



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Sustainable
Development
Goals

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

2018-2020



O3

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

UNESCO envisages this through the Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future (O3) Programme (2018-2020), which aims for a 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 will support the delivery of good quality comprehensive sexuality education that empowers adolescents and young people, while developing the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competencies needed to prevent HIV, reduce early and unintended pregnancies and eliminate gender-based violence.

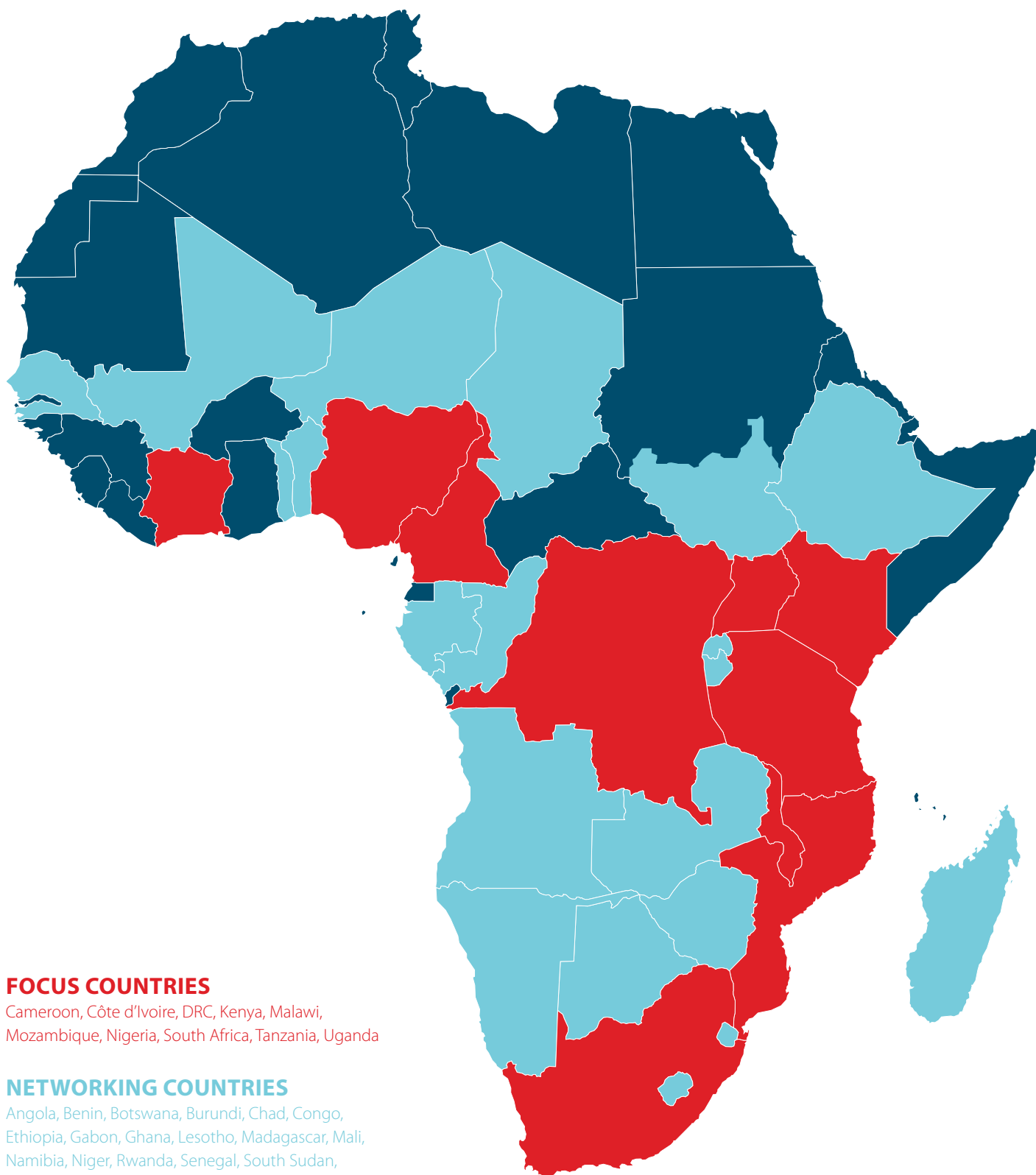
Through the generous support of the government of Sweden and other partners, the O³ Programme builds on current efforts by UNESCO to improve sexual and reproductive health, and gender and education outcomes for adolescents and young people.

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.

Between 2018 and 2020, the O³ Programme will reach **10.7 million** learners in **45 000** primary and secondary schools; 30 000 pre-service teachers; and **186 000** in-service teachers. An additional **30 million** people (parents, guardians, religious leaders, and young people out of school) will be reached through community engagement activities and **10 million** young people through social and new media platforms.

Programme coverage



Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the O³ Programme

FRIENDSHIP LOVE AND
MARRIAGE
MARRIAGE

The O³ Programme will make a direct contribution to the achievement of the SDGs¹ around education, health and gender, and their specific targets. It will also advance the attainment of other key SDGs, especially those related to poverty, hunger, and peaceful and just societies.



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.

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



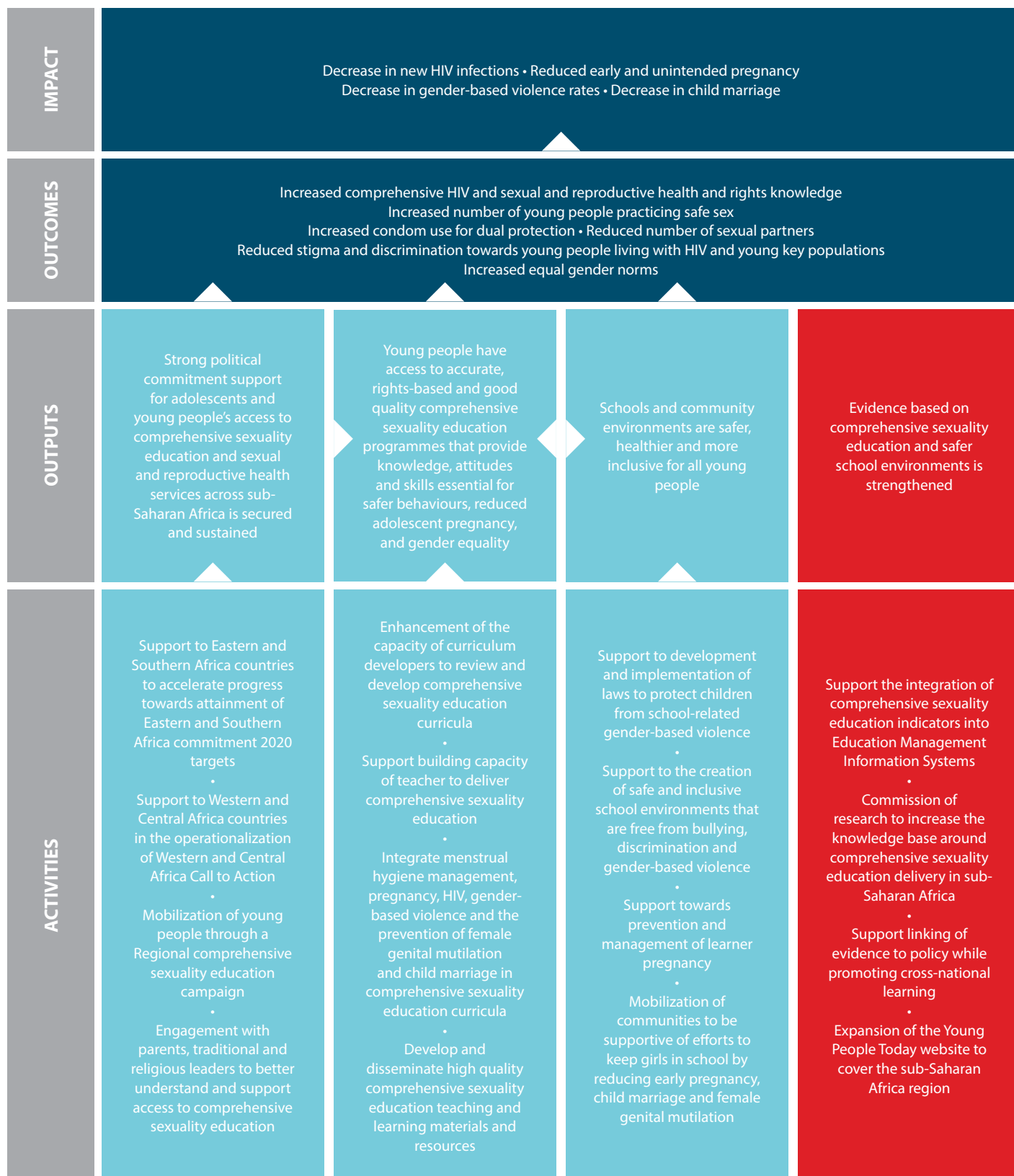
Comprehensive sexuality education

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





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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 gender equality and Africa.

UNESCO's mission on the area of health education

- Promoting healthy lifestyles among girls, boys, young women, and 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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en.unesco/themes/health-education

