

56th
Session



COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Population, education and sustainable development

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Advancing Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) **through transnational feminist narratives**

Co-sponsors: Mission of Spain, Mission of Argentina, Fòs Feminista, Center for Reproductive Rights, and IPAS, Action Canada for SRHR

Date and time: Monday, April 10th, 1:15-2:30 EDT

Venue and format: Hybrid, in-person convening at Instituto Cervantes and virtual session with interpretation in English, Spanish and International Sign-Language

Registration link: <http://bit.ly/SideEventCSE>

Background

The 56th session of the Commission on Population and Development, which will focus on the role of education on population issues and sustainable development, invites us to consider the contribution of civil society organizations (CSO) in the improvement of the quality of educational systems and curricula, and promotion of evidence-based, gender-transformative, comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) that equips children, adolescents, and young people to demand their rights, respect others' rights, celebrate diversity, and make healthy, safety and empowering decisions.

Despite the human rights standards, evidence base, policy and programmatic guidance and advances achieved in the last twenty years, CSE continues to be stigmatized, misunderstood, misrepresented and mismanaged by the people and institutions that have the obligation to deliver accurate, appropriate and acceptable sexual and reproductive health information and education in schools and communities. A large factor that contributes to this situation is the continued misinformation actively perpetuated by conservative state actors and opposition groups.

The modalities with which groups oppose CSE may vary, but the use of government institutions to stop the implementation of CSE has been recurrent in recent years. Part of the strategies used are the proliferation of misinformation, fear-based campaigns and compromised and biased research data² to terrorize the public and decision-makers into the approval of restrictive regulations or control over content of curricula. In many countries, "improving educational content", "ensuring greater participation of parents", "protecting the society's culture and values" or protecting the children from "pornography" are measures to promote homophobic and transphobic cis-heteronormative and binary conceptions of

gender and to censor gender diversity, sexuality, and bodily autonomy. Such barriers to the provision of CSE violate the rights of children, adolescents, and young people to education, health, information, bodily autonomy and freedom from discrimination and violence among others.

Feminists, women's rights, LGBTQIA rights, and young people's movements have always been at the forefront of CSE advocacy as part of a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice agenda. The role of CSE in expanding constituencies for human rights and bodily autonomy cannot be downplayed as has been evidenced by the important advocacy done by young people who have benefited from CSE to push for the full realization of SRHR in their national contexts. From direct and social media actions demanding answers from authorities to coalition-building and joining forces, developing research to uncover networks that facilitate the actions of opposition groups, supporting legal action to defend allied teachers, developing informative campaigns to highlight the benefits of CSE, civil society organizations not only respond to opposition narratives and actions but advance narratives that center a positive perspective of CSE in key spaces.

Within the framework of the Commission on Population and Development, we seek to give visibility to the actions and strategies that are being carried out by civil society organizations at the national, regional or global level to counteract opposition and advance feminist and human rights-based narratives on CSE. Through this event, we aim to promote the role of civil society in ensuring evidence based comprehensive sexuality education as a right and an essential element of quality education and fundamental cornerstone to the promotion of stronger and more inclusive democracies. Using national, regional, and cross-regional examples, panelists will share experiences and the strategies their organizations and collectives are developing to strengthen CSE advocacy and implementation worldwide.

Objectives

1. Promote the role of civil society in ensuring evidence-based CSE as a human right and cornerstone to inclusive and strong democracies
2. Share national, regional and cross-regional experiences and strategies on advancing feminist narratives and countering opposition narratives on CSE
3. Identify areas for further action in building support for the implementation of CSE

List of speakers:

Ana Jiménez de la Hoz, Deputy Permanent Representative, Mission of Spain
María Del Valle Aguilar, National Director, Gender Violence Prevention Policies, Government of Argentina
Kemi Akinfaderin, Fòs Feminista
Edward Perez, Center for Reproductive Rights, Senior Legal Adviser LAC
Susana Chavez, Promsex (Peru)
Rumunse Obi, EVA (Nigeria)
Apurupa Vatsalya, YP Foundation (India)
Nancy Makeoh, WFAC (Cameroon)

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