



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS AND CAREER SERVICES

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE O3 PLUS UNESCO PROGRAMME

THEME: Promoting Health and Wellbeing among students in Institutions of Higher Learning in Kenya through UNESCO's Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future (O3 Plus) Project

1. Introduction

The overall goal of the Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future (O3 Plus) project is to ensure that young people in higher and tertiary education institutions in the Eastern and Southern Africa realize positive health, education and gender equality outcomes through sustained reductions in new HIV infections, unintended pregnancy and gender based violence. The project being implemented in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe aims at enabling young people to reach their full educational potential and contribute more effectively to the development of their countries and region as graduates, professionals and young leaders.

The project will contribute directly to the health, education and gender Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the specific targets for these, while also contributing to the achievement of other key SDGs, especially those related to poverty, hunger, peaceful and just societies

2. Rationale of the project

Higher and tertiary education institutions in Kenya are home to a large number of sexually active young adults who are vulnerable to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) related concerns and risks as they navigate new responsibilities, relationships, and experiences on their own and in unfamiliar settings. Negative SRH outcomes, such as unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), alcohol and substance abuse, mental health and GBV among others immediately affect students' well-being and can cause disruptions in educational attainment, career progression and life goals, ultimately limiting the potential of this critical human capital to contribute towards national development and leadership.

It is frequently assumed that because students have reached the tertiary level of education, they have already received the education that equips them to avoid negative health outcomes. While there has indeed been significant focus and investments in Kenya on increasing the provision of sexuality education at the basic level, much less attention has been paid to the status of sexuality education and service provision within higher and tertiary education institutions. The reality is that too many young people are still growing into adolescence and adulthood with very limited knowledge about their reproductive health and sexuality and in a context of poor access to sexual and reproductive health services.

(Extracted from the 03 plus concept note)