

# #10 GOLDEN PRINCIPLES

## OF FACILITATING COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION (CONCEPT)

1. Facilitate instead of teach by:
  - a. Helping students to make an OWN, well-informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive life, whenever that will start.
  - b. Creating a conducive & safe learning environment
  - c. Communicating with students in an open way,
2. Use participative methods
3. Know the sexual health needs of young people
4. Young people have the same rights you have
5. Sexuality is body, mind and soul
6. Sexuality education is most effective when comprehensive
7. Have a positive view on young people and sexuality, the powerful motor in life
8. Know the difference between facts and opinions, and stick to evidence
9. Separate your personal values from your professional values.
10. Acknowledge diversity among students, but treat them equally

## Principle 1: Facilitate instead of teach

### What does this mean?

WSWM is a student-centred curriculum. That means the questions and experiences of the student are the starting point of the program and also for the teacher. We call this: **needs-based**. This way students will have their own learning process; they learn more easily and effectively and feel appreciated, acknowledged and their needs are being met.

This is also very important for students to build their self-confidence, the fundament of WSWM: **to learn to make and stick to your OWN decision about your sexual and reproductive life, whenever that will start.**

You can't teach a student-centred curriculum as you continuously need students' input. As a teacher you should instead 'facilitate' the learning process, owned by and made together with students.

Besides, you can't teach values; students have to develop their own norms and values, based on facts and evidence.



What do you think is the difference between 'teaching' and 'facilitating'?

Think of 3 differences.

Discuss 2 minutes with your fellow students.

### Teaching versus facilitating

The most important difference is that your role as a teacher changes quite dramatically.

When teaching, the teacher is the focal point of the classroom, he has all the knowledge and the students listen and obey. Teaching uses frontal didactic methods, mainly lecturing. The teaching process for the students is passive; they are only seen as recipients.

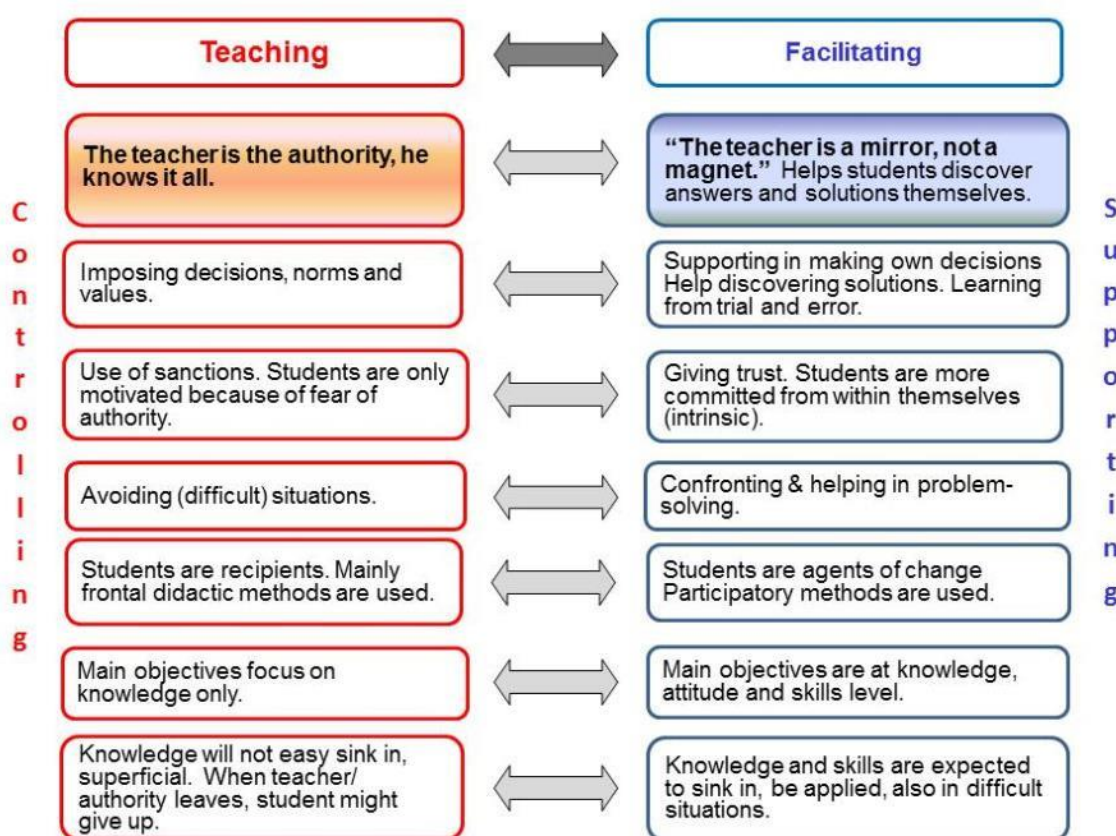
When facilitating, the teacher is a mirror, not a magnet. That means he supports students in discovering their own answers to their own questions. So, a facilitator won't give the 'right' answers; students will look and find the right answers themselves. The teaching process is active and students become 'agents of change'.

Facilitating has several **advantages** over teaching: students get involved and become more motivated to learn, they become better problem solvers and because they actively learn, they learn more effectively (they will remember the knowledge better). Active learning also facilitates attitude change and acquirement of skills.



Facilitating WSWM in Ethiopia

### Teaching vs facilitating



## Principle 1b: Interact and communicate with students in a participative and open way

In addition to principle 1, facilitating the learning process implies that you communicate in a different way than as you would be teaching.

A facilitator is curious about the existing knowledge of the student, and therefore asks a lot of questions, listens well and is open. Ultimately students drive the learning process, not the teacher.

The facilitator doesn't have to be a friend of the students, but he should be accessible.

- He has to be inviting, verbally and non-verbally, reflected in his body language.
- He should stress that all input is valuable and there is no wrong input.
- He is trustworthy and students feel safe telling their personal experiences for learning purposes.

## Principle 1c: Create a conducive & safe learning environment

Facilitating also means creating a conducive learning environment between the students and between the facilitator and students.

- **Ground rules:** As a start you help the class making ground rules to get a conducive learning environment; e.g. about respect, listening and active participation by everybody.
- **Confidentiality:** Also you make sure students feel committed to adhere to confidentiality as a ground rule. They agree to treat each other in a confidential way and do not disclose class mates outside the class, so everybody feels free to discuss personal experiences and problems when they want to.
- **Positive role model:** A quality facilitator also opens up himself to create a safe atmosphere. He might tell something about his own youth, how he was educated about sexuality, by whom and on what, his first time of falling in love, et cetera. In this way he shows trust to his students, while students learn to trust him as a facilitator.



In a participative learning environment, students are eager to learn from each other and feel all responsible for contributing to the learning process.

## WSWM Golden Principle 2: Use participative methods

An important characteristic of facilitating WSWM is the kind of methods to be used. These have to be 'participatory' to get the input of students. It helps students learn by doing, using methods like interactive games, group discussions and role plays.

What a teacher should always do with every participatory method:

- **Make clear what the objectives are** (for yourself and the student), so you can make sure these are met.
- **Support students in carrying out the methods** (instead of telling them what the right answer is). In group work, let them work their own way, but instruct them well and regularly check whether they are focussed.
- **Timekeeping**. Very important, as students don't keep track of time and their enthusiasm might stimulate them to pose lots of questions and share a lot, which takes a lot of time.
- **Make sure the conditions for every method are met**: every method has some conditions to be effective. For instance, when students are reading and discussing about a presentation, you should make sure that every student is actively participating and focussed.
- **Check whether 'health-promoting' norms and values are always supported**. For instance, we promote gender equity in this program. This means if in a group discussion one student thinks women are inferior to men, you should ask the class: do you agree with the statement that women are inferior to men? What do we know about it, learned in the lesson on gender, lesson 3? If the students don't answer 'correctly', only then you should 'teach' about the health-promoting and to be supported norm of gender equity.
- **Rounding off with the core message**. Every method and part of a lesson has a core message. Students need to know that; it gives focus to what they have learned. Best is if students can tell you this core message yourself. If not, you can tell them or better, get it out of them in a class discussion.

In the factsheet 'participatory methods' you can learn about all the methods used in WSWM. Also you can read this in the online Teacher Manual.

To support you in getting more familiar with all of the methods, each lesson of WSWM will ask you to do some homework about reflecting on which methods have been used in that particular lesson and whether and how you would do them differently.

### **WSWM Golden Principle 3: Know the sexual health of young people**

As a facilitator/teacher you need to know what the sexual health of young people in Malawi is like and how their physical and psycho-social social development is. That shows the need of this program and the age-appropriate needs of young people .

### **WSWM Golden Principle 4: Young people have the same rights you have, treat them likewise**

In WSWM we have a rights-based approach towards young people. These rights have been agreed upon by many countries since the first 'declaration of human rights' in 1948 and all following UN Conventions such as the Convention on the Right of the Child in 1989.

#### **Young people have the right:**

1. to be themselves (self-determination, own decision making, self-expression)
2. to complete information and education (on sexuality, sexual health, prevention of and support in sexual health problems and on rights)
3. to accessible, affordable and confidential sexual and reproductive services
4. to protect (towards sexual health problems and discrimination) and be protected (e.g. sexual abuse)
5. to participate (in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies, programs and services)

That's why WSWM provides students with complete and comprehensive information. Also, a quality educator teaches them to think actively and critically, so they can use this information to make their own decisions and communicate them. And of course, also to seek for support and health care.

Rights also come with responsibilities. You will learn about that in lesson 3 on gender and rights.

## WSWM Golden Principle 5: Sexuality is body, soul and mind

Let's first find out what sexuality is. What do you think *sexuality* is? You can choose more than one answer.

- A. Having sex with someone (intercourse, petting, oral sex, et cetera)
- B. Fantasizing about having sex
- C. Feeling attractive and sexy, and feeling attracted to someone
- D. Enjoy touching and being touched and hugged by someone you find sexually attractive
- E. Longing to be with someone

The right answer is: all of these answers are right!

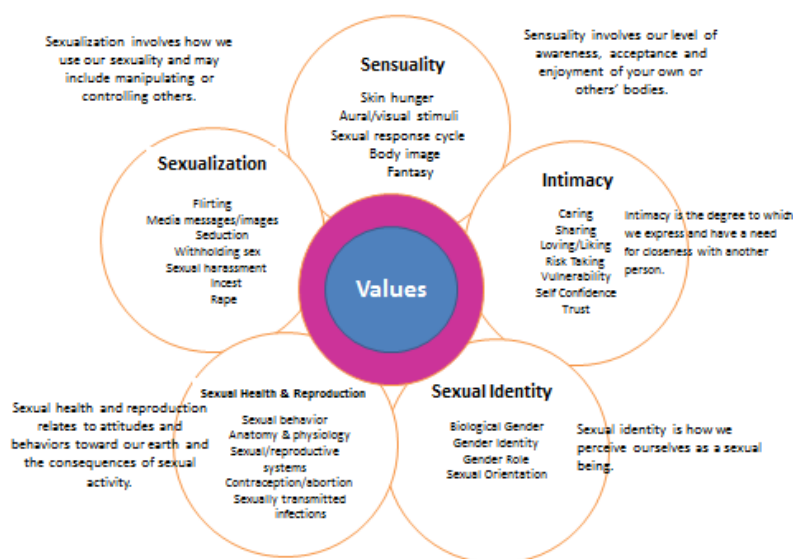
Sexuality is everything about having sexual feelings, thoughts, fantasies and sexual activities.

It's about being intimate with someone in all kinds of ways, so hugging someone, telling someone that you love him/her, and having sex. And it's also about feeling attractive and good about your own body. Or even touching your own body in a sexual way.

It is also about biology and physiology: hormones, sexual urge and feeling aroused.

And it has a strong cultural influence: culture and religions offer values and norms that tells people how to act, what is 'right and appropriate' 'and 'wrong and sinful'. These norms often vary for men and women, boys and girls, and are in some instances linked with oppression and violations of human rights.

That means that in the World Starts With Me curriculum, we also have a comprehensive view on sexuality: a **bio-psychosocial approach**. We try to touch upon all these levels.



## WSWM Golden Principle 6: Sexuality education is most effective when comprehensive

Just like sexuality contains many aspects and levels, sexuality education does too. You already learned that earlier in this presentation. We call this ‘comprehensive sexuality education’ or ‘life skills training’.

We will answer some Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) about CSE now.

### What is comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)?

CSE is education that teaches students about all aspects of sexuality: body, emotions, intimacy, communication, abstinence, having sex, being safe, sexual risks (and protection), consensual sex and abuse, et cetera .

It enables them to postpone having sex till they are ready and it prepares them to enjoy sex safely and consensually without negative consequences, when they are ready for it.

It is the right of young people to receive full information, so they can make their own informed choices on being sexual active or not. Quality facilitators don’t impose their own norms and values and don’t prescribe decisions to young people.

### I’m afraid that talking about sexuality, pregnancy and HIV/aids openly with students will spoil them. That they will be tempted to experience sex. Is that true?

No, on the contrary actually. International research has proven that comprehensive sexuality education helps to postpone the sexual debut of young people and among them who already are sexually active, have safe sex.

### This may sound unrealistic to you, so how come?

Young people who don’t have any information on love and sexuality, are not prepared. They don’t know what sex is, what their boundaries are, how to communicate about it, how to postpone it or how to do it safely. They will be much more likely to have sex on a young age, often forced, and unsafely. This may lead to a lot of unintended pregnancies, HIV-infections and sexual abuse.

### What about Malawi?

In Malawi many young people lack complete information and therefore there are many SRH problems among young people.

Of the young people who learn to openly talk about sex and have the appropriate knowledge, attitudes and skills, more of them will start their sexual debut later and will practise safe and consensual sex when being sexual active.

### So, what are the advantages of comprehensive sexuality education?

Evidence shows that comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) leads to a better sexual and reproductive health of young people as more of them.

- postpone their sexual debut ,
- use condoms and contraceptives more often, when they decide to have sex, and are thus better protected against STI’s, HIV/Aids and unintended pregnancy.
- are better able to openly talk and negotiate with their partner about using protection.
- understand that gender equality is a driving force in common decision making, consensual sex and in the fight against violations of human rights, including sexual and gender based violence.

- suffer less from sexual abuse, because they know how to avoid risky situations, they have consensual relationships and can communicate better about their boundaries and limits.

### **I still think that abstinence only is better than talking about premarital sex. Why do we need CSE in Malawi?**

Abstinence is a very good way to don't run the risk of getting pregnant or catching an STI. So programs promoting abstinence have a good point.

Only...many young people in Malawi DO have pre-marital sex nonetheless and unfortunately ill-prepared.

We see the proof in the many teenage pregnancies and young people undergoing or even dying from unsafe abortions in Malawi. Abstinence only programs often don't pay attention to how to have safe sex and to condoms, just because of the misconception that when you teach young people about sex, they will try it.

### **So comprehensive sexuality education offers the option of abstaining, but also something extra?**

Yes, exactly. Comprehensive sex education offers more than just the option of abstaining from sex. But it also prepares young people how to protect themselves *when they do have sex*.

By getting to know their body and that of the other sex, understanding how fertility works, how you can communicate and negotiate about (not yet) having sex, and how to use contraceptives and condoms when they do have sex.

And moreover, it supports them in deciding when they are ready to have sex, instead of having sex unplanned and thus unsafe and in having only consensual sex and not force anyone into sex..

## WSWM Golden Principle 7: Have a positive view on young people and sexuality

Having a positive view on young people and sexuality leads to better health outcomes, has been proven scientifically.

Most sexuality education programs tend to see sexuality as something you should fear or guilty about: 'don't have sex (yet), it will ruin your life!' For instance: 'Pre-marital sex leads to AIDS; you will die' (like many abstinence only programs do.)

Also, they portray young people as lacking own norms and values and without the potential to make their own, wise decisions.

The consequence is that these programs don't prepare students for actual life by not giving comprehensive information. But we can't close our eyes for the many young people in Malawi that DO have sex, proven by the many unwanted pregnancies, HIV and STI's. It even is a Christian value to support them in preventing those.

**WSWM's underlying concept is investment in young people's assets and protective factors instead of in moralising and warning them.** Young people's well-being can be most effectively achieved by

- empowering them and strengthening their capabilities
- enlarging access to opportunities and services
- providing them with safe and supportive environments

In addition, **viewing sexuality as a positive force in everyone's life** is much more effective than portraying sexuality as something vulgar. In fact, sexuality is a beautiful source for sharing love and intimacy. It is the reason of our existence as it is a result of our parents having sex. It is a powerful and fundamental part of human beings, from birth on.

However, when becoming sexually active, young people need to know how to protect themselves and their partners and how to make safe, healthy and happy decisions!

## WSWM Golden Principle 8: Know the difference between facts and opinions, and stick to evidence

There is a difference between a fact and an opinion. Can you tell what it is?

Which of these statements is a fact, and which an opinion? *Please do this individually*

1. Nelson Mandela was a man
2. Masturbation is wrong
3. Masturbation is not unhealthy
4. Women have a vagina, men a penis
5. God tells us to wait with sex until marriage

*See the right answers on the next slide*

### What is the difference between a fact and an opinion?

#### OPINION:

- An opinion is based on values and norms: e.g. about what is good and bad behaviour.
- It is often something that has its basis in religion or culture, a ritual or a habit.
- An opinion is something personal, it is never right or wrong; you can agree with it or not.

#### FACT:

- A fact is based on scientific evidence: being a man, and having a penis is something biological and scientific; masturbation has been proven not to be unhealthy as there is no evidence that it results in physical or psychosocial damage.
- You can't agree or argue on a fact, it's the scientific truth.

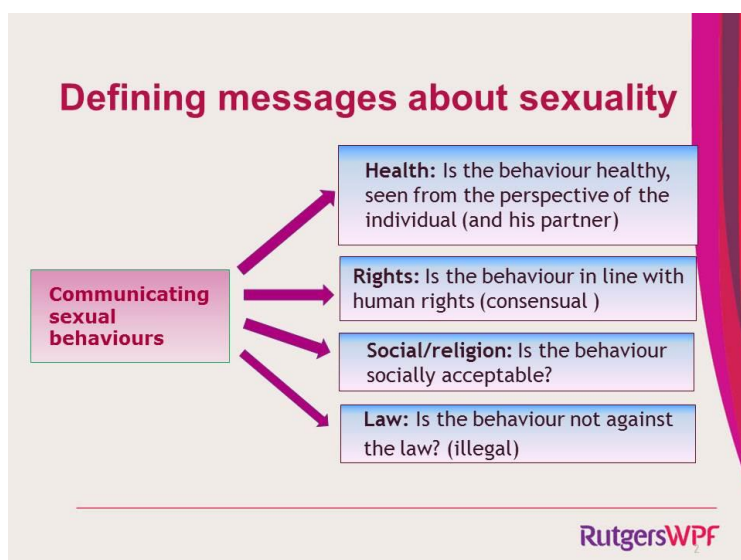
**As a teacher you should stick to facts, and present opinions as 'values'.** Students should be supported by you to develop **their own norms and values** and decide for themselves which values are right for them.

*For instance: Should young people be able to have sex before marriage?*

There is no fact that says that young people should or shouldn't. That's an opinion. Even if the bible tells you so, it is still a personal value. But it is a fact that sex should be safe and consensual to prevent sexual health problems.

**It is your job as a teacher to give students full information on facts and on the values that are present in society, so they can make their own informed choice.**

More specifically it is your job as a teacher to give facts about the different perspectives you can use looking at sexual behaviour:



So if you apply this to the topic ‘should young people be able to have sex before marriage?’ What would you do being a teacher in comprehensive sexuality education?

1. **Health:** is the behaviour healthy? Premarital sex is healthy, as long as it is safe and both partners are ready and can make a well-informed decision about it. That means as a teacher you should provide information on consequences of being sexually active: pregnancy, HIV and STI’s: how fertility works in a woman’s or man’s body, how a woman can get pregnant, how to have safe sex and so on. But also on: when are you ready for sex?
2. **Law:** what is legal behaviour in Malawi and what isn’t. Is it legal to have sex before marriage? Before the age of 18?
3. **Rights:** is it the right of young people in Malawi to decide when they want to have sex? When it is consensual and both partners are ready for it and can make a well-informed decision, it probably is, as Malawi signed the universal declaration of human rights.
4. **Religion and culture:** You can also tell if premarital sex is accepted by religion and culture in Malawi. A religious value might be: no, premarital sex isn’t accepted. But also: it is socially accepted that boys in Malawi have premarital sex to proof that they are a ‘real man’.

The right answers are:

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Nelson Mandela was a man:                         | FACT           |
| 2. Masturbation is wrong;                            | OPINION        |
| 3. Masturbation is not unhealthy                     | FACT (see WHO) |
| 4. Women have a vagina, men a penis:                 | FACT           |
| 5. Young people should wait with sex until marriage: | OPINION        |

## **WSWM Golden Principle 9: Separate your personal values from your professional values**

**Always separate your personal values and views from your professional ones.** Your personal opinions about what is right or wrong behaviour are very important guidelines for living your own life, but you shouldn't impose them on your students.

A good facilitator shows the different perspectives on sexuality, like mentioned before, and support students at making their own decisions and developing their own norms and values. These are the decisions they will adhere to, not the one which are prescribed for them.

## **WSWM Golden Principle 10: Acknowledge diversity among students, but treat them equally**

No student is the same, they may differ in gender, age, experience, health, sexual orientation, family history, (dis)ability, HIV-status, religion and cultural background.

However your job as a facilitator is to treat everyone equally.



Cc: Dreamstime