



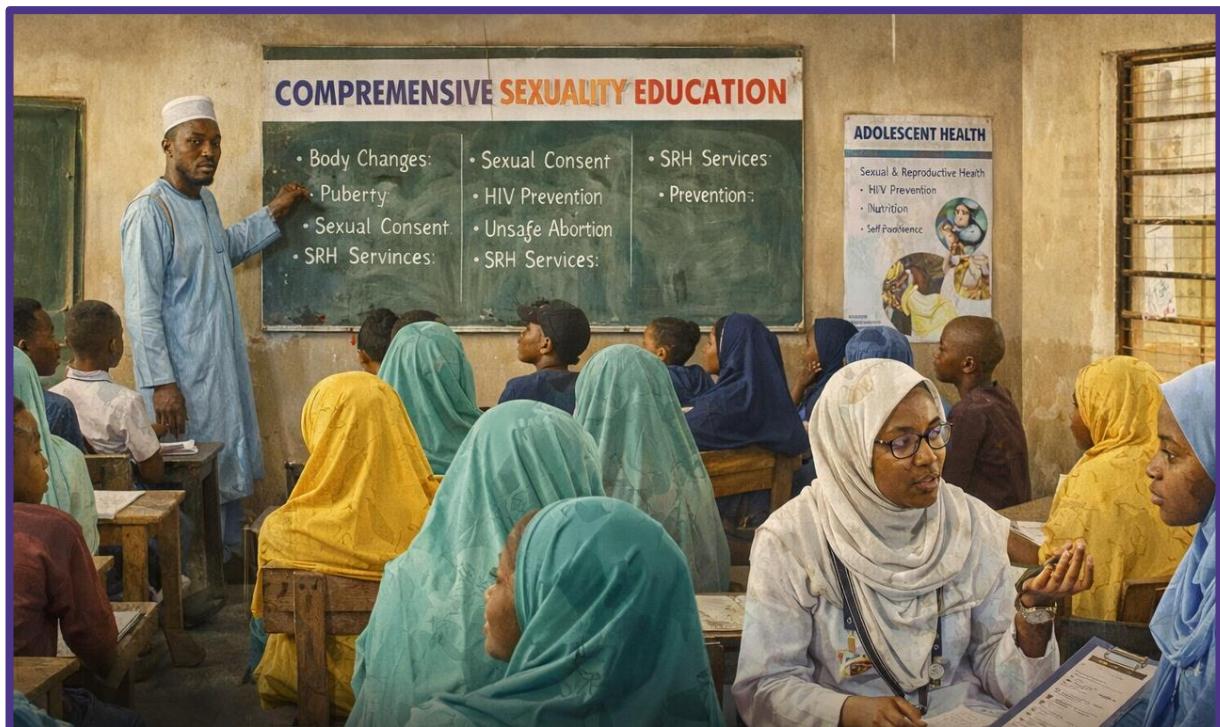
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Integrating Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Guidance Counselling in Schools to Address Adolescent SRH Challenges in Bauchi and Gombe States

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Executive Summary

Adolescents in Bauchi and Gombe States face growing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) risks driven by limited knowledge, absence of structured sexuality education, weak guidance and counselling services, and socio-cultural barriers to open discussion of puberty and sexuality. Stakeholders across education, health, community leadership and civil society consistently identified lack of sexuality education and inadequate school-based counselling as key contributors to teenage pregnancy, school dropout, stigma, and vulnerability to sexual abuse.

This policy brief presents evidence from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted in six LGAs across Bauchi and Gombe States among education and health ministries' key stakeholders and proposes actionable measures for integrating Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and strengthening guidance and counselling systems in schools. Implementing these recommendations will improve adolescent wellbeing, increase school retention—especially for girls—and support state commitments to education and health development goals.

Problem Statement

Many public schools in rural Bauchi and Gombe lack:

- Structured Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)
- Functional guidance and counselling units
- Trained teachers to deliver adolescent SRH content
- Safe spaces for adolescents to seek advice confidentially

As a result, adolescents enter puberty without adequate information on menstruation, bodily changes, consent, contraception, and protection from abuse. Girls are disproportionately affected, often dropping out of school following unintended pregnancy or stigma associated with sexual harassment.

Without deliberate education system reforms, adolescent SRH risks will continue to undermine education outcomes, gender equality and community development.

Evidence from Stakeholder FGDs

Stakeholders repeatedly highlighted lack of sexuality education and counselling structures in schools.

Absence of Guidance and Counselling

“Some schools don’t have guidance and counselling units, which is very, very important.”

— *Education stakeholder, Bauchi State*

Lack of Knowledge on Puberty and Menstruation

“When a girl begins menstruation, she has no knowledge of it and wasn’t expecting it. It becomes a problem to the young woman.”

— *Education stakeholder, Bauchi State*

Teachers Request Curriculum Integration

“Gender-based violence and sexual health topics should be co-opted in our curriculum. If we educate students and parents, the rate of gender violence will reduce.”

— *School head, Gombe State*

Link to School Dropout

“When a girl faces sexual harassment or pregnancy, she is stigmatized by colleagues and this leads to dropping out of school.”

— *Teacher, Gombe State*

These findings confirm that absence of structured sexuality education and counselling directly contributes to poor adolescent SRH outcomes and school attrition.

Policy Recommendations

1. Institutionalize Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)

- Integrate age-appropriate CSE into basic and secondary school curricula.
- Align content with national Family Life and HIV Education (FLHE) frameworks.
- Ensure culturally sensitive, gender-transformative delivery.

2. Establish Guidance and Counselling Units

- Mandate functional guidance and counselling desks in all public schools.
- Deploy trained counsellors or designate trained teachers.

3. Train Teachers on Adolescent SRH

- Conduct in-service teacher training on puberty, SRH, GBV prevention and referral.
- Provide teaching aids and standard lesson guides.

4. Create Safe Spaces for Adolescents

- Establish school-based adolescent clubs and peer-education platforms.

Promote confidential reporting and support mechanisms.

Key Decision Makers

- State Ministries of Education (Bauchi and Gombe)
- State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB)
- Teaching Service Commissions
- Local Government Education Authorities
- School Management Boards

Call to Action

Investing in Comprehensive Sexuality Education and guidance counselling is a cost-effective strategy to reduce teenage pregnancy, school dropout and gender-based violence. Bauchi and Gombe States can lead transformative change by embedding adolescent SRH education into school systems and equipping teachers to guide young people safely into adulthood.

CPED and ANeSA project team, therefore, call on State Education Authorities to adopt and implement CSE and counselling reforms within the next education sector plan cycle

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About ANeSA

Addressing Neglected Areas of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Sub-Saharan Africa (ANeSA) is a seven-year, CAD 29.9 million initiative co-funded by Canada's International Development Research Centre, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and Global Affairs Canada. ANeSA supports greater realization of neglected sexual and reproductive health and rights by underserved and marginalized populations.

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