



PREVENTING SCHOOL-RELATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE KIX LEARNING EVENT

7TH OF DECEMBER 2021

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) refers to “acts or threats of sexual, physical, or psychological violence occurring in and around schools, perpetrated as a result of gender norms and stereotypes and enforced by unequal power dynamics.”

SRGBV in schools and other learning environments is widespread, and discriminatory gender norms are one of the key driving factors. As with all forms of violence, SRGBV violates children’s rights and is a significant barrier for girls’ and boys’ access to and participation in education. Evidence shows us that boys and girls experience tend to be vulnerable to different types of SRGBV with girls more vulnerable to psychological abuse, cyberbullying, sexual violence, and harassment, and boys at higher risk of corporal punishment than girls.

SRGBV has far-reaching impacts on children, in terms of mental and physical health and well-being, education attainment and outcomes,

development, health status, including HIV status and early pregnancy. Much work remains to be done requiring accelerated and multi-dimensional prevention and response efforts.

For this reason, UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) in coordination with UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) convened a learning event on Preventing and Responding to SRGBV on the 7th of December 2021. The learning event on SRGBV brought together participants to share promising country practices and experiences as well as brainstorm solutions.

This specific event reinforced the capacities of Ministry of Education officials to expand and improve interventions related to gender-based violence (GVB) in and around schools and learning institutions. Additionally, the event provided space for thought leaders to share their expertise, experiences, and challenges.

What did the learning event reveal?

The overall findings indicate a continued need to strengthen the strategy and capacity to address SRGBV in national policies and action plans and recognize the need for holistic approaches and responses to mitigate its impact on children.

The United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) Education Specialist, Sujata Bordoloi set the scene on SRGBV by sharing experiences, challenges and successes. [Click here for PPT.](#)

Sujata Bordoloi highlighted 6 key areas that countries should focus on to address gender-based violence:

- Empowerment of teachers with skills and mentorship;
- Establish a school curriculum to shift harmful gender and social norms;
- Establish a safe and confidential reporting;
- Apply a whole school approach;
- Invest in data collection as well as monitoring;
- Integrate SRGBV prevention in education sector plans and policies.

Subsequently, participants from Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, and Uganda exchanged knowledge and experiences regarding SRGBV and how it is experienced, identifying SRGBV violates children’s rights and is a significant barrier for girls’ and boys’ access to and participation in education. The meeting brought out the following recommendations:

1. Invest in data, evidence to inform the response to SRGBV and applying system-wide approaches to review and reform, to ensure that state education institutions comprehensively address SRGBV.

2. Strengthen connections between education and child protection policies, procedures and systems. Empower teachers to identify and respond to the acts of SRGBV:

- o Ongoing training of teachers to identify, report and respond to gender-based violence;
- o Ongoing coaching and mentorship as well as peer-to-peer support;
- o Work with education unions to revise teachers’ codes of conduct and disseminate among teacher members.

3. Developing and implementing laws, and comprehensive, national policies to prevent and respond to SRGBV.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES OF SRGBV LEGISLATION AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS



LESOTHO

The Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Education and Training and Ministry of Health, as well as Ministry of Gender have collaborated with international partners (i.e. UNICEF, UNESCO) to implement and guide policies that ensure an end to violence in schools. In addition, there are campaigns at both community and school levels with messages that sensitize people on this issue.

Lesotho also implemented the Life Skills Based-Strategy Education; a compulsory course from Grade 1 to Grade 3 to empower students and teachers.



MALAWI

In Malawi, the violence intervention framework that was developed following the Violence Against Children Study changed the approach in as far as addressing violence is concerned. Previously addressing violence did not involve the children themselves but the studies showed that the adults and duty bearers have failed the children, exposing them to more violence. The intervention framework proposed developing personal protection strategies of children as one way of preventing violence. The Empowerment Transformation Training that has been presented by the Ministry is one way of empowering children and learners. The prevention element also targets development of protective environment at home, school and community as well as addressing social norms. [Click here for PPT.](#)



NAMIBIA

In Namibia, both government and ministries are working closely together to establish a national school task force that consists of 3 ministries, as well as UNESCO, UNICEF and WHO. It also includes the Namibia police and other NGOs working within communities. Moreover, the task force has come up with a communication strategy (through mass media, radio, television) that speaks about gender-based violence in schools and around schools. This communication campaign addresses issues such as teenage pregnancy, bullying. Additionally, promoting access to information to support girls who suffer from violence and abuse, including those who have gotten pregnant and never returned to school.



NIGERIA

Nigeria has developed and adopted the National Policy on Safe, Secure and Violence-Free Schools in August 2021. The development of support documents for Violence- Free Schools which includes the following:

- i. Mandatory Reporting Protocol;
- ii. Tools for Reporting, Referral and Tracking of violence against children with service providers;
- iii. Child Protection Training Manual;
- iv. Facilitators' Guide for the Training Manual.

[Click here for PPT.](#)



UGANDA

Uganda has been working with Education Unions on integrating SRGBV within their core functioning. The country has also developed guidelines for teachers to implement the gender responsive pedagogies based on the FAWE/UNICEF/ UNESCO-IICBA Manual that was developed. Training has been done for both in-service and teachers educators. At the school community level, there are expert teachers that have been trained to mentor other teachers and learners to be gender sensitive, to avoid biases and discrimination.

SRGBV ATTENDANCE, IN THE NUMBERS

Total attendees of KIXs SRGBV event



Resources

[Webinar recording](#)

More resources:

[UNGEI Ending Gender based violence in schools](#)

[*FAWE gender Responsive Pedagogy Toolkit](#)

