



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Sustainable
Development
Goals



OUR RIGHTS
OUR LIVES
OUR FUTURE

Introducing the Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future (O³) Programme

2018-2022

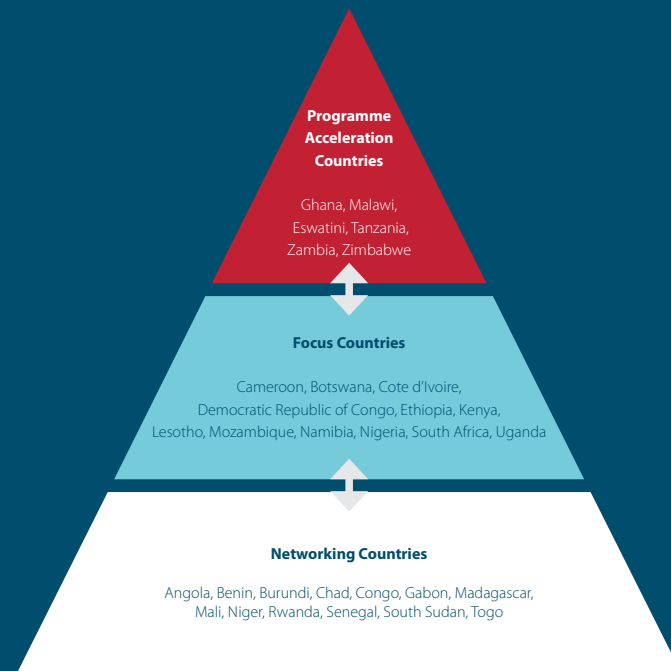
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O3

Imagine a sub-Saharan Africa where all adolescents and young people attain positive health, education, and gender equality outcomes.

This is the future that UNESCO envisions through the **Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future (O³) Programme**. This vision can only be realized through consistent reduction in new HIV infections, early and unintended pregnancy, gender-based violence, and child marriage. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to 158 million young people aged 15-24; a number that is expected to rise to 281 million by 2050. This young population comes with tremendous potential for achieving Africa's development, but only if sustained investments are made to address the education and health challenges that continue to undermine young people's well-being.

The O³ Programme commenced in 2018 and supports delivery of good quality comprehensive sexuality education that empowers adolescents and young people and builds agency, while developing the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competencies required for preventing HIV, reducing early and unintended pregnancies, and eliminating gender-based violence. With additional support from the government of Sweden, six countries (Eswatini, Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe), will undergo a programme acceleration (2018-2022) to enable them to deepen the scope of existing activities in order to achieve an almost full-scale implementation of CSE. These countries are now referred to as Programme Acceleration Countries (PAC). The programme follows a three-tier system with programme acceleration countries at the top, followed by focus countries, and then networking countries. This three-tier system will allow countries to learn from each other as they work towards national coverage, while institutionalizing the CSE programmes will ensure governments provide domestic funding and contribute to fully scaled-up CSE interventions.



