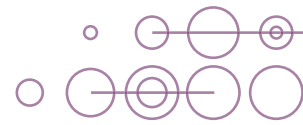


Safe to Learn Diagnostic Exercises in Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda

Synthesis Report

November 2020





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is a synthesis of learning from the four diagnostic exercises that took place in Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda. It is the outcome of a collaborative effort of members of the Safe to Learn coalition with funding provided by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). It was conducted by Cambridge Education contracted by UNICEF and benefited from the contributions of teams and individuals within and outside of UNICEF.

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- UNICEF country offices in Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda
- FCDO in-country Education Advisors
- Researchers from Ipsos in Pakistan and Uganda, from the World Bank in Nepal and from Cambridge Education in South Sudan

DISCLAIMER

The findings, interpretations and views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of UNICEF or other Safe to Learn members.

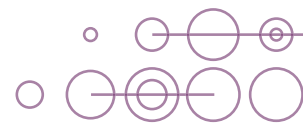
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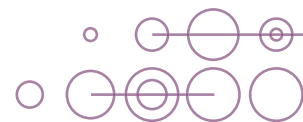
Contents

Acronyms	4
Executive Summary	5
Introduction	11
Background	13
Methodology	18
 Findings for Call to Action 1 Implement laws and policies	21
 Findings for Call to Action 2 Strengthen prevention and response at school level	29
 Findings for Call to Action 3 Shift social norms and behaviour change	41
 Findings for Call to Action 4 Invest resources effectively	46
 Findings for Call to Action 5 Generate and use evidence	49
Conclusion and recommendations	54
Annexes	56
ANNEX 1 – SUMMARY TABLE OF ALL BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS BY COUNTRY	56
ANNEX 2 – FULL RECOMMENDATIONS BY BENCHMARK	60



CLICK TO VIEW ADDITIONAL
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Acronyms

C4D	Communication for Development
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CVICT	Centre for Victims of Torture
DEO	District Education Officer
DFID	Department for International Development
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ESSP	Education and Sports Sector Strategic Plan
FCDO	UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
GESP	General Education Sector Plan
INGO	International non-governmental organization
MGCSW	Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sport
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Sport and Technology
MoGEI	Ministry of General Education and Instruction
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MoHR	Ministry of Human Rights
NASA	National Assessment of Student Achievement
NCHR	National Commission on Human Rights
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSP	National Strategic Plan
PoC	Protection of Civilian
RTRR	Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response
SOPC	State of Pakistan's Children
SMC	School Management Committee
SPARC	Society for the Protection and the Rights of the Child
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
STL	Safe to Learn
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VACiS	Violence against Children in Schools
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
VAC	Violence against Children





Executive Summary

Violence in and around schools affects millions of children all over the world. Around 150 million students aged 13–15 – about half of all students aged 13–15 worldwide – face peer-to-peer violence in and around schools; approximately one in three students in the same age group experience bullying, and about the same proportion is involved in physical fights. About 720 million children of school-age live in countries where laws do not fully protect them from corporal punishment at school.¹

“Safe to Learn” is a global initiative dedicated to ending violence against children in and through schools. It was launched in 2019 by a core group of members of the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom (UK).

The Safe to Learn initiative addresses diverse forms of violence including:

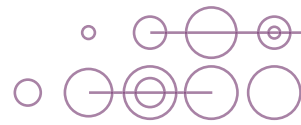
- Violence perpetrated by teachers and other school staff - including corporal punishment, cruel and humiliating forms of psychological punishment, sexual exploitation and abuse and bullying
- Violence that takes place between peers in and around schools - such as bullying, sexual and gender-based violence and physical and psychological violence; including online violence
- Violence in the home and violence in the community that has an impact on schools
- Attacks on schools, understood as any intentional threat or use of force – carried out for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, religious or criminal reasons – against students, educators, and education institutions²

The objectives of Safe to Learn are set out in a five-point Call to Action: (1) implement policy and legislation; (2) strengthen prevention and response at the school level; (3) shift social norms and behaviour change; (4) invest resources effectively; and (5) generate and use evidence.

Strategies to prevent violence in and around school need to be written explicitly in the education sector plan and accompanied with key indicators, action plans and budgets.

1 United Nations Children’s Fund, *An Everyday Lesson #End Violence in Schools*, UNICEF, New York, 2018.

2 Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, <www.protectingeducation.org/what-attack-education>, GPCEA, New York, accessed 7 May 2019



The Call to Action was subsequently translated into a set of benchmarks with national, state and school-level ‘checkpoints’ that governments and the education sector should meet in order to ensure that schools are safe and protective. These benchmarks have formed the basis for a Diagnostic Tool which aims to measure the degree to which governments are meeting these checkpoints.

This synthesis report presents an overview of the results from four diagnostic exercises conducted in Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda from November 2019 to March 2020.³ The diagnostic exercises consisted of a document review of relevant laws and policies, as well as interviews with stakeholders at the national, district and school-level to assess the degree to which these laws and policies are being implemented. The samples were not nationally representative, but they aimed to provide wide geographic coverage.

Whilst the findings of this diagnostic exercise are country specific, the good practices identified as well as some common gaps and challenges among the country studies provide the basis for recommendations to policy makers and partners worldwide.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON GOOD PRACTICES, GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

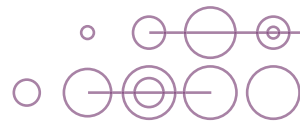
The diagnostic exercise found examples of good practice in all countries, across all five points of the Call to Action. All countries have strong legal and policy documents in place prohibiting violence against children. They also include violence prevention within education sector plans. However, the study shows that all four countries have more progress to make in all five areas in order to end violence against children in and around schools. In particular, to:

1. Ensure strategies to prevent violence in and around school are explicitly included in the education sector plan and accompanied by key indicators, action plans and budgets and that these strategies are resourced
2. Include support for coordination, monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives in all education sector plans
3. Strengthen dissemination of national policies, plans and guidelines on preventing violence in school to sub-national and school levels and ensure stronger enforcement at these levels
4. Ensure the Ministry of Education is included in the national child protection policy framework and participates in the multi-sectoral child protection coordination mechanism
5. Increase focus on shifting social norms to end violence against children in school, including through greater use of existing platforms (for example: student curriculum, teacher training, etc)
6. Ensure better coordination, monitoring and evaluation of interventions to improve prevention of violence in schools
7. Strengthen the role of government officials at sub-national level in oversight of the implementation of violence prevention and response measures
8. Increase investments targeting at ending violence in schools – including domestic resources, donor funding and private sector financial and non-financial resources

In the next sections we look at each of the five points of the Call to Action and provide a summary of the findings from all countries as well as recommendations based on the evidence

³ Findings from a fifth country diagnostic, conducted in Jordan, will be presented in a separate country report. As of the time of writing this report, the findings are not yet available, due to delays in the Jordan diagnostic, caused by school closure during the COVID-19 emergency.





Call to Action 1 Implement laws and policies

Violence prevention is included in the education sector plans and policies of all four study countries.

All four countries have laws that **prohibit violence against children**. Uganda, South Sudan and Nepal ban corporal punishment in schools. Pakistan has laws prohibiting corporal punishment in some provinces, but this could be extended to all schools throughout the country, for example by enacting the anti-corporal punishment bill drafted by the MoHR. Countries where prohibition was attained, need to strengthen capacities and build systems for implementation and enforcement, including strong dissemination and monitoring of schools' compliance.

Violence prevention is included in the education sector plans and policies of all four study countries. For example, the General Education Sector Plan of South Sudan has a strategy for providing safe learning spaces, promoting schools as zones of peace and sensitizing communities on school related gender-based violence. In other countries, measures for preventing violence within the Education Sector Plan could be strengthened with an explicit objective, accompanied by an action plan, key performance indicators and budget for implementation.

A **national multi-sectoral Child Protection Policy** can ensure a co-ordinated approach to reduce violence against children. Such a multi-sectoral policy was evident in Uganda's *National Strategic Plan on Violence against Children in Schools (NSP VACiS)*. In Pakistan, Nepal and South Sudan, ministries of education, health, social welfare, gender, and other relevant ministries could come together under a formal child protection framework to build upon existing policies and develop a multi-sectoral child protection policy framework that outlines referral and response processes and co-ordinating actions between sectors.

All four countries have laws that prohibit violence against children

In all countries, many sub-national government officers understood the national laws and policies prohibiting violence in schools and could give examples of sensitizing schools on these laws. Fewer sub-national government officers are taking action to oversee implementation of laws and policies and ensure compliance in schools. Laws and policies could be strengthened by including **communication of key messages to all stakeholders, guidance on implementation, and a process for non-compliance**, where this does not exist, to support law enforcement.



Call to Action 2 Strengthen prevention and response at school level

In Uganda, South Sudan, Nepal, and Punjab and Islamabad Capital Territory in Pakistan, the **curriculum includes approaches that (i) develop life skills, (ii) teach children about violence and safe behaviour, (iii) challenge social and cultural norms and promote equal relationships**. In Uganda, the Life Skills Curriculum for Primary School Teachers also includes a handbook for implementation. Although some teachers reported to be teaching this content, at least half of the teachers interviewed were not aware of this content in the curriculum. This may be because preventing violence, ensuring safe behavior, challenging social norms and promoting equal relationships are not explicit enough within the curriculum. In this instance, the syllabi, pre- and in-service training, teaching and learning materials could be reviewed and improved to explicitly include these topics and provide guidance to teachers on how to teach them.

Some in-service training on positive discipline and classroom management exists in all study countries. This tends to be led by development partners. Whilst useful where implemented, training is not rolled out at





scale and provided for all teachers. No country in the study has a comprehensive **national pre- or in-service teacher training curriculum** with course content on positive discipline, child safeguarding, violence reporