The Whole School Approach for Sexuality Education
Findings from Uganda
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1 Introduction

Comprehensive sexuality education is seen as an effective approach to inform learners about human reproduction, sexual behaviour, risks, prevention of ill health and positive aspects of sexuality (UNESCO, 2018). The implementation of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) programmes remains a challenge in many parts of the world. Common implementation challenges are a lack of programme fidelity by school staff, whereas lessons are skipped or shortened, especially those on sensitive topics such as abortion or sexual diversity (Vanwesenbeeck, Westeneng, de Boer, Reinders, & van Zorge, 2016). Also, insufficient teacher skills including a lack of motivation and attitude contribute to decreased programme fidelity and effectiveness. Another implementation challenge is composed of contextual barriers such as differences in the perception of gender and opposing opinions at the socio-cultural and religious levels that demand the involvement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders in implementing CSE programmes (Vanwesenbeeck et al., 2016). These challenges are a small sample of the barriers that exist in the process of implementing sexuality education in schools. In order for SE programmes to be successful, it is highly important that the implementation process is accurate and adapted to the needs of the different stakeholders. It is, therefore, important that governments, communities, families and young people are engaged in the implementation process (Boonstra, 2011).

A framework for the implementation of CSE, called the Whole School Approach (WSA) for sustainable sexuality education was developed by Rutgers, SchoolNet Uganda, Straight Talk Foundation (Uganda), and the Centre for the Study of Adolescence (Kenya) in 2015. The WSA aims to move beyond classroom teaching and addresses the whole school environment, including supportive school policies and school facilities. The WSA emphasizes the involvement of all relevant stakeholders including students, school management, government officials, peer educators, teachers and sexual and reproductive health service providers (Rutgers, 2017).

Between 2013 and 2015, Rutgers and partner organisations piloted the WSA for SE at 12 schools across western Kenya and eastern Uganda. Preliminary results of the WSA pilot study showed promising outcomes regarding the use of the whole school approach (Rutgers, 2017b). The results showed that an increased number of students received sexuality education due to the introduction of the WSA. It was also found that the sense of safety among students increased and, subsequently, drop-out and absentee rates decreased. Finally, the number of collaborations with external stakeholders and support for teachers and other SE educators increased.

Now, more than four years after the pilot study, the WSA is implemented in 60 schools across eastern Uganda under the Get Up Speak Out (GUSO) programme and more than 700 schools under different programmes in Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Indonesia, using the Quick Guide from Rutgers.1 The current research investigates how the WSA is functioning in its current state, how it is contributing to SE implementation at a local level and how it can lead to a more sustainable and scalable implementation of SE in schools. Gaining more insight into how the WSA addresses the implementing challenges, such as teacher skills, contextual barriers and other potential unknown challenges is assumed to contribute to improving the implementation process of SE. This research seeks to describe and explore how the Whole School Approach for sexuality education addresses challenges related to the implementation of SE programmes. Additionally, the current study is seeking evidence on how to increase the scalability and sustainability of WSA. Therefore, the research question of this study is:

How does the Whole School Approach (WSA) address challenges, scalability and sustainability in regard to the implementation of sexuality education in Ugandan schools?

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1 The Quick Guide of the Whole School Approach for Sexuality Education is the short implementation document organizations use to implement the WSA
2 Background

2.1 Whole School Approach: its core

The Whole School approach is a comprehensive framework that aims to effectively implement CSE curriculums. The WSA is not an entirely new approach; it is based on existing frameworks and experiences of partner organizations that have been adapted to the field of implementing comprehensive sexuality education. One of those frameworks is the “Whole School Approach for Health”, developed by the WHO (1997). The WHO describes a so-called “health promoting school” as a school that is constantly strengthening its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working. The aim of this framework is to promote cooperation between the education and health sectors to improve the health of children at school age by including relevant concepts, all of which are equally important to the WSA. These concepts will be described in the following paragraphs.

The first concept is ownership, meaning the school should be in the driving seat in directing the process of CSE implementation. This is assumed to increase the participation and motivation of school management and teachers, as well as other stakeholders (World Health Organization, 1997). Secondly, integration of CSE in the school’s existing curriculum is important to increase programme fidelity. If schools rely on their own resources, procedures, regulations and practices, the programme will become their own, which relates back to the concept of ownership (World Health Organization, 1997). Thirdly, parental involvement is important since parents are able to highly influence young people’s lives and opinions. In order to avoid conflicting messages and parental opposition to SE, parents are asked to participate in the CSE programme. Fourthly, student participation is crucial for CSE. The WSA is based on equity of access to CSE: no student should be excluded. Additionally, students are able to contribute to a better programme content and to the implementation of CSE by providing their opinions and ideas. Next, a key role is given to teachers since they are the facilitators of CSE and have direct contact with the students. Teachers receive extensive training in CSE and student-centred education methods. Finally, the role of the school within the community is an important concept in the WSA. Schools are active in communities, maintaining relationships with a variety of stakeholders, such as parents and health service providers. The school itself can also influence the community by setting positive norms and values regarding SE and respectful communication between adults and young people. These concepts and examples are used to provide insight in the roots of the complex, multi-level aspects of the WSA.

Based on the previously mentioned concepts and wide variety of stakeholders, the WSA incorporates five action areas in three domains. Note that action areas refer to topics that should be targeted to improve implementation of CSE. The first domain is “school policy and environment” and has two action areas: (1) management support, and (2) safe and healthy school environment. The second domain is “cooperation with (external) stakeholders” and has two further action areas: (3) parental involvement, (4) access to health services and information. The third domain is “school curriculum and teaching capacity and quality” and has one specific action area: (5) teaching capacity, figure 1 helps to visualize this overview. The five action areas and the implementation process are described in the following paragraphs.
The first action area, school management support, focuses on budgeting and timetabling SE. Support from the management towards SE teachers in terms of facilitation and encouragement is crucial to implement the WSWM. The second action area, a safe and healthy school environment, concerns both social and physical issues that should be addressed by the school. Social issues, such as positive and respectful communication, a violence-free environment and supportive policies are addressed by the WSA. The practical environment concerns good hygiene, lockable restrooms, sufficient water supply, and a clean and secured school compound. Parental involvement is the third action area of the WSA. Parents should support both their children and the teachers, meaning that they are not only expected to approve sexuality education, but also comprehend the motivation and need for SE. Additionally, parents can also take a role as SE advocates to engage with other parents, other schools and other community members. The fourth action area focuses on access to youth-friendly health services and reliable SRHR information. Cooperation with health providers is crucial as students are able to obtain information that is not provided in class. By creating connections with local clinics, schools can easily refer students to a health service. Additionally, establishing an in-school youth corner could provide further (reading) materials for students with questions concerning SRHR. The fifth and last action area focuses on the quantity and quality of teaching capacity. Training, monitoring and peer exchange are crucial to increasing the teacher’s ability to efficiently provide SE. Increasing knowledge and skills on how to deal with sensitive topics in ways that are comfortable for both the teacher and the student requires extensive teacher training. Additionally, in-school sharing of SE knowledge should be used to prevent a loss of information when a trained teacher leaves the school or when there is a general lack of staff.

Approximately three years are needed to implement the WSA at a school. Implementing NGOs have a guiding and facilitating role when it comes to implementing WSA and are the schools’ main contact. In the first year, together with the school, the NGO conducts a self-assessment workshop and establishes a school action plan based on the results of the assessment. After this process, training for teachers and management staff starts. During the second year, the school will be responsible for the full implementation of the action plan that was made in the first year. Based on the outcome of the self-assessment, the school also has to ensure that improvement is made within the five action areas. At the end of the second year, a new self-assessment workshop will indicate if progress has been
made and which indicators need more attention. During the third year, schools continue to implement sexuality education independently.

2.2 Sexuality education in Uganda

A large proportion of Uganda’s population is young; children under the age of 15 make up 50% of the total population. Young people in Uganda, as in many other countries, are confronted with sexual and reproductive health challenges. For example, in 2016 the median age at first intercourse was 16.9 for girls and 18.5 for boys. Only 40.3 percent of sexually active unmarried women aged 15-19 reported using a modern contraceptive method, with injectables and male condoms being the most popular methods among those who did use such a method. Teenage pregnancy rates have been concerning in Uganda; 25% of young women between the ages of 15 and 19 have begun childbearing (UDHS, 2016). Data from the Ministry of Education and Sports (2018) shows that out of 28% of the girls who were sexually active while still at school, 80.1% got pregnant and 97% of this group dropped out of school because of their pregnancy. 31% of the girls and 17% of the boys aged 15-19 were ever tested on HIV and received the results. The estimated number of adolescents living with HIV aged 10-19 is 100,000.

Adolescent girls (aged 15-19) face a number of vulnerabilities, such as being coerced into unwanted sex or marriage. This puts them at risk of unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion and sexually transmitted infection (STI) including HIV, potentially causing complications and school drop outs. Ten percent of adolescent girls aged 15-19 have ever experienced sexual violence with numbers rising to twenty percent for young women aged 20-24 (UDHS, 2016). Only 36% of the adolescent boys and girls are assumed to have sufficient knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS (UDHS, 2016).

Curriculum-based sexuality education has proven to be able to contribute to health-related outcomes such as delayed initiation of sexual intercourse and increased use of contraceptives, as well as to changes beyond health outcomes including increasing gender equitable norms and confidence among young people (UNESCO, 2018). In Uganda, institutional and contextual factors such as lack of institutional capacity and resistance from religious institutions have formed obstacles to the implementation of a sexuality education policy (Ninsiima et al. 2020).

The Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY) is the Ugandan sexuality education programme that is used in Uganda to inform students about the health risks of having intercourse (Ministry of Science, Technology, Education and Sports, 2015). Its primary function is to prevent the spread of HIV by advising pupils to abstain from sex until marriage. PIASCY consists of 26 abstinence-centred messages that are spread by the teachers to the pupils during life skills lessons. It is important to note that PIASCY is not considered to be a comprehensive sexuality education programme but is currently the only programme allowed by the government. The programme is used by STF and in addition other materials from STF are used to ensure the provision of CSE.

Despite the effort to increase awareness on responsible sexuality and reproductive health through PIASCY, there is still a shortage of written materials that outline the appropriate standards for providing sexuality education in Uganda (Ministry of Education and Sports & MoES, 2018). This was a reason for the Ugandan government to develop the National Sexuality Education Framework. The themes include human development, relationships, sexual behaviour and sexual health, each of which is further broken down into many key topics. The values that will be promoted are cultural, religious and ethical values that enhance family life, sexual and reproductive health that are specific to the Ugandan context. However, information concerning the utilization and reach of the Sexuality Education Framework is not yet available and PIASCY remains the current sexuality education programme.

Based on the previously described information, it is assumed that young people in Uganda need to be empowered with accurate information on SRHR to be able to make informed choices. In response to this need, the SRHR alliance Uganda partners have adopted and been implementing the WSA as a mechanism to facilitate PIASCY lessons and engage different stakeholders in SE. It must be noted that
the WSA for SE should be seen as a model that facilitates proper implementation of SE and is not aimed at developing or reviewing a SE curriculum.

2.3 Partner organization in Uganda

Straight Talk Foundation (STF) is a Ugandan NGO, registered in 1997 and operating nationally. STF’s mission is to improve the sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing of young people through quality social and behavioural change communication. STF was one of the NGOs that were at the forefront of developing the WSA. STF is currently using the WSA to guide schools during implementation of sexuality education and is, therefore, a crucial actor in the SE delivery process.
2 Methodology

2.1 Study setting and participants

A qualitative research design was used to investigate the use of the WSA for SE implementation. The study was carried out in June 2019 in two districts in eastern Uganda, Bugiri and Iganga. A total of 12 schools were included, six in Bugiri and six in Iganga. In each district, half of the schools were primary, the other half were secondary schools. The research team consisted of four researchers, three researchers conducted semi-structured interviews and one made observations around the school compound. Interview guides and observation sheets were used to structure each school visit and aimed to investigate the contribution of the WSA in regard to the implementation of sexuality education. At each school, at least four people were asked to participate in the research: (1) head teacher or deputy teacher, (2) SE teacher, (3) teacher to guide observations, (4) one or more peer educators.

2.2 Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research

To provide this study with a theoretical ground, a framework for implementation research was used. The range of available frameworks for implementation research is relatively narrow since this field of research is fairly new (Peters, 2013). In their research, Damschroder et al. (2009), performed an analysis of 19 different current theories and frameworks that related to implementation research and suggested that there is a considerable amount of overlap between them. Yet, it is stated that none of the existing frameworks is complete, each framework is missing one or more key concepts. Based on the different existing theories, Damschroder et al. (2009) extracted important concepts and established the CFIR framework: the Consolidated Framework For Implementation Research. For this study, the CFIR framework offers a theoretical basis as it is considered to be the most comprehensive implementation framework currently available. The structure of the CFIR framework is used to systematically guide an assessment of a multi-level implementation process and identify factors that might influence the intervention implementation and effectiveness (Damschroder et al., 2009). The CFIR includes five major domains, (1) characteristics of the intervention, (2) inner setting, (3) outer setting, (4) the individuals involved and, (5) the implementation process. The CFIR has been adjusted to fit the WSA situation. This resulted in a conceptual framework which is presented in figure 2.

![The Whole School Approach: conceptual framework for implementation research](image)
2.3 Sub-questions

The following sub-questions are based on the CFIR and the operationalizing of concepts mentioned above.

1. How does the WSA for SE address SE implementation challenges at the organizational (school) level?
2. How does the WSA for SE address SE implementation challenges in the social, cultural and religious contexts?
3. How does the WSA for SE address SE implementation challenges at the professional (SE educator) level?
4. How has the WSA for SE contributed to improving the scalability and sustainability of SE implemented at Ugandan schools?

2.4 Data processing and analysis

Data analysis of qualitative data followed the structure of the conceptual framework that is described in chapter 2.2. This means that the directed content analysis roughly followed the conceptual framework: (1) the intervention, (2) inner setting, (3) outer setting, (4) individuals involved and (5) the implementation process (sustainability and scalability). In the first step of the content analysis, labels were given to certain text parts within the transcripts that were concurrent with one or more of the pre-determined categories. In this way, transcripts were systematically unravelled. For themes that emerged which could not be put into one of these four categories, a new category was made. To systematically organize this process, software (MAXQDA) was used to manage, analyse and describe the data from the different sources. Additionally, observation sheets were incorporated in MAXQDA and compared to the information in the transcripts to complement or check what was stated by the respondents.

2.5 Study limitations

This study acknowledges certain limitations. The first limitation is the fact that this study is of explorative nature and was not always able to find an explanation for relationships between, for instance, creating awareness and how this contributes to the initiation of change within schools. Secondly, purposive sampling of respondents might have biased the selection procedure. Schools were informed that the research team was coming to visit and recruited the respondents that were eligible for interviews. This process could have influenced research findings since the research team was not aware of the exact role and level of WSA knowledge of the respondent prior to the visit. Thirdly, some respondents may have given socially desirable answers. The fact that researchers from Rutgers (the donor organization that executes and finances the WSA) and STF were present during the interviews could have influenced the respondents’ answers, for example on topics related to financial aspects, but could also have caused an over-estimation of the positive effect of the WSA. Fourthly, due to the qualitative nature of the study design, this research may not be able to describe and definitely indicate causal inferences of the WSA. In short, this means that it is difficult to attribute findings explicitly to WSA or PIASCY interference. In addition, the short time frame and relatively small budget of the study has limited the possibility of collecting information through large samples and from all the participating schools.
3 Results

The following results section presents the findings from analysis of key informant interviews and observations, as well as the perspective of STF staff members. Results are structured according to the conceptual framework as shown in figure 2. In each section of this chapter, the contribution of the WSA to the implementation of sexuality education in each field of interest is described. These are respectively:

1. The school’s inner setting: challenges and experiences from management perspective
2. The outer setting: challenges and experiences from a socio-cultural and religious perspective
3. The individuals involved: challenges and experiences from individual level, e.g. teachers, peer educators
4. The implementation process: a focus on sustainability and scalability challenges

At the end of each section, an overview of key findings is presented. An important note: as this study was not designed to assess the outcomes of the PIASCY programme, this topic will not be covered in the results section.

3.1 The organizational level

This section respectively describes the findings regarding the organizational level of the school. The organizational level comprises the school management, more specifically, the head or deputy head teacher. The following section describes findings based on their experiences and challenges regarding the WSA. Topics that are discussed in the following paragraphs are the main themes that have been brought up during key informant interviews, these are the head or deputy head teacher’s attitude towards the WSA, change that is attributed to the WSA, experiences with monitoring and evaluation, and the establishment of a youth corner.

3.1.1 Attitude towards WSA

All school managements across Bugiri and Iganga have shown a positive attitude towards the implementation of the WSA. Head and deputy head teachers have experienced that the WSA is a useful tool that helps to bring the different stakeholders onboard, both within and outside the school environment.

“I am positive about it! Because, we embrace the WSA, that means every child, every personnel in this school, be it a teacher, a learner or the support staff, will be enlightened. We cover a number of topics, self-awareness, personal hygiene, menstrual hygiene, things concerning HIV/AIDS, we make everybody come on board.” Head teacher, Bugiri

Head and deputy head teachers are generally aware of the main goals, as they mention that the WSA “brings everybody on board” or “has a sensitizing role”. According to head and deputy head teachers, their role is to facilitate the implementation of the WSA in terms of time, space and resources. When asking respondents about the different elements of the WSA, such as doing a self-assessment, or making a work plan, answers were often superficial. For this more detailed information about the process of the WSA, researchers were often referred to a senior male or female teacher (counsellors) as they were, in some cases, in charge of the WSA implementation. While this situation was similar at most schools, it was repeatedly found that schools do not have a focal person specifically assigned to WSA. Schools face challenges such as high turnover of staff, for instance due to country policies that require the transfer of school staff to other areas on a regular basis. In some schools this has resulted in the transfer of teachers who were trained on the WSA and who are not being replaced.
While all head and deputy head teachers show a positive attitude towards the WSA, differences have been found in their level of understanding of the WSA and their efforts to actively implement WSA. First, it has been found that the WSA is not always a clearly understood concept and that the level of understanding differs between school heads. In schools, the term GUSO (the overall programme name) is often used instead of the WSA. This might have caused confusion in terminology, and the finding that respondents have difficulties in describing the WSA itself.

Concerning the management efforts to implement the WSA, differences have been found in motivation and commitment. Most of the schools’ managements make an effort to implement the WSA. These efforts are often described as the development of action plans from self-assessment workshops and facilitation of the implementation. However, interviews with head and deputy head teachers, as well as STF staff, have shown that the commitment to implement the WSA is different per school. On the positive side, interviews with school heads and STF staff revealed that if the management is passionate about the WSA, the teachers and students are very involved as well. The WSA then becomes an integrated part of their school system instead of a separate project. On the other side, data has shown that the commitment sometimes decreases due to the management’s wide range of important responsibilities which may cause implementation of the WSA to be given a lower priority. Additionally, resource constraints, such as a lack of finance, time, staff and space are often brought up as a reason that sometimes limits the motivation or commitment to fully implement the WSA.

3.1.2 Change attributed to WSA implementation

Head and deputy head teachers mention that the WSA is bringing positive change to the school environment. This positive change is often attributed to the participation of stakeholders in and outside of the school environment and their awareness of sexuality education. According to head and deputy head teachers, the WSA emphasizes the inclusion of all in-school actors: students, teachers, administrators, cooks, matrons, patrons and watchmen. In addition, it has been found that the WSA generally helps them to see the importance of making connections with different stakeholders, such as bringing parents onboard (inviting them to meetings, and the inclusion and, in some schools, the establishment of parent teacher associations), and making connections with a local health centre, cultural leaders, religious leaders and district officials.

Positive change, attributed to the initiation of the WSA, is described in various ways. First, head and deputy head teachers mention the decrease in drop-out rates due to pregnancy, early marriage, and STIs. According to most of the school heads, sexuality education, sensitization and the raised levels of awareness of all stakeholders has caused students to be less shy, open up, speak and speak for themselves. According to all of the head and deputy head teachers, this has resulted in their students having the ability to say “no” to (coerced) sexual activities and has reduced the number of girls dropping out. In addition to the decrease in drop-out rates, head and deputy head teachers mention that since the arrival of the WSA, more girls come to school. While girls were always fewer in number compared to boys, the change in school environment has caused the ratio of boys to girls to become more equal. Unfortunately, we cannot back this up with numbers or with experiences from students, as students were not interviewed in this study. When asking respondents which change in school environment causes girl retention, it was often mentioned that girls are now able to talk openly about menstruation issues. According to the respondents, the WSA-induced awareness has caused menstruation to be seen as normal by boys, girls, and teachers and initiated the making of reusable sanitary pads and the availability of a clean school uniform in case of an accident. Both the de-stigmatization and the availability of reusable sanitary pads help girls to feel more comfortable during their menstruation period.

“I’m positive because I see a positive behaviour change among young people. Before the WSA, there were challenges, children were fearing to express themselves, like during menstruation periods. That changed, they talk about it. Second, rapport has been built between teacher and students, there is no fear for teachers, this relationship is positively changed. Also, children open up to their parents due to the exhibition.” Head teacher, Iganga
Second, positive change is also attributed to an increased inclusion of parents in the school environment. According to head and deputy head teachers, parental involvement has improved the ability of both the parent and the student to talk about sexuality related issues. Sensitizing WSA trainings have showed participants the importance of including PTAs and GUSO committees (also known as sustainability teams). These committees consist of different stakeholders, some include a group of parents, teachers, students, district officials and religious leaders. These committees seek to broaden the awareness of sexuality topics inside and outside school boundaries, for instance, by inviting parents to general assemblies and explaining that sexuality education is not about teaching their children to have sex, which is a common perspective among parents, but about issues and challenges that relate to their sexuality.

3.1.3 Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the WSA

A task that should rest within the responsibility of the head or deputy head teacher is monitoring and evaluating the progress of the WSA implementation process and sexuality education lessons. While the WSA training should provide tips and tricks for monitoring and evaluation, there are no signs that the process of implementing the WSA is thoroughly monitored and evaluated at school level. Evaluation of sexuality education lessons is generally done by the teacher who orally discusses the content of the lessons with the students by asking their opinion on the SE programme. The only documents that are currently available for evaluation practices are often records of referrals to health centres if students need medical attention and a record of peer educator interactions.

Key steps in the WSA are the self-assessment and the development of action plans. According to STF, self-assessments have been carried out in every school. School staff often could not recall the self-assessments, so it is unclear which stakeholders were involved in these assessments. Action plans, on the contrary, have been seen in almost every school. The action plans describe which steps have to be taken to keep up with the implementation process of the WSA, for example club meetings, pad making, guiding and counselling, dialogues and an exhibition. Most of the schools do not keep track of the progress of the action plans and no documentation has been seen of this progress.

Interviews with STF staff have revealed that the documentation of WSA progress is a problematic situation for the monitoring and evaluation process. It becomes difficult for STF to monitor the progress that schools make if they do not document the steps that have been taken to implement the WSA. This lack of documentation also includes keeping track of statistics that should be able to back up the decrease in student drop-out rates. Because of the lack of documentation, the process of monitoring the WSA implementation process is currently done during school visits by STF project officers. During conversations with school staff and observations at the school compound, they investigate which steps from the action plan have been taken and which SE lessons have been provided to the students. These findings are documented by STF and compiled in activity reports, in which the progress of schools is summarized.

3.1.4 Establishing a youth corner

According to the WSA manual, a youth corner is a safe space within a school where young people can access and share SRHR information, services and skills which empower them and enable them to make informed choices. All schools included this study have made an effort to establish a youth corner. With help from STF, this effort has resulted in almost all 12 schools having a youth corner available. Youth corners vary in size, location, and available materials, depending on the resources available, such as space and finances. Generally, schools have put up youth corners by, for instance, creating a separate space within a classroom, an empty classroom or a separate building. While most youth corners should create a safe space for students to obtain information that concerns sexuality, they are mainly used as places where girls can rest during their menstruation periods, change their uniforms in case of leaking incidents or make reusable sanitary pads. Often a mattress to rest on is available as well as an extra uniform. As a result, boys rarely make use of the youth corner. The following quote illustrates this issue and a solution that has been proposed by the school.
“Almost every month most girls would take two to three days without coming to school. But when we established this youth corner, a girl can come there, we have pads she can use and also clean herself. Even for the boys we also established a youth corner after discussions in the committee meeting. One youth corner cannot serve people of different biological make because for example, a girl can be in the space padding herself then now a boy also comes and also needs assistance, this cannot happen in the same space.” Teacher, Bugiri

However, the following quote illustrates that boys should not be excluded from a youth corner and that it is important to include mixed genders. According to this teacher, they also have to learn that they have a role to play during the menstruation period of a peer student.

"Each one needs sexuality education, so they stay in their society when they know that a boy can teach or can help a girl when she is in problem, like skirt is spoiled or a dress is spoiled, A boy can make a pad which a girl is to use. In a social way a boy can help to bring water in the youth corner which the girls can use to wash." Teacher, Bugiri

A first point of attention is that the amount of information regarding sexuality, which should be available in the youth corner, generally lags behind. While STF emphasizes their distribution of materials, such as their STF newspaper, and documents that cover different topics, these materials have not been seen in the youth corner or schools. Moreover, no computers have been seen in the youth corner. The information available is usually limited to the PIASCY handbooks only. The school management repeatedly attributes the lack of resources in the youth corner to a lack of finances and available materials.

A second point of attention is that the youth corner is often led by the management, teachers and students. With the exception of a few schools, it was found that the organization of the youth corner is the responsibility of “everyone”. Schools that did have a special youth corner focal person and/or a small group responsible for organizing the youth corner, were able to create a place with more available materials and resources when compared to schools without focal person/group.

3.1.5 Creating a safe and healthy school environment

The WSA emphasizes that the school environment should be safe and healthy, focusing on both the physical and the social environment, as this is contributing to the wellbeing of students. To different extents, each school has made efforts to ensure the presence of (night) watchmen, proper fencing, providing clean and lockable toilets with water and soap, and the establishment of a connection with a youth-friendly health centre which students can be referred to. Each school has a different physical environment and not all schools are considered to be fully safe and healthy due to a lack of resources. However, emphasizing the importance of a safe and healthy school environment has helped the school staff to realize that improvements can be made in the future.

During school visits, it has repeatedly been found that clean toilets remain quite challenging. All schools have separate restrooms for boys, girls and staff. The situation concerning locks, cleanliness, provision of water and soap and lights differ per school. An example of this finding is that in some schools you see that water, soap and toilet paper is provided while another school has none of these facilities in place. A second example is that the school’s toilet for the girls was clean and the boys’ toilet very dirty.

Concerning the school compound, the findings are highly school dependent as well. Some schools are completely fenced and have a guard at the gate while other schools do not have any type of security measures in and around the compound. With a few exceptions, most of the schools have clean and maintained areas surrounding the school buildings, including rubbish bins and waste management. The quote below illustrates the vigilance that was created by WSA training:

“Our watchman is now so much enlightened, up to the extent that if he sees any male person, an unknown male person moving around here, he has to be cautioned and...”
then we keep them off. The same like the matron, we ordered her, no unknown person should move near any of these girls, if he is a parent he should come straight to the office, then we give him or her a go ahead to talk to our children. So both are equally very good.” Head teacher, Bugiri

Regarding the social environment, no code of conduct or other policy has been seen in schools. In one of the schools, caning by the teacher was visible during the research. Rules and regulations exist and are visible in schools, but they mainly apply to students only. STF has revealed that there is no specific assistance in place to establish a school’s code of conduct. However, the topics of child protection and child safeguarding are discussed during the WSA training. No effects of this training, in terms of policies and codes of conduct, have been observed in the school environment.

3.1.6 Summary of key findings

Within the organizational level of the school, the head and deputy head teacher have provided insight in current challenges and experiences with implementing the WSA. The following points can be identified as key findings:

➢ Management attitude towards WSA is positive; schools embrace the WSA under the GUSO project and the management aims to implement WSA within their capabilities
➢ Management confirms the positive impact of involving stakeholders both within and outside of the school environment
➢ WSA-induced change is based on sensitization and creation of awareness of the importance of sexuality education among all stakeholders; change is described as:
  o Increased number of girls that come to, and remain in, school
  o Decrease in student dropouts, especially girls
  o Students are less shy and openly talk about sexuality issues
  o Involving parents has shown to improve the relationship between students and parents in terms of discussing sexuality issues
➢ Documented records for monitoring and evaluation do often not exist; keeping record of progress is mostly done by STF observing actions that undertaken according to the workplan
➢ Youth corners exist in almost all schools; the main challenge is to equip youth corners with relevant resources and making them inclusive for both boys and girls
➢ Almost all schools were made aware of the importance of creating a healthy and safe school environment in WSA training; providing a supportive physical environment in terms of providing guards, fencing, clean and lockable toilets and water and soap remains challenging, but efforts are made to keep improving the physical environment in the future
3.2 Socio-cultural and religious environment

The following paragraphs present the results that concern the socio-cultural and religious environment. These entail the influence of the cultural and religious context on the implementation of the WSA.

3.2.1 The socio-cultural and religious environment

The socio-cultural and religious environment is found to be supportive towards sexuality education. It was assumed that cultural or religious norms and values would potentially form a barrier to the in-school delivery of sexuality education. However, results show quite the opposite. It must be noted that the sexuality education curriculum (PIASCY) developed by the government has been adapted to cultural and religious norms. Sensitive topics such as sexual rights, homosexuality, masturbation and abortion are not covered during SE lessons. Therefore, PIASCY is not considered a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum. Also mentioned by STF staff, it is currently assumed that because of these adaptations, no schools experience serious opposition from cultural or religious leaders. In fact, in most schools, cultural and religious leaders are involved in the school environment. The school staff have mentioned that the WSA can be seen as a tool to connect with cultural and religious leaders. By becoming aware of the roles that these leaders can play within the school environment, WSA trainings have facilitated the process of bringing these stakeholders on board. The role of cultural and religious leaders is to speak to students during a general assembly where they do not avoid the topic of sexuality.

"My role is mainly to talk to the students that I am treating because I got skills and knowledge from the GUSO workshops. I make sure that with all the knowledge I have, I am able to translate it into culture to implement." Cultural leader, Bugiri

The quote above shows that cultural and religious leaders participate in the GUSO workshop. The WSA has made them aware of the importance of being involved in the school environment. After attending the workshop, religious and cultural leaders feel that they have a role to play in the school environment. The following quote illustrates the change that a religious leader has experienced since he became active in the school environment.

"There are about three ways I can say that we have seen change by involving the religious leader. First, GUSO came at a time when we as parents were shy to talk to our children. This has now changed. Second, it has helped to follow the teachings that talk about things like not having sex outside marriage, which has helped young people. Thirdly, GUSO has helped young people to understand their bodies [which] is very important." Religious leader, Iganga

3.2.2 Summary of key findings

The physical, socio-cultural and religious environment of the school should provide supportive and facilitating elements. The following key findings concerning this environment are:

➢ There are no signs of major opposition towards the current sexuality education curriculum. The non-comprehensive PIASCY programme is adapted to cultural and religious norms and is not expected to cause opposition. The WSA has contributed to the involvement of cultural and religious leaders by creating awareness among school staff regarding the influencing role of these stakeholders.
3.3 The individuals involved: experiences and challenges

The following section provides results from the perspective of teachers, peer educators, health workers and district officials.

3.3.1 Teachers: challenges and experiences

Almost all teachers are aware of the goal and use of the Whole School Approach and see the importance of disseminating the knowledge they receive during workshops. Sexuality education teachers have the crucial role to deliver sexuality information to the student. It was found that, to fulfil this role as a sexuality education teacher, providing them with adequate support is crucial. Support comes in the form of facilitation, appreciation, the provision of training and the emphasis on cascading training (passing knowledge to fellow teachers and school staff). No cases have been found where teachers received financial incentives.

Teachers receive training on sexuality education and materials from STF. The teacher training usually takes five days and includes specific information on the WSA. The management has the role to allocate time during weekly assemblies or include SE in the timetable. During the training, STF provides the teacher with knowledge, materials and skills to understand sexuality issues and the PIASCY curriculum. According to STF, teachers receive handouts of the PowerPoint presentations (e.g. PIASCY outline) that were given during the training. There are no indications that participants receive particular WSA information such as the Quick Guide. SE teachers share positive experiences towards the WSA training and support process, and the appreciation they receive from STF, the school management and the students for being a SE educator is seen as a motivation to sustain SE. The following quote illustrates the importance of appreciating their efforts in providing sexuality education.

“The support we get, one of them is emotional support. The school has been coming in and thanking us or thanking me for the work done, when they see changes, so only that has made me to feel so strong and love sexuality education in the school. The head teacher thanks teachers who are conducting sexuality education, saying that if it wasn’t for you maybe even we would be experiencing problems. So, I as a person I have been developing a lot of strength whenever I receive such kind of support.” Teacher, Bugiri

Teachers also express positive feelings towards the training they receive. These training sessions are provided by STF as GUSO training during which the WSA is explained. Teachers share feelings of happiness and are grateful to be a part of the WSA/GUSO. Due to this training, they acknowledge the importance of their role as the messenger of sexuality education. The following quote shows how teachers view the training they receive.

“This trainings have helped me as a sexuality educator in that they awaken my understanding. I get knowledge, we have come to learn that all the youth are not the same and they need this knowledge to be equipped with knowledge, and the trainings have helped me to know that my services to the youth can change them into useful people. It has even helped me to know that these youths once equipped with skills they can start studies and complete. It has also helped me to know that handling these youths in their problems is not a disturbance, it is my responsibility to help them grow.” Teacher, Iganga

During GUSO/WSA training, the concept of cascading training is explained to participants. During interviews, teachers have shared their experience with this concept. They acknowledge that it is important to inform other staff members, from cook to head teacher, to increase awareness on the topic of sexuality. Generally, it has been found that the management facilitates meetings where teachers, and peer educators, can share the knowledge and experience they have obtained during STF workshops. They call this cascade training, although the main goal is to sensitize others by sharing information. It is not expected that the participants of these meetings are going to actually execute sexuality education lessons. The following quote shows a teacher who tells about the process of cascade training.
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"We wanted it to be integrated and now even our head teacher advised us that whenever you go for a workshop the first thing you come to do is to go the office. You report what inspired you in the workshop and after that we have to call the whole staff. You brief them about what have learnt and how to move on. So that if you are not there somebody else can do your job and, indeed, that thing is working. It is working because, now there is that solidarity every person knows what to do. Even someone who is not a patron can arrange the youth corner very well." Teacher, Iganga

A critical finding that concerns teachers is that they are generally unfamiliar with the WSA toolkit, manual or quick guide. Having access to these documents might help to gain insight in the different steps of the WSA and provide necessary background information. As also mentioned by STF staff, this is a remarkable finding since all of the included teachers in this study have participated in a training session where they should have been introduced to, and supplied with, these documents. This finding implies that there is a problem in the distributing, receiving or using the necessary WSA background documents. Based on the current data, the origin of this problem could not be determined.

3.3.2 Peer educators: challenges and experiences

Peer educators have been found to be present at every school included in this research. They fill a major role in terms of informing their peers and referring them to teachers, a senior male or female teacher (counsellors) in case they feel more help is needed. A few interesting topics have emerged from interviews with peer educators which might help to improve the WSA. The following illustrates how peer educators see their role:

"We made local pads, liquid soap, and others. We are many doing this. Apart from this, I assemble and mobilize my fellow students. We have books on PIASCY and share the topics with them. We do this in their classes, and sometimes in free lessons or when the teacher is absent for a lesson. Also, on the school compound I approach students, if I find a group, I talk to them." Peer educator, Bugiri

Peer educators show a great amount of initiative. It has been found that they actively seek students that need help with sexuality-related issues. They are always open for questions and provide advice if other students approach them. The peer educators also show own initiative through advocacy related ideas. Many of them want to start visiting other (non-GUSO) schools and they reach out to the community to talk about sexuality with young people who are not in school. In addition, they train each other to get self-confident in discussing issues of sexuality and ensuring cascade training. To illustrate these initiatives, the following quote shows how peer educators organize their own meetings:

"During lunchtime, we meet in the youth corner, share and get ready for sessions in the evening after classes. We also come over to school to meet on Saturday, as time allocated is not sufficient for S.E sessions ... We often train ourselves, especially when we are going to discuss the topics, we support each other to understand the topics. When we discuss, we get self-confidence, and we do this as all peer educators. We train others, we have other students in senior one and two whom we are mentoring. Because next year I am willing to step out and allow another person lead." Peer educator, Bugiri

Peer educators face a few challenges. As the previous quote already shows, peer educators have to deal with a lack of time. It has been repeatedly found that peer educators need more time to share information with their peers. In addition, peer educators have the feeling they are not always taken seriously when they have organized a GUSO meeting. They are sometimes being ignored, their fellow students think they are showing off or think that peer educators are being spoiled. In most cases, peer educators are backed up by teachers or other staff members. However, one case has been found where peer educators mention that a teacher has said that peer educators are “time wasters”. The following quote touches on the challenges peer educators face.
“The biggest problem is mobilizing many of my classmates in P6 especially after classes, they will all run away to play football instead of coming for learning group sessions. Some of the pupils ask for refreshment every time you inform them that there is GUSO Learning group session, which is not there. Some students also leave much work of STF GUSO Club for the peer educators saying that it is peer educators who benefit the most. But when the patron/matron intervenes, they all do the task at hand as required.” Peer educator, Bugiri

3.3.3 Health workers: challenges and experiences

Health workers are (external) school staff members that help students with health-related issues, including sexuality-related issues. There are cases where a nurse is permanently stationed at the school, taking care of the sick bay, or is an external health worker who is invited to the school. In the latter case, a health worker from a nearby clinic (that students are referred to in case of medical issues) is invited to come and do a check-up on students or talk with them about different matters. Health workers are often included in the school environment as part of the WSA. In most situations, health workers have been active in school prior to the introduction of the WSA. However, the school management frequently mentioned that the awareness and importance of having a health worker in the school environment has increased since the start of the WSA. For some schools, this has led to the inclusion of a so-called clinic day where students can be tested for HIV, pregnancy and STIs. While health workers are not always found to be familiar with the WSA, they emphasize the importance of being involved in the school environment to discuss and assist with sexuality-related topics.

“It is good to collaborate with the schools like [names of schools] where we usually go to do HIV, pregnancy tests and other services. It is very important to visit the schools because in my visits we have been getting sexuality-related challenges from schools which the teacher does not know enough about. After visiting a school, the students come and call us and ask: please come and help us, we have this issue, and we share then sometimes solve the issue.” Health worker, Bugiri

3.3.4 District officials: challenges and experiences

The WSA prescribes that district officials, also referred to as district education officers, should be included in the school environment as they have a crucial role in supporting schools in providing sexuality education. This is especially important, because in Uganda programmes cannot be implemented in schools before the approval of the district education office. The two interviewed district officials in Bugiri and Iganga are highly positive towards the WSA. The district office made sure that the WSA is included in their monitoring system and they instruct the school inspectors who go to the schools to also see how, for example, PIASY is timetabled and if youth corners are available in schools. District officials are also advising to establish sustainability committees in schools. The following quote shows how the district education officer in Bugiri fulfils his role within the WSA.

“I am a focal point person. I coordinate all the stakeholders’ offices to ensure that what we agree on as stakeholders is carried out. District officials committed themselves to helping the continuity of the GUSO programme. I ensure that my inspectors who go to the field look at the timetable and see whether GUSO is on the timetable. We also inspect if the youth corners have what is necessary.” District education officer, Bugiri

3.3.5 Summary of key findings

The previous paragraphs have described the challenges and experiences of the different individuals who fulfil a key role within the WSA. The following key findings can be extracted from the results:

- Teachers share positive views towards the WSA and training they receive
- Appreciation for the work they do seems to be a motivational factor
- Teachers recognize the importance of cascading training and, in cooperation with the school management, meetings are organized to share knowledge and skills
➢ Teachers are generally unfamiliar with the WSA manual, toolkit or quick guide
➢ Peer educators are present all 12 schools
➢ Peer educators share positive experiences and show a great amount of initiative to improve their peers’ sexual health
➢ Peer educators face the challenge that they are not always taken seriously and need backup from school staff to ensure they are able to perform their duties
➢ Health workers are available for students to reach out to; health workers acknowledge the importance of participating within the school environment
➢ District education officials who were involved in this study share positive experiences towards the GUSO programme and the WSA; they provide support to scale-up and sustain in-school sexuality education
3.4 Scalability and sustainability

The last section of the results presents the findings that relate to the implementation of the WSA. Within this section it is discussed how the WSA contributes to the scalability and sustainability of sexuality education. Key informant interviews with school staff, district education officers, peer educators, cultural and religious leaders and a STF staff member have revealed different positive findings and future challenges to scaling up and sustaining sexuality education by using the WSA.

3.4.1 Scalability

The term scalability or scaling up refers to increasing the number of people who are reached through sexuality education. Analysis of key informant interviews identified the following elements as contributors to the scalability of sexuality education: timetabling, inclusion of different stakeholders, the presence of peer educators and cascade training.

It has been found that timetabling is a major contributor to the scale-up of sexuality education. Schools have limited time available to include extracurricular activities, under which sexuality education is currently categorized. Schools have struggled to include sexuality education in the timetable but many of them have successfully found the opportunity to structurally dedicate time for SE. This situation can be split into three categories:

1. The first category are schools that have structurally adopted PIASCY in their timetable for all classes
2. The second category are schools that chose to address sexuality education during a weekly assembly
3. The third category exists of schools that have GUSO clubs in which sexuality education is provided; it must be noted that only students who choose to join the GUSO club will be receiving sexuality education

These three categories describe how sexuality education is provided to the learners. It has to be noted that category 1 is the most favourable situation because every learner is expected to receive sexuality education. Categories 2 and 3, in some cases also combined, are less favourable since chances are high that some groups of learners miss out on sexuality education.

As already described in chapter 5.1, the inclusion of in- and out-of-school stakeholders increases the number of people who are aware of the importance of sexuality education. The increase in awareness is found to lead to a more supportive and open environment to discuss issues of sexuality. Important to mention is the ownership that is taken by different stakeholders to increase scalability (and sustainability). The following quote shows how a district education official is stimulated to implement GUSO and WSA at other schools:

“We have been focusing on a few schools and I was wondering how we can scale it up to cover the rest of the schools. Because now if a child transfers from a GUSO school to a non-GUSO school without that continuity then we will fall back. It is my humble appeal to ensure that we can look for a way of scaling it up to the rest of the schools in the catchment area.”

The presence of peer educators has been revealed as a factor that increases the reach of sexuality education. As found, peer educators actively seek other students that have to deal with issues regarding their sexuality. Peer educators provide help and assistance or refer the student to a teacher, senior male or female teacher or a health worker. By actively addressing their students, organizing GUSO meetings, exhibitions and developing ways to advocate for SE inside and outside the school environment, the presence of peer educators seems to be a major contribution to the scalability of sexuality education.

Trained teachers sharing information is another element that is presented as a contributor to the scale-up of sexuality education. Most schools included in this study organize meetings where teachers and
peer educators are asked to share knowledge with the other staff members at the school. Schools experience positive change due to these meetings. It is mentioned that more people, such as the cook, the guard and other actors, became aware of the importance of dealing with sexuality-related matters.

STF mentioned that the WSA quick guide is also used in other programmes, in more than 700 schools. It is not sure how exactly the WSA is used in these contexts and if all its elements are implemented. However, when looking at scale-up, it will be interesting to see how STF has implemented the WSA in this high number of schools. We have not taken this into account in this research.

3.4.2 Sustainability

In the context of this study, sustainability is best described as the school’s ability to sustain (maintain and continue) the provision of sexuality education. One goal of the WSA is to address the importance of sustaining sexuality education, also when STF support is phasing out. Therefore, the following paragraphs present findings on how schools are currently finding and planning ways to increase sustainability. These findings describe plans to achieve financial sustainability and ensure the continuity of sexuality education provision.

Financial sustainability is a topic that was often addressed during key informant interviews. Currently, schools receive support from STF in terms of the provision of CSE materials and financial resources. When STF support phases out, schools should be able to provide their own (financial) resources, such as buying materials to equip the youth corner. Schools have different ways to address issues of sustainability, but generally three categories can be identified: developing a sustainability committee, organizing income-generating activities, and asking parents for a small financial contribution. Having income-generating activities, such as starting a vegetable garden or making arts and crafts, the products of which are sold to customers, has been the most observed form of creating financial sustainability.

The development of a GUSO sustainability committee is repeatedly found as a way to address the continuity of the GUSO programme. Sustainability committees or teams generally consist of a group of parents and a few school staff members who help to mobilize other parents to contribute to the GUSO programme. The following quote illustrates the work of the sustainability committee.

“We have to call the school sustainability committee, which is a group of parents who were chosen in order to sensitize the ideas of GUSO [WSA] in case it stops ... We want children to talk to the parents, so that we share views with parents, so they [the sustainability committee] get involved because they help us to mobilize. Because when we had just started it was very difficult for us to mobilize parents, but when we got the sustainability committee, it’s now mobilizing the parents.” Teacher, Iganga

In addition to the development of a GUSO sustainability committee, district officials have also made efforts to ensure the continuity of the GUSO programme. The district official is aware that STF support will phase out at a certain point in time and is already taking steps to ensure the school continues to receive support for sexuality education by including a line for the WSA in the district budget. The following quote illustrates this effort.

“I have brought on board all the departments in the district to own it [WSA]. The bigger issue is to own it because we are aware that Straight Talk Foundation has to move to other schools. Now unlike other programmes and clubs that have come here and died, we found it prudent that we should have a sustainability approach ... if the district owns the programmes it is incorporated into the budget.”

The district offices are also aware of the importance of including different stakeholders when tackling SRHR issues. It is likely that the WSA has caused this awareness. The following quote shows the efforts of the district official in Bugiri.
“Then we also brought the head teachers on board by having one representative to have a voice for the rest. We also thought that, as a way to stop issues like abortion, school dropout and early marriages we should also bring a representative of the religious faith and representative traditional leaders so that all these are constituents for these people.” District official, Bugiri

Key informant interviews also revealed different forms of income-generating activities. Examples are making and selling arts and crafts, handmade stoves, brushes, local pads, and the start-up a GUSO garden to grow and sell foods from. These income-generating activities involve the learning of practical skills and provide a way of gaining financial resources to buy, for instance, materials for the youth corner.

“We also introduced GUSO garden. Last year we had eggplants there, we sold those eggplants and we got 25,000 shillings. We went to the head teacher and said we have sold our eggplants and this is the money. But we are lacking a mattress, please, can you give us a push so the head teacher was good, he said okay, you bring that money and he gave us a mattress which we are using currently.” Teacher, Iganga

As a last source, school managements are planning to ask parents for a small contribution (ranging between UGX 100-500 each term) to address SE sustainability. However, not many parents have yet made this contribution. It is expected to be a future challenge, but schools hope that when levels of awareness of the importance of sexuality rise among parents, this will stimulate them to make a small contribution.

Another element of the WSA that could support sustainability are the school cluster meetings. STF is organizing school cluster meetings so that schools can exchange knowledge, best practices and lessons learned. STF is positive about these meetings and say that schools can support each other with information and other resources and/or bundle their expertise. School staff have not mentioned the school cluster meetings, so we cannot say anything about the effect of these meetings.

Important to note is that STF did not completely phase out of any school. Also, phasing out strategies have not been seen within STF. Schools are expected to continue with the WSA and sexuality education after the GUSO programme. However, schools mention that they do not feel prepared enough to do this in a sustainable way.

STF is currently developing ways to scale up and sustain the GUSO/WSA project. District officers in Bugiri are interested in the WSA and are looking for ways to include the WSA in their monitoring system. However, this brings challenges related to the provision of materials, budget and supporting schools. While there are ideas to develop digital platforms to share knowledge and information, internet access remains challenging for many schools.

3.4.3 Summary of key findings

The previous paragraphs have described findings that present how the WSA addresses the concepts of scalability and sustainability. The following key findings have been identified:

- Contributing elements for scaling up are identified: timetabling, inclusion of different stakeholders, the presence of peer educators and cascade training
- Sustainability plans are important in the event that STF phases out their support; these plans consist of:
  - Developing a sustainability committee
  - Organizing income-generating activities
  - Asking parents for a small financial contribution
Conclusion and recommendations

This last chapter provides conclusions and recommendations based on the results of this study. The conclusions and recommendations aim to contribute to future improvements of the Whole School Approach. Recommendations will be provided for each level that this research has aimed to address: the organizational level, the level of the socio-cultural and religious environments, the individuals involved and the scalability and sustainability level. Together, these conclusions and recommendations provide insights into the question: how does the Whole School Approach (WSA) improve the implementation of sexuality education in Uganda?

4.1 The organizational level

At an organizational level, the WSA contributed to strengthening the implementation of sexuality education by creating awareness of the inclusion of in- and out-of-school stakeholders. The awareness of the importance of sexuality education and the positive consequences of bringing all stakeholders on board are widely acknowledged by the school heads. Management staff has embraced the WSA, however, head and deputy head teachers across the 12 schools show different levels of dedication due to their other responsibilities. The school management motivation and commitment to implement the WSA seem to be key indicators for successful implementation. In addition, monitoring and evaluation skills lag behind, especially in the form of structurally documenting the progress of SE and WSA.

The following recommendations have been formulated:

1. It seems there is no separate management training on the WSA for SE. Rutgers should be in the lead to develop a management training to emphasize the importance of the role of the schools management within the WSA and increase the level of dedication and commitment of the head or deputy head teacher (ownership) clearly explaining “the bigger picture” (e.g. how all different elements relate to one another) and what is expected of the school. STF needs to play a role in the development, especially in what the school management needs with regard to the WSA.
2. Within this training, it is necessary to pay special attention to monitoring and evaluation skills and the process of documenting progress of the WSA and SE implementation and to show the importance of doing this.
3. STF should make sure that each school has a responsible team for the youth corners that takes care of the materials and the use of this safe space, taking into account that youth need to play an active role in this. More sexuality education materials should be made available and the space should not be used as a dressing/resting room only, so that both boys and girls can use the room.
4. The study findings show that in many schools there is also need for a dressing room. STF should discuss the possibilities for this within the school, next to the youth corner.

4.2 Socio-cultural and religious environments

The WSA has been found to be contributing to the implementation of sexuality education by creating awareness on the topic of creating a safe and healthy school environment and the involvement of cultural and religious leaders to minimize opposition towards sexuality education. Generally, no major signs of opposition were found due to the extensive involvement of cultural and religious leaders and the non-comprehensive PIASCY curriculum. Creating a safe and healthy school environment by addressing physical elements within the school’s compound seems to be a challenging aspect. Schools have made efforts to improve the school environment but there is still much to gain.

The following recommendations have been formulated:
1. Schools should be made aware of the importance of continuing to improve the school environment. Additionally, STF should continue to actively follow up on the school’s plans to improve the school environment.
2. STF should monitor the steps schools have been taking to establish a code of conduct and if this has been done with the involvement of young people, and if they received a “good school” training to tackle corporal punishment etc.
3. Within the training provided the suggestion should be made that gaining financial resources from income-generating activities is a possibility for schools.
4. Rutgers and STF should research if fundraising should be addressed in the training of schools.

4.3 The individuals involved

The WSA has been found to be contributing to the implementation of sexuality education by providing workshops for teachers and peer educators in which their knowledge, attitudes and skills regarding sexuality education are strengthened. SE teachers and peer educators are generally positive towards SE and the WSA and efforts are made to cascade the training they receive. In addition, as peer educators face the challenge of not always being taken seriously by students, they need to be backed up by school staff to gain credibility with their fellow students.

The following recommendations have been developed:

1. It is not clear enough to school staff what the WSA entails. Results have shown that teachers are generally unfamiliar with the WSA manual, toolkit or quick guide, documents that could provide important information to ensure progression and sustainability of the WSA. For school staff to have an overview, it is recommended that a poster be developed that can be handed out to schools. In this way they are reminded of an overview of the WSA and the steps that it includes.
2. Rutgers and STF need to be clearer on what role peer educators should play, what is expected from them and what is beyond their limits. What peer educators are expected to do differs from school to school.
3. During training and workshops, peer educators emphasize that they face credibility challenges. School staff need to show support for their peer educators to earning the credibility they need to carry out their tasks.
4. During training and workshops, STF should emphasize the importance of appreciating the work of SE teachers and peer educators. Practical examples should be provided of how this can be done.

4.4 Scalability and sustainability

With regard to sustainability and scalability, the WSA has contributed by focusing on school ownership of the WSA. The major contribution to the process of scaling up is the emphasis on timetabling, the inclusion of in- and out-of-school stakeholders, peer educators and cascade training. Sustainability in terms of resource mobilization, such as sustainability committees and additional GUSO parents’ fees are used as tools to sustain WSA activities. Plans to ensure sustainability developed by the school itself concern mostly income-generating activities.

The following recommendations have been developed:

1. This research suggests that timetabling, inclusion of stakeholders, peer educators and cascade training are key elements of scalability and sustainability. More evidence is needed to substantiate these findings and to develop a strategy around it.
2. STF should continue to improve the process of scaling up by providing tailored advice for each school. This could potentially be done by follow-up training in which the initial scale-up steps could be evaluated and adjusted (if needed). For schools it is difficult to sustain projects that
are initially funded by an NGO, therefore schools need to be prepared from the beginning that STF will be phasing out at a specific moment in time. Although steps are already taken (like the sustainability committees), it is unclear if this is enough to sustain the programme.

3. The WSA could incorporate and elaborate on the idea of starting income-generating activities to sustain GUSO/WSA activities by developing a resource mobilization aspect as part of training and workshops.
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