



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

## CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

### STRENGTHENING PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

#### Background information and context

Parent-child communication programmes (PCC) aim at encouraging and improving discussions between parents/guardians and their adolescents on subjects related to sexuality and sexual and reproductive health and Rights (SRHR). In many countries of Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA), parent-child discussions around these subjects remain highly sensitive while young people living in the region are still facing considerable health issues: difficulty to access youth-friendly health services, high rates of HIV, gender-based violence, early and unintended pregnancy, or low use of contraceptives, among many other things. A negative or lack of parent-child communication is proven to reinforce such issues, leading young people to adopt riskier sexual behaviours, to have lower self-esteem, suffer from emotional distress and school problems.

Indeed, parents are the primary source of information among children and adolescents, and diffuse without knowing its values, skills and attitudes on sexuality and SRH to their children. It is therefore critical to enable the enhancement of a positive parent-child communication, based on trust and respect, through the delivery of PCC programmes. Many of these programmes have demonstrated positive results in the empowerment of young people to make safe and healthy decisions about their life. For instance, young people who declared feeling more connected to their parents are more likely to delay first sexual intercourse, to use contraceptives and to avoid risky sexual behaviours.

UNESCO has worked to support ministries of education and ministries of health in Eastern and Southern Africa, in the design and implementation of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) programmes and youth-friendly health services. Building on the *International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education*, and within the framework of the ESA commitment, UNESCO aims to address the numerous sexual health issues young people are facing. Gathering support from parents and educating them is essential in this regard and thus, in partnership with SAfAIDS, UNESCO has launched in 2015 the *Toolkit on Engaging Communities in Comprehensive Sexuality Education*, as well as brochures<sup>1</sup> to support both parents and children in engaging conversations about sexual and reproductive health.

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO, SafAids. (2015) Why? Who? Where? What? And How? to talk to parents and guardians about sexual and reproductive health.

UNESCO, SafAids. (2015) Talking to your child about sexual and reproductive health.

However, there is an undeniable lack of culturally-appropriate comprehensive resources on the subject available to non-governmental and governmental programme designers in the region.

Therefore, **the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa seeks to develop a package on parent-child communication** adapted to the region to encourage, and bring support to, ministries, institutions and the civil society when designing and implementing such programmes, while contributing on a larger scale to the achievement of SDG 3 on good health and well-being, SDG 4 on quality education, and SDG 5 on gender equality.

Based on the successfully adapted and implemented *Creating Connections Programmes* from the University of Melbourne - a longstanding partner -, in China by UNESCO Beijing Office, and the recently released mentor manual *Let's Chat*<sup>2</sup> by UNFPA Zimbabwe, the manual will offer increased opportunities within families and communities in ESA to instigate positive, trustful communication between parents and adolescents on relationships, gender and sexual health-related issues.

### Objective

The objective of the consultancy is to develop a positive parent-child communication manual or package on sexuality and SRH for the ESA region.

To achieve this objective, UNESCO is seeking the expert services of a consultant to build on existing curriculum support tools, notably *Creation Connections* from the University of Melbourne and *Let's Chat* from UNFPA to develop a manual on delivery of parent-child communication on sexuality and sexual and reproductive health programmes adapted to Eastern and Southern Africa.

### Scope of work

The consultant will lead in the development of all technical and capacity building aspects linked to the adaptation work, including content adaptation/development and training.

The consultant will carry out the following tasks:

1. Design and develop the content of a comprehensive draft manual, specifically by adapting *Creating Connections* and *Let's Chat*, and respecting the following requirements:
  - a) The manual should include 5 main sections:
    - **Introduction:** this section will comprise a description of the process of development of the manual as well as its objective, and key information on the SRH context of Eastern and Southern Africa and the current state of parent-child communication programmes in the region;
    - **Training of facilitators:** this section will comprise technical advice to facilitate training of trainers, requirements of a good facilitator, and guidance to organize successful sessions in a participatory and safe learning environment. Facilitators are key to the success of the programmes and it is important to emphasize this;
    - **Sessions for parents:** this section will comprise core subjects of comprehensive sexuality education to be in line with what is taught to adolescents in schools, such as relationships, sexuality, puberty, teenage pregnancy, contraception, gender norms and so on. It will also include reflections on family values and sharing of the challenges

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<sup>2</sup> Page 7 of the *Let's Chat* manual permits the reproduction or adaption of the document without permission except if it's distributed for profit; contact: [zimbabwe.office@unfpa.org](mailto:zimbabwe.office@unfpa.org).

they faced when they were the age of their children, and fostering of communication skills;

- **Sessions for adolescents:** this section will comprise complementary subjects to comprehensive sexuality education (family values and dynamics, gender-based violence, help-seeking, problem solving, peer support) and a strong focus on communication abilities to prepare them for joint session with parents. The sessions will be developed for specific age-groups of 10-13, 14-15, and 16-19.<sup>3</sup>
  - **Parent-adolescent sessions:** this section will comprise interactive activities and subjects to break the ice between adolescents and parents, with a core emphasis on communication and building trust. It can comprehend topics around empathy, gender norms, respect, positive communication, peaceful resolution of conflicts, relationships etc.
- b) The consultant will most precisely build on the comprehensiveness of the *Creating Connections* document to extract key information, activities, and general architecture; the consultant will also consider the more detailed and age-adapted facet of *Let's Chat* document during the adaptation;
- c) Information and activities in the manual will be, when appropriate, disaggregated into three different age-groups for adolescents (define age group 1; age group 2; age group 3), and one group for the parents.
2. Plan the content of, the approach to, and provide remote support in in-country consultations with Parents Teachers Associations, adolescents and young people, ministries of education, gender, and youth, SRHR experts, gender experts, civil society, UN experts – to review and provide recommendations on the draft manual; guarantee that it is culturally sound and age-appropriate. These country consultations will be facilitated by UNESCO NPOs, in partnership with ministry officials.
3. Deliver a regional training to capacitate national staff and partners on the use of the manual for further in-country trainings and implementation.

### Key deliverables

- An inception report detailing understanding of scope of work
- A draft manual on the implementation of parent-child communication programmes in Eastern and Southern Africa
- A draft agenda and feedback tools for in-country consultation workshops, to be finalized in discussion with UNESCO and key partners, as appropriate
- A report summarizing the inputs gathered through the consultation workshops, with follow-up recommendations to inform the conception of the manual
- A final manual on the implementation of parent-child communication programmes in Eastern and Southern Africa
- A regional training report

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<sup>3</sup> The Manual could specify that facilitators can choose to reduce the age groups to two (10-14, and 15-19) depending on context.

## Time frame

The consultancy will last 40 days, with flexible start and end dates.

## Reporting and management

The contract will be managed by the UNESCO Regional HIV and Health Education Advisor based in the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa in Harare, Zimbabwe with support from the UNESCO regional HIV and health education team for ESA, and UNESCO country field office staff, as appropriate.

Technical backstopping and coordination of contract activities will be provided by the Section of Health and Education at UNESCO HQs in Paris.

## Profile of the consultant

The following qualifications and skills are mandatory:

- Advanced academic degree in a related field - preferably education, with specialization in one or more of the following: social and emotional learning; family health; safe and inclusive education; gender-transformative education;
- At least 8 years' professional experience in curriculum development; design and delivery of training programmes (for community facilitators and/or for teachers in formal education systems);
- Excellent workshop facilitation skills;
- Excellent writing and communication skills.

The following skills and experience are desirable:

- At least 5 years' professional experience in one or more of the following fields: child and adolescent development; school health and wellbeing programmes; health promotion education; gender and gender-based violence; and, sexual and reproductive health;
- Strong skills in research, analysis and synthesis of findings;
- Familiarity with government education systems;
- Experience of working with UN organisations, and writing of UN reports most appreciated;
- Demonstrated ability to synthesise and work with feedback from a range of reviewers.

## Expression of interest

Interested individuals and institutions should submit a cover letter outlining recent experience on similar projects, CV(s), together with an approach to and estimated costs for the assignments, to [vacancies.harare@unesco.org](mailto:vacancies.harare@unesco.org) copying [r.matambo@unesco.org](mailto:r.matambo@unesco.org) by 17:00 hours CAT on **20 December, 2018**.