

Pre-Service Training Program Design and Delivery

Building capacity, opportunity, and
motivation among CSE Educators

This brief describes the design and content of Projet Jeune Leader's multi-faceted, pre-service training program—one strategy out of a package of strategies we used and tested—to develop well-equipped, willing, and skilled Educators for comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in Madagascar.



SUMMARY

To prepare government teacher-trainees to deliver Projet Jeune Leader (PJL)'s comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) program in public middle schools—a new opportunity stemming from a partnership between PJL, Madagascar's Ministry of Education, and the Haute Matsiatra Regional Teacher Training Institute—**PJL designed and delivered a specialized pre-service training program for 114 teacher-trainees** embedded in the Haute Matsiatra Regional Teacher Training Institute.

The training was delivered by PJL's Technical Managers, who had several years of experience teaching CSE and training, supervising, and supporting CSE Educators. We used a combination of **educational modules, skill-building sessions, and course simulations to build teacher-trainees' essential knowledge and skills**. We also included targeted sessions to **enhance trainees' motivation** (for example, to positively shape their beliefs about the impacts of teaching sexuality education). Teacher-trainees completed 84 hours of training sessions over two and a half weeks.

Throughout the program we used content and teaching assessments, feedback mechanisms, and written motivation and values surveys to evaluate trainees' understanding and identify real-time opportunities for adjustment.

Pre-service training program design

Introduction

In Madagascar, Regional Teacher Training Institutes are responsible for the recruitment and two-year pre-service training of government middle school teachers. In partnership with the Haute Matsiatra Regional Teacher Training Institute, Projet Jeune Leader (PJL) embedded a new pre-service training program for first year teacher-trainees. **The goal of the pre-service training program was to build teacher-trainees' capacity and motivation to deliver PJL's comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) program during the following practicum teaching year of their training.**

PJL's Technical Managers delivered the training program to all 114 teacher-trainees in the Institute's 2021-2023 cohort (50% female; Ages 22-36). Over the course of 84 pre-service training hours, PJL used **a combination of education, training, and modeling strategies** to build teacher-trainees' essential knowledge, skills, and motivation to deliver PJL's comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) program. Our team developed and refined these strategies over a decade of work in Madagascar, and they align closely with [UNESCO's 2018 recommendations](#) for pre-service teaching training in sexuality education. This brief shares these strategies and our lessons learned.

- **Experienced, credible, approachable trainers**

- **Modeling participatory pedagogical approaches for deeper learning**

- **A holistic approach to capacity-building and soft skills development**

- **Structured learning, reflection, learning, practice, and learning**

Experienced, credible, approachable trainers

The pre-service training program was designed and implemented by staff with deep knowledge on comprehensive sexuality education delivery in Madagascar. Each of the three lead trainers—PJL's Technical Managers—had five to eight years of experience teaching CSE to adolescents, training CSE Educators, and coaching CSE Educators throughout their teaching placements. As such, they approached the training with a strong understanding of the factors for success and common challenges faced by CSE Educators in the local context. Their long and proven track record gave them credibility in the eyes of teacher-trainees and grounded experience to draw upon when teacher-trainees had questions or concerns about teaching sexuality education.



Mamisoa, PJL Technical Manager and the main implementation support practitioner for the teacher-trainee model

These young, dynamic, passionate lead trainers were assisted by current CSE Educators who led course simulations of PJL's curriculum and were further able to motivate the teacher-trainees by sharing their personal experiences as CSE Educators.

The lead trainers were also responsive to their audience of teacher-trainees. It was these trainers who established the relationship and official partnership with the leaders of the Regional Teacher Training Institute, a process that provided them insights into existing practices and cultures within the Institute. The cohort of 114 teacher-trainees was divided into three groups of 35-40 trainees per group for most program sessions, with each group led by a lead trainer and assistant facilitators (PJL CSE Educators). This allowed trainers to get to know their cohort of teacher-trainees over the course of the training, observe their growth, and foster open communication to address questions and concerns as they arose.

Modeling participatory pedagogical approaches for deeper learning

Course simulations were a key strategy to cover the most important content of PJL's CSE curriculum, as well as provide observational and practical training in participatory teaching. Given that sexuality education is still rare in Madagascar, teacher-trainees generally lacked essential knowledge on sexuality-related topics (for example, male teacher-trainees had notably low understanding of and comfort around female reproductive health, including menstruation). Teaching methods in Madagascar—including among teachers-in-training—are also largely rote and commonly lack the clear, dynamic delivery needed to promote students' learning.

Throughout the pre-service program, teacher-trainees participated in real lessons from PJL's CSE curriculum to build their essential knowledge, as well as learn effective classroom management and participatory teaching skills from dynamic and skilled CSE Educators. Teacher-trainees also had repeat opportunities to practice key curriculum lessons and related participatory activities during assessment and feedback sessions.



Teacher-trainees participate in a group activity from the CSE curriculum lesson on leadership.



Interactive activity from the CSE curriculum lesson on non-verbal communication.



Teacher-trainees learn about constituent accountability and feedback and using PJL's "EKO" magazines to collect and respond to their school community's feedback

A holistic approach to capacity-building and soft skills development

Given that teachers' conflicting attitudes toward youth sexuality are a common barrier to direct, comprehensive instruction of CSE curriculum, we also used educational sessions and values clarification exercises to build teacher-trainees' comfort with PJL's program content and rights-based approach. For example, trainees discussed opinions around youth sexuality, reflected on their own adolescent experiences, and reviewed data about the sexual and reproductive health realities of youth in Madagascar.

The program also included skill-building sessions where teacher-trainees learned and practiced essential skills specific to PJL's multi-component model, such teaching from PJL's scripted curriculum, delivering personalized counseling to students, providing healthcare referrals and promoting access to services, and delivering gender-transformative extracurricular and enrichment activities. Other modules on advocacy and communication specifically addressed context-specific challenges that teacher-trainees may face in the school community. Teacher-trainees viewed and discussed videos created by PJL's existing CSE Educators on techniques to build community support and trust—which also served to alleviate trainees' concerns of community resistance to them and the CSE program. Trainees also participated in

related scenario activities to simulate and assess real-life situations together.

Structured learning, reflection, learning, practice, and learning

PJL's lead trainers facilitated regular individual and group reflections, as well as utilized feedback mechanisms through which teacher-trainees assessed their skills and confidence levels, raised questions, and set personal learning goals. Our team used daily debriefs, midday and at the end of the day, to discuss successes and challenges, reflect on progress, and decide on adjustments together throughout the two-and-a-half week program. A dedicated PJL team member also took written notes and observations throughout the training, particularly on teacher-trainee responsiveness and participation. We used the results of trainees' assessments and feedback to integrate improvements in real time and reinforce key information and skills. This feedback also informed targeted topics for subsequent in-service training and coaching sessions.

Ultimately, the pre-service training program was an essential first step to build teacher-trainees capacities and motivation to deliver CSE—but only one of a suite of other essential strategies, including in-service trainings, supportive supervision, and coaching throughout the school year to further enhance teacher-trainees' skills.



A teacher-trainee practices delivering a lesson excerpt from PJL's CSE curriculum.

Pre-service training program content and objectives

THEME #1 ■ Projet Jeune Leader's comprehensive sexuality education program

Pre-service program content¹

- Educational session: Introduction to CSE, the program, and values clarification (Full-day, 7 hours)
- Educational session: Understanding the concept of systems and role of CSE change agents (Half-day, 4 hours)
- Educational session: Understanding the structure, content, and management of the CSE curriculum (Half-day, 3 hours)
- Skills assessment: Applying and refining teacher presentation skills (2 hours)
- Skills reinforcement: Review of teacher presentations and teacher-trainee course simulations (2 hours)

Knowledge Objectives

Understand the concept, the purposes, and objectives of the CSE program; understand the systemic nature of barriers to healthy development for youth and adolescents in Madagascar; understand the structure of the CSE program and curriculum

Attitudes Objectives

Recognize and reflect critically and constructively on one's personal values, beliefs, and attitudes related to the sexual and reproductive health of youth and adolescents, and separate them from one's teaching of the curriculum²

Skills Objectives

Explain the CSE Program and its objectives in promoting the healthy development of youth;³ manage the CSE curriculum efficiently, applying participatory and dynamic teaching approaches

THEME #2 ■ Puberty and sexual and reproductive health

Pre-service program content

- Course simulations (observational): Puberty, bodily changes, and sexual and reproductive health (Full-day, 7 hours)
- Course simulations (observational): Reproduction and prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (Half-day, 4 hours)
- Review and course simulations (practical): Reviewing key sexual health concepts and teacher presentation skills (Full-day, 7 hours)

Knowledge Objectives

Understand, from a scientific standpoint, the changes adolescents experience during puberty and human reproduction; understand basic factors influencing the reproductive health of adolescents; understand the importance for adolescents to make informed decisions to delay sexual activity, prevent early pregnancy, and prevent sexually transmitted infections

Attitudes Objectives

Be comfortable and open to speaking about these topics with students and parents, despite their oftentimes sensitive nature

Skills Objectives

Apply effective and engaging teaching and presentation techniques to transmit knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for students to navigate their development during puberty and make healthy and informed choices

¹ Not listed in chronological order of the pre-service program; See Annex 1 for actual training schedule.

² Future of Sex Education Initiative (FoSE), National Teacher Preparation Standards for Sexuality Education. 2019.

³ World Health Organization (WHO) and Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) (2017). "Training matters: A framework for core competencies of sexuality educators", WHO Regional Office for Europe and Federal Centre for Health Education, Cologne, 2017.

THEME #3 ■ Gender equality and adolescents' and youth's rights related to their sexual and reproductive health

Pre-service program content

- Educational and skills-building session: Understanding and delivering engaging and gender-transformative extracurricular and enrichment activities (Full-day, 7 hours)
- Course simulations (observational): Curriculum lessons on gender (Half-day, 4 hours)

Knowledge Objectives

Understand the definition of social norms, gender norms, and gender stereotypes and systemic disadvantage with regards to gender in youth's health and development; understand the definition of abuse and its different manifestations, and its short- and long-term consequences

Attitudes Objectives

Be able to examine and challenge norms, stereotypes, and harmful practices related to sexuality and gender, injustices, and vulnerabilities³

Skills Objectives

Apply gender-transformative approaches to teaching and animating the CSE program that account for the disadvantages and exclusion of students based on gender and other aspects of identity;⁴ respond to situations of abuse facing students

THEME #4 ■ Counseling and individual support for students

Pre-service program content

- Skills-building session: Counseling and strong communication skills (Half-day, 3 hours)
- Skills-building session: Providing medical referrals and promoting adolescents' access to health services (Half-day, 4 hours)
- Course simulations (observational): Healthy relationships and seeking support (Half-day, 4 hours)
- Skills-building session: Understanding, identifying, and responding to cases of abuse (Half-day, 3 hours)
- Skills reinforcement and course simulations (practical): Counseling techniques and communication (2 hours)
- Review and skills-building session: Medical referrals and establishing linkages with healthcare facilities (2 hours)

Knowledge Objectives

Understand the definition and importance of services that are personalized and adapted to the needs of youth, in particular private counseling and medical consultations and their role in the promotion of youth and adolescents' sexual and reproductive health and development

Attitudes Objectives

Be open and practice equal treatment towards students from varying backgrounds, capacities, and identities; demonstrate empathy, respect, and professionalism in response to serious situations and stories shared by students^{5, 6}

Skills Objectives

Serve as a trusted adult for students; be able to provide practical, scientific, direct, and reassuring information, advice, and support to students, as well as medical referrals, in a safe, confidential, welcoming and non-judgmental space



Teacher-trainees participate in a scenario-based activity.

³ WHO and BZgA, 2017

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Pound, P. and R. Langford and R. Campbell (2016). "What do young people think about their school-based sex and relationship education? A qualitative synthesis of young people's views and experiences." *BMJ Open*. 2016;6:e011329

THEME #5 ■ Reinforcing learning and student engagement in the school environment

Pre-service program content

- Skills-building session: Understanding and delivering engaging and gender-transformative activities (Full-day, 7 hours)
- Skills workshop: Student engagement and classroom management (Half-day, 3 hours)

Knowledge Objectives

Understand the different tools for delivering extracurricular/enrichment activities and methods for optimally using them with all students

Attitudes Objectives

Aspire for a school environment that is conducive to learning inside and outside of the classroom, one where students feel physically and psychologically safe, can cultivate meaningful interactions and relationships, and enjoy a sense of belonging and community

Skills Objectives

Create and maintain a safe, fun and respectful school environment; be able to effectively facilitate and monitor educational and recreational extracurricular activities⁷

THEME #6 ■ Community engagement in the CSE Program

Pre-service program content

- Skills-building session: Understanding advocacy for CSE and effective communication strategies to different audiences (Full-day, 7 hours)
- Skills-building session: Expanding our advocacy toolbox to build community support for CSE (Half-day, 4 hours)

Knowledge Objectives

Understand the influence of the community on the development of adolescents; understand the importance of engaging parents and the school community in the promotion of healthy behaviors of adolescents; understand the meaning, objectives, and examples of advocacy for the CSE Program within the community

Attitudes Objectives

Recognize and value various stakeholders with an eye towards engendering collective and sustained responsibility for the attainment of youth and adolescents' sexual and reproductive health and rights in the community

Skills Objectives

Actively listen to parents and other local stakeholders and gatekeepers' comments about the CSE Program; engage with local stakeholders in friendly, respectful, and constructive dialogues; deploy assertive communication techniques to promote and explain the benefits of the CSE Program in ways that resonate with the audience at hand; be able to manage conflicts and reconcile different points of view; be able to deliver parent workshops⁸

⁷ WHO and BZgA, 2017

⁸ Ibid.

 **Pre-service program content**

- Skills-building session: Learning and practicing activity reporting and documentation procedures (2 hours)
- Skills-building session: Identifying and managing stress and mental health (1.5 hours)

 **Knowledge Objectives**

Understand the qualities, characteristics, and behaviors for promoting and maintaining professionalism and embodying leadership as a CSE Educator;⁹ understand the policies and rules of the CSE Educator position, including the schedule, commitment, and other expectations and responsibilities

 **Attitudes Objectives**

Remain open to constructive feedback to continuously develop one's skills; remain motivated to grow one's capacities through the exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences with other teachers and teacher-trainees; approach the position in a spirit of mutual support and collaboration

 **Skills Objectives**

Serve as a role model and leader for students, teachers, and the community; apply effective time management; develop one's autonomy and self-efficacy, including self-confidence, in problem-solving



Chrystian (in photo at left) and Hanitra (at right), both PJJ Technical Managers, helped design and lead the pre-service training program for teacher-trainees. In his day-to-day role at the organization, Chrystian recruited, trained, and supported PJJ Educators in our direct delivery model, while Hanitra was working on advocacy and partnership building.

⁹ Pound et al. (2016)

Annex 1 Description of actual training schedule, by week and day

Week 1 (5 days, 7 hours of training each day) – May 2022

| MODULE | LENGTH | CONTENT |
|--------|------------------------|--|
| 1 | Full day (7 hours) | <p>Educational session: Introduction to CSE, the program, and values clarification</p> <p>This module sought to facilitate connections amongst and between teacher-trainees and trainers and introduce the comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) program. Trainers provided an overview of adolescent sexual and reproductive health-related outcomes to contextualize the CSE program and led values-clarification exercises to surface and exchange teacher-trainees' attitudes related to CSE and adolescent sexuality.</p> |
| 2 | Morning (4 hours) | <p>Educational session: Understanding the concept of systems and role of CSE change agents</p> <p>This module sought to raise teacher-trainees' understanding of key barriers and facilitators of youth's sexual and reproductive health outcomes in Madagascar. Through groupwork, teacher-trainees constructed diagrams to visualize systemic disadvantages and their contributions to systems change to improve adolescent health and development trajectories.</p> |
| 3 | Afternoon (3 hours) | <p>Educational session: Understanding the structure, content, and management of the CSE curriculum</p> <p>This module consisted of explanations and demonstrations of the CSE Package curriculum content, structure, and approaches. Trainers and assisting CSE Educators walked teacher-trainees through key elements of each curriculum, while providing tips and practical advice on curriculum management and implementation. The lead trainers concluded the session with curriculum simulations to illustrate appropriate delivery mechanisms and procedures.</p> |
| 4 | Full day (7 hours) | <p>Course simulation (observational): Puberty, bodily changes, and sexual and reproductive health</p> <p>Trainers led simulations of class lessons on puberty and related physical changes for males and females, male and female reproductive systems, menstruation, and hygiene practices.</p> |
| 5 | Morning (4 hours) | <p>Course simulations (observational): Reproduction and prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections</p> <p>To build on previous sexual health topics, trainers conducted simulations on human reproductive science, reproductive health, and the prevention of early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.</p> |
| 6 | Afternoon (3 hours) | <p>Skills-building session: Counseling and strong communication skills</p> <p>This skills workshop aimed to develop teacher-trainees' communication skills necessary for effective counseling. They brainstormed counseling techniques and approaches and worked in groups to analyze and respond to a set of given counseling scenarios. They then partook in a series of immersive activities to hone their skills in empathic listening, paraphrasing and reflection, asking open-ended questions, and using encouraging tones.</p> |

| MODULE | LENGTH | CONTENT |
|--------|------------------------|--|
| 7 | Morning (4 hours) | <p>Skills-building session: Providing medical referrals and promoting adolescents' access to health services</p> <p>Trainers extended the counseling training by preparing teacher-trainees to provide medical referrals to their future students. The session gave space for reflection on various structural, cultural, and personal barriers preventing adolescents' access to health services and the characteristics of youth-friendly health services. In groups, teacher-trainees brainstormed how to serve as effective medical liaisons in a set of given scenarios and reviewed procedures for making medical referrals for their students.</p> |
| 8 | Afternoon (3 hours) | <p>Skills assessment and course simulation (practical): Applying and refining teacher presentation skills</p> <p>Each teacher-candidate simulated a 7-minute excerpt from a curriculum topic already covered in the training, and received constructive feedback from peers and a member of the training team.</p> |

Week 2 (5 days, 7 hours of training each day) – August 2022

| MODULE | LENGTH | CONTENT |
|--------|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | Full day (7 hours) | <p>Skills-building session: Understanding advocacy for CSE and managing communication to different audiences</p> <p>Trainers introduced teacher-trainees to the concept of advocacy and their role as CSE advocates. Through discussions and groupwork, trainees rehearsed explanations of the CSE program tailored to specific stakeholder groups and brainstormed and responded to potential questions and concerns from communities. Trainers provided teacher-trainees several communication techniques.</p> |
| 2 | Full day (7 hours) | <p>Review, skills reinforcement, course simulations: Reviewing key sexual health concepts and teacher presentation skills</p> <p>Trainers reviewed curricular concepts that were most challenging for teacher-trainees, as revealed through their written exam results, and effective teacher presentation methods based on oral exam outcomes. Teacher-trainees then led simulations in pairs and groups to integrate and practice their CSE subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Lead trainers and assisting CSE Educators conducted repeat simulations of curricular topics to reinforce content and teaching delivery techniques.</p> |
| 3 | Full day (7 hours) | <p>Skills-building session: Understanding and delivering engaging and gender-transformative extracurricular and enrichment activities</p> <p>Altogether, this module sought to equip trainees with the knowledge and skills to effectively implement structured extracurricular and enrichment activities. Trainers demonstrated interactive pedagogical tools for facilitating extracurricular sessions and worked with teacher-trainees to conceptualize gender-transformative approaches to program delivery.</p> |
| 4 | Morning (4 hours) | <p>Course simulations (observational): Healthy relationships and seeking support</p> <p>To build teacher-trainees' knowledge of key concepts important for understanding the concept of abuse, the lead trainers conducted simulations of class lessons on topics related to healthy and unhealthy relationships and seeking out support from trusted adults.</p> |

| MODULE | LENGTH | CONTENT |
|--------|------------------------|--|
| 5 | Afternoon (3 hours) | <p>Skills-building session: Understanding, identifying, and responding to cases of abuse</p> <p>Trainers developed teacher-trainees' knowledge and skills to identify and respond to cases of abuse amongst their adolescent students. The module began with a review of medical referral procedures. Trainers then presented definitions, statistics, and information on abuse, its various forms, and consequences in Madagascar. In groups, trainees analyzed scenarios and brainstormed response strategies to different cases of abuse.</p> |
| 6 | Morning (4 hours) | <p>Skills-building session: Expanding our advocacy toolbox to build community support for CSE</p> <p>Trainers handed it over to CSE Educator-Assistants to share their own advocacy experiences, lessons, and tips through short films they developed in which they describe how they build community support for CSE. Assistants facilitated discussions on each film, and a final reflection in which teacher-trainees consolidated a list of communication, interpersonal, and behavioral advocacy strategies. Teacher-trainees also learned about constituent accountability and feedback through participatory activities, and reviewed and discussed PJJ's "EKO" magazines a way to collect and respond to their school community's feedback.</p> |
| 7 | Afternoon (2 hours) | <p>Skills-building session: Learning and practicing activity reporting and documentation procedures</p> <p>In this final module, teacher-trainees practiced procedures for counseling and medical referral reporting and documentation. The trainers explained reporting templates and responsibilities and filled out example forms together with teacher-trainees.</p> |

Week 3 (2 days, 7 hours of training each) – October 2022

| MODULE | LENGTH | CONTENT |
|--------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Morning (3 hours) | <p>Review and course simulations (observational): Review of early curricular lessons and new lessons on gender</p> <p>Trainers conducted review sessions on key health topics accompanied by simulations of key curricular lessons, including those on gender and stereotypes to complement the prior week's training.</p> |
| 2 | Morning & Afternoon (2 hours) | <p>Review and skills reinforcement: Counseling techniques and communication</p> <p>This two-hour block covered a review of key concepts related to counseling for students. Teacher-trainees then simulated counseling scenarios and received peer feedback.</p> |
| 3 | Afternoon (3 hours) | <p>Skills-building session: Student engagement and classroom management</p> <p>This workshop focused on proactive approaches for student engagement and classroom management. The module consisted of discussions about what resembles an effective classroom, and modeling strategies to cultivate positive classroom environments, such as inclusive participation, classroom norms, creating community, etc.</p> |

| MODULE | LENGTH | CONTENT |
|--------|-----------------------------|---|
| 4 | Half-morning (2 hours) | <p>Review and skills workshop: Review of medical referrals and establishing linkages with healthcare facilities</p> <p>The trainers conducted a brainstorming session to refresh teacher-trainees on the rationale for medical referrals. They then sensitized trainees to their responsibilities of advocating for sexuality education to healthcare providers to establish referral linkages. Teacher-trainees simulated dialogues with healthcare providers and practiced completing a notecard guide to assess the quality of adolescent services.</p> |
| 5 | Half-afternoon (2 hours) | <p>Skills reinforcement and course simulations (practical): Applying and refining teaching skills</p> <p>In this first refresher session on the topic, trainers demonstrated examples of effective versus ineffective teaching delivery techniques (tone variation, eye contact, dynamics and movement, etc.). Then, in a friendly, group-based competition, teacher-trainees designated peers to simulate curriculum excerpts, after which groups provided constructive feedback and voted on best trainee presentation.</p> |
| 6 | Afternoon (1.5 hours) | <p>Skills-building session: Identifying and managing stress and mental health</p> <p>This skills workshop aimed at raising teacher-trainees' awareness of mental health-related problems and stresses that could arise because of their work. The trainer introduced the concept with scenarios illustrating stress, burnout, compassion fatigue, and lack of self-confidence, and concluded with a group brainstorming and exchange of strategies for managing mental health and a self-compassion meditation.</p> |

ABOUT THIS LEARNING SERIES

Since 2013, Madagascar-based NGO **Projet Jeune Leader (PJL)** has refined an evidence-based, multi-component comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) program for very young adolescents in Madagascar's government schools. The program consists of a rights-based, gender-transformative curriculum, youth-friendly counseling services and healthcare referrals, and programming for parents and school leaders.

To realize impact at scale, **PJL is working alongside Madagascar's Ministry of Education to mainstream our CSE program into the country's education system.** To capture our implementation learnings and processes in (near) real-time, we developed this series of briefs which distill the package of strategies we used to deliver and scale this promising model of CSE in Madagascar's public school system.



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