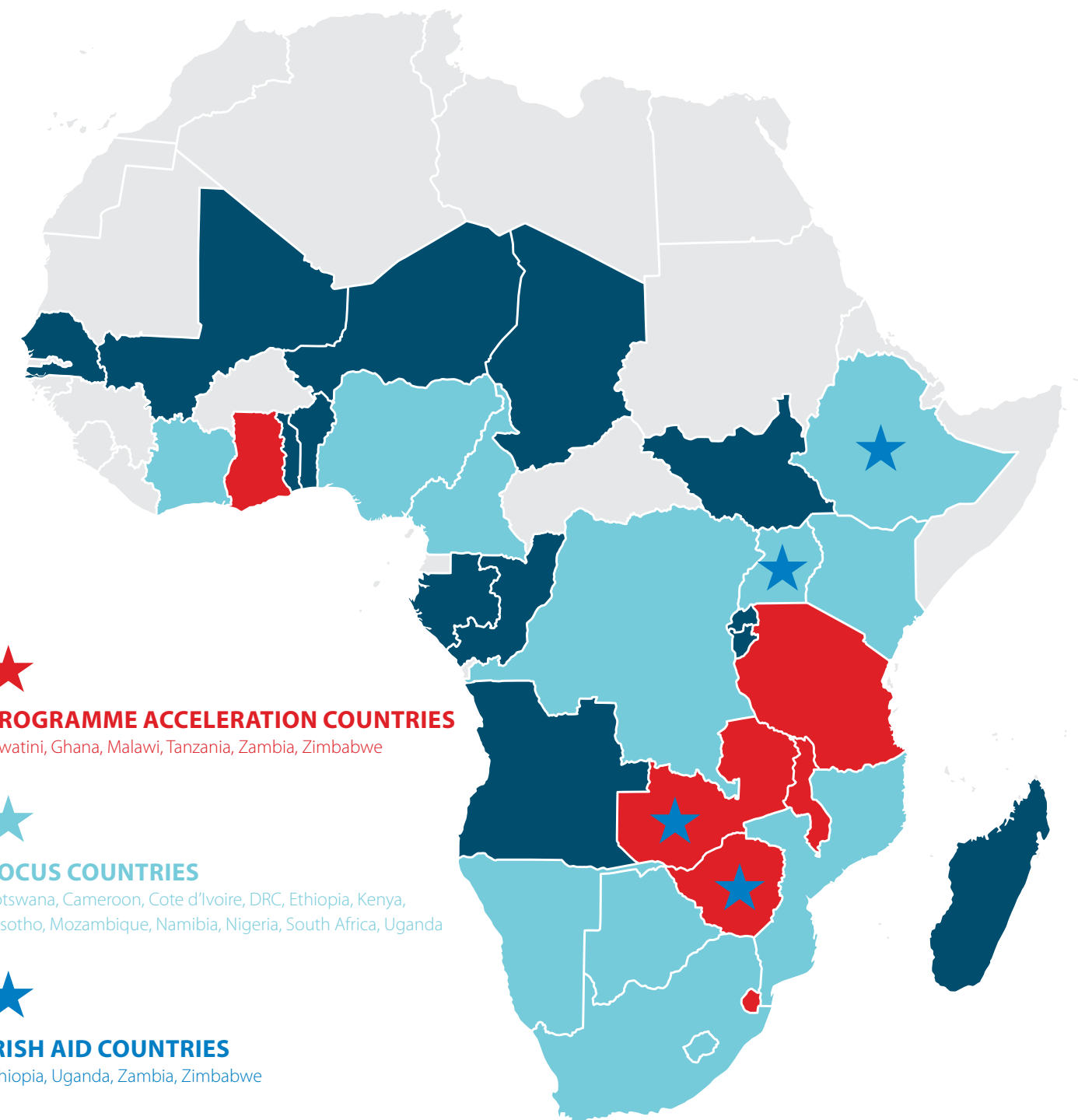
Through the generous support of the governments of Sweden and Ireland, the O³ Programme and its acceleration builds on current efforts by UNESCO to improve sexual and reproductive health, as well as gender and education outcomes for adolescents and young people. UNESCO will scale up the current programme to sub-Saharan Africa by implementing programmes designed to:

1. Secure and sustain strong political commitment and support for adolescents' and young people's access to comprehensive sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health services across sub-Saharan Africa.
2. Support the delivery of accurate, rights-based and good quality comprehensive sexuality education programmes that provide knowledge, values, and skills essential for safer behaviours, reduced adolescent pregnancy, and gender equality.
3. Ensure that schools and community environments are safer, healthier, and inclusive for all young people.
4. Strengthen the evidence base on comprehensive sexuality education and safer school environments.

The O³ Programme will reach **20 million** learners in **64 000** primary and secondary schools; **47 000** pre-service teachers; and **367 000** in-service teachers. The programme is also expected to reach **30 million** people (parents, guardians, religious leaders, and young people out of school) through community engagement activities and **10 million** young people through the Young People Today website and social media platforms.



Programme coverage



PROGRAMME ACCELERATION COUNTRIES

Eswatini, Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe



FOCUS COUNTRIES

Botswana, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda



IRISH AID COUNTRIES

Ethiopia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe



NETWORKING COUNTRIES

Angola, Benin, Burundi, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, South Sudan, Togo



Advancing SDGs through the O³ Programme

The O³ Programme and its acceleration will directly contribute to realizing the education, health, and gender Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs,¹ as well as their specific targets, while also advancing the attainment of other key SDGs, especially those related to poverty, hunger, and peaceful and just societies.

The programme is guided by UNESCO's strategy on education for health and well-being, which is designed to achieve the SDGs through:



- Preventing early and unintended pregnancy through good quality comprehensive sexuality education and links to sexual and reproductive health services
- Preventing new HIV infections in young people and promoting uptake of testing and treatment
- Promoting healthy lives through skills-based education
- Referral to health and counselling services



- Addressing factors that contribute to school dropout and gender disparities in education e.g. early and unintended pregnancy and school-related gender-based violence
- Eliminating bullying and discrimination in school settings
- Comprehensive sexuality education, which ensures that all learners have the knowledge and skills to promote human rights, gender equality, peace, and non-violence



- Comprehensive sexuality education, which can play a key role in reducing gender inequalities by equipping girls with knowledge and skills that empower them in their communities and relationships, and improve their future employment prospects and income. Comprehensive sexuality education also promotes attitudes and values that support gender equality and tackle harmful gender norms



- Education, which can help develop attitudes, values, and skills required for peaceful, tolerant, and inclusive societies
- Safe and supportive learning environments that are free from violence and discrimination, thereby providing a model for later life and instilling respect for rights, diversity, and equality

¹ SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; and SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.



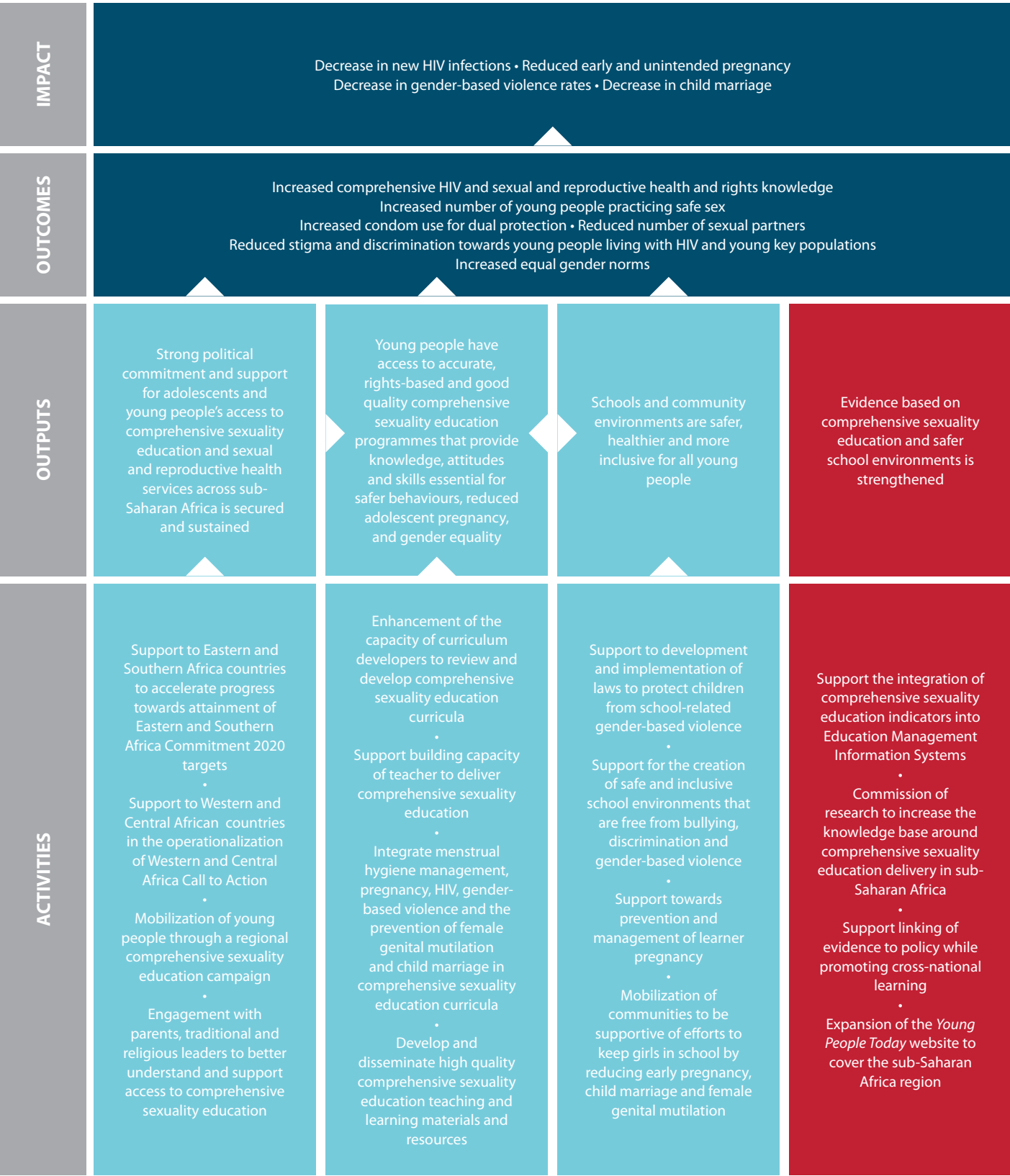
Comprehensive sexuality education

Comprehensive sexuality education is a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social aspects of sexuality. It aims to equip children and young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that will empower them to protect their health, well-being, and dignity, as well as to develop respectful social relationships and consider the well-being of others affected by their choices. Importantly, it also helps them to understand and act upon their rights throughout their lives.

Youth leadership

In order to meaningfully engage adolescents and young people – not simply as beneficiaries, but as leaders informing programming – the O3 Programme will make use of new and traditional media to secure youth leadership, including engagement with young key populations at community, national, and regional levels. The Young People Today website, along with other partner initiatives, such as Safeguard Young People led by the UNFPA, will continue to provide practical platforms for youth engagement and mobilization. Deliberate steps will also be taken at the planning and implementation stages to ensure that the voices and aspirations of young people inform this work.

Theory of change



About UNESCO

UNESCO is a United Nations' specialized agency for education. It provides global and regional leadership in education, strengthens national education systems, and responds to contemporary global challenges through education, with a special focus on Africa and gender equality.

UNESCO's mission on the area of health education

- Promoting healthy lifestyles among girls, boys, young women, and young men through skills-based education in formal educational settings, non-formal educational activities, and informal education.
- Ensuring that all children benefit from good quality comprehensive sexuality education that includes information on HIV prevention.
- Ensuring that all children and young people have access to safe, inclusive, health-promoting learning environments.

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#O3Campaign #ESACcommitment



Young People Today. Time to Act Now.



@yptcampaign



youngpeopletoday.org