacy plans, calling on the relevant Ministries to ensure broad coverage to fully ‘comprehensive and inclusive’ Sexuality education. The Policy asks are shared with the Dutch Youth Ambassador on SRHR who disseminated through her social media networks and blog.

Indictators
- 12 young people attended the Unite4CSE webinar on Thursday 1st February
- 6 YouAct and 3 CHOICE youth members attended the Capacity Building on Advocacy & Policy Influencing workshop in Amsterdam in November, 2017.
- Unite4CSE Infographic reached over 27,000 people [*5000 people reached in Poland]
- Unite4CSE Infographic shared 134 times
- 8 meetings with policymakers
- 5 blog posts on CSE
- 1 compiled desk research on CSE

**d. What expected ‘advocacy outcomes’ have not been achieved?**

Whereas meetings with policy-makers took place in Cyprus, Georgia and Romania. The advocacy outcomes which were initially envisioned in the Netherlands and Poland was not possible due to the limited capacity of youth advocates to commit time to national advocacy over the extended winter holidays.

**e. Where there any unexpected results of this project?**

In Cyprus the public engagement with the online campaign was not predicted, particularly the general acceptance that Cyprus’ approach to CSE needs to be amended, more accessible and progressive. Additionally, as a result of the publicity of the infographic,
young people that had not been actively engaged in the field of youth SRHR subsequently approached the Cyprus Family Planning Association expressing interest in volunteering.

In **Georgia**, NGOs approached the idea of starting collaborative work and set out to synergise and connect advocacy approaches in 2018 to advance Comprehensive Sexuality Education.

In **Romania**, the politicians reached through the project acknowledged the usefulness of infographics as a method of simplifying data to support their arguments within parliamentary debate.

In **Poland**, the YouAct lead identified the absence of official data particularly on issues related to sexual and reproductive health and rights as unexpected, in comparison with the initial assumption that Poland regularly collected and supported access to data and statistics.

**f. Briefly explain how this ShareNet grant will contribute to your continued work on Comprehensive Sexuality Education?**

As funding for SRHR and youth initiatives is particularly limited, the ShareNet grant provided a great opportunity and support for young European advocates to take action within their respective national contexts. The fact that advocates conducted activities locally, highlighted the importance and urgency of advocating for CSE within the European context and encouraged stakeholders and other organisations to reflect on the situation of SRHR information and effective dissemination through CSE curricular. The project created momentum which both organisations will continue to pursue, integrate into existing advocacy work and build upon in 2018.

In early February, YouAct and CHOICE submitted the project; *Capacity strengthening for national-level policy change: Europe Unite for CSE Rights!*, for consideration for the European Charlemagne Youth Price, an opportunity, if successful on securing additional funding - to continue with the collaboration and to invest additional resources to implementing the CSE advocacy strategies developed through the ShareNet-funded project in 2017. And, in potential, this will be an opportunity to expand advocacy on CSE to the European Level.

In all five countries the desk research and the info-graphics will be used in future awareness and advocacy campaigns, in **Romania** the printed materials are already integrated in the workshops that volunteers will facilitate in schools and in the **Netherlands** a youth-advocate working group has been created to strengthen CHOICE’s national advocacy work on comprehensive sexuality education.

**g. Other/Lessons learned?**

1. Partnerships are of critical importance, collaboration with local organisations made the implementation of the country activities possible, reaching broader audiences and benefiting from the credibility of well-established organisations. Similarly, cross-country, collaborative partnerships increased interest and attention due to the expanded network and ability to provide country-comparison.
2. In developing external communications, it is important to set the target audience ahead of design and dissemination, to ensure effective outreach and impact.

3. Policy influencing requires significant preparatory work; extensive stakeholder and influencer mapping and is similarly restricted to certain policy influencing spaces or moment. Engaging in advocacy in November and December 2017 was particularly challenging given that many national policy making discussions or developments are put on hold over the extended period of parliamentary/ governmental closure.

4. National statistics and data vary amongst countries; with some Governmental departments formalising collection and analysis regularly and systematically whilst others have an absence of reliable and current data.
THE RIGHT TO SEXUALITY EDUCATION

SEXUALITY EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF PREVENTING VIOLENCE

POLICY CONTEXT

Sexuality Education is a human-rights based approach which equips young people with the necessary knowledge and life-skills for building healthy and equal relationships, based on respect and free from stereotypical beliefs and violence.

The Ministry of Education and Culture supports Sexuality Education as a right of children and young people in its Policy Document on Sexuality Education.

Sexuality Education is included in the National Curriculum under the Health Education Program.

The National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Sexual Violence and Bullying in Schools (2014-2017) identifies Sexuality Education as the most important prevention tool against abuse.

ACCORDING TO THE YOUNG ADVISORS GROUP OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN’S RIGHTS, HEALTH EDUCATION AS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IS NOT TAUGHT ADEQUATELY AND SYSTEMATICALLY.

THE REALITY

In a study on Sexuality Education conducted by the Cypros Family Planning Association in 2014, teenagers aged 15-16 years old stated that skills-building in regards to dealing with situations such as pressure to engage in sexual activity is absent from their education and seek for more information concerning emotions and relationships.

WHEREAS: ACCORDING TO AN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS, 1 IN 5 CHILDREN IN CYPRUS WILL EXPERIENCE SEXUAL ABUSE OR SOLICITATION.

STATISTICS

In a study conducted by the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies in 2014, one teenager’s intimate interpersonal violence and sexual violence aged 15-17 years old report that:

1 in 2 have experienced online violence
1 in 3 have experienced emotional violence
1 in 5 have experienced sexual violence
1 in 10 have experienced physical violence

CALL FOR ACTION: WE CALL THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE TO RESPOND TO ITS COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE SEXUALITY EDUCATION AT ALL EDUCATION LEVELS.
GEORGIA

Europe Unite For

COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION RIGHTS

ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN GEORGIA

STATISTICS

21% of Georgia’s population are young people.

The majority of young people do not have access to comprehensive sexuality education.

ACCORDING TO THE SURVEY CONDUCTED BY ASSOCIATION HERA XXI, ON PARENTS’ NEEDS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS CSE

97%

of parents believe they should talk with their children about Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.

SOCIAL CONTEXT

Sexuality education is perceived as taboo by the Georgian society.

POLICY CONTEXT

Comprehensive sexuality education is on a limited basis in formal and non-formal education.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

1. The Government of Georgia should increase efforts to ensure young people’s access to comprehensive sexuality education.

2. Following-up and monitoring processes must be improved in order to certify the effective implementation of of the National Youth Policy Document for Georgian youth.

This infographic is produced as part of the Europe Unite For Comprehensive Sexuality Education Rights project implemented by the youth-led organisations CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality and YouAct, with support from ShareNet International. The projects aims to encourage policy change in five European countries: Cyprus, Georgia, Poland, Romania and the Netherlands.

In Georgia the project is implemented in partnership with the Georgian Youth Development and Education Association - GYDEA, Association HERA - XXI and Youth Development Center - XXI.

youact.org | choiceforyouth.org | © 2017
Netherlands

Europe Unite For

COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION RIGHTS

BULLYING AND HOMOSEXUALITY IN HIGH SCHOOL

30% of homo- and bisexual boys say they would rather not be gay
22% say it isn’t nice to live as a gay person.
This percentage is higher for boys in VMBO schools.

IN REALITY

Lesbian, homosexual or bisexual (LHB) students at VMBO schools do not feel as comfortable with their sexual orientation as LHB students in HAVO or VWO. The LHB students at VMBO also experience more bullying because of their sexual orientation.

SINCE 2012, SCHOOLS ARE OBLIGED TO TALK ABOUT DIFFERENT FORMS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR SEXUAL IDENTITY (GENDER).

Schools also are obliged to work with anti-bullying programs.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

WE CALL FOR A SAFER AND MORE PLEASANT SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT FOR EVERYONE.

1. More attention paid towards the bullying of LHB-students within the mandated anti-bullying programs and talks about diversity, sexual orientation and identity.

2. Training of students who want to stand up against bullying because of their own sexual orientation or those of other students, in order to support the victims.

3. Creation and expansion of Gender and Sexuality Alliances within schools for and by the students themselves.

This infographic is produced as part of the Europe Unite for Comprehensive Sexuality Education Rights project implemented by youth-led organisations CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality and YouAct, with support from Share-Net International. The project aims to encourage policy change in five European countries: Cyprus, Georgia, Poland, Romania and the Netherlands.

youact.org | choice4youth.org | © 2017
Poland

Europe Unite

Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Gender Based Violence Campaign

Statistics
An estimated 400-500 women are killed by gender violence every year in Poland.
32% of women in Poland have experienced sexual harassment.

Every 40 seconds a Polish woman experiences violence.
30% of Poles believe that sex without consent can be justified.

Policy Context
Poland has no specific law concerning violence against women but ratified the Istanbul Convention in 2015.

Social Context
A general trend of suppressing sexual and reproductive health and rights exists in the country. It is thought that the number of reported gender violence cases is much lower than the actual number of cases because of the lack of support for victims and the little amount of understanding as to what constitutes gender violence.

Call to Action
Advocate for a specific law concerning violence against women that would give better support to women.

Introducing comprehensive sexuality education content to schools can help solve this by teaching students what consent means, what constitutes a violation, how to report it, etc.

This infographic is produced as part of the Europe Unite for Comprehensive Sexuality Education Rights project, implemented by the youth-led organisations CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality and YouAct, with support from ShareNet. The project aims to encourage policy change in five European countries: Cyprus, Georgia, Poland, Romania and the Netherlands.

Youact.org | Choiceforyouth.org | © 2017
COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION

CONtributes TO FIGHT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

STATISTICS
30% of women in Romania have experienced physical and/or sexual violence.
1 in 4 women in Romania has been physically or sexually assaulted at least once by her partner.

VICTIM BLAMING ATTITUDES ARE COMMON IN ROMANIA IN A 2016 SURVEY
55% OF RESPONDENTS STATED THAT RAPE CAN BE JUSTIFIED IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.

EXISTING POLICY
The Istanbul Convention has become active in Romania in September 2016.
National programmes addressing domestic violence have been developed for the period 2017-2019.

LIMITED ACCESS TO SEXUALITY EDUCATION IS LISTED AS AN ENABLING FACTOR OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.

Only 6% of students participated in the “Health Education” optional school subject during the year 2014-2015.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION
Sexuality education guides young people towards being responsible and teaches them about gender norms.
Sexuality education contributes to combating gender stereotypes and prevents violence against women.

1. WE CALL FOR AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
   That includes age-appropriate sexuality education, adapted to the development level of every child.

2. WE CALL FOR ACTION TOWARDS ENSURING INCREASED ACCESS TO SEXUALITY EDUCATION
   and adequate services, for all young people.

SOURCES: European Institute for Gender Equality, 2015; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014; Eurobarometer 25/36; National Center for Health Evaluation and Promotion, 2015; Presidential Administration, Department of Health and Research and Public Health, 2015

This infographic is produced as part of the Europe United for Comprehensive Sexuality Education Rights project implemented by the youth-led organizations CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality and YOUACT with support from SHARENET. The project aims to encourage policy changes in five European countries: Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Romania, and the Netherlands.

In Romania, this initiative is implemented in partnership with the following organizations:

youact.org | choiceforyouth.org | © 2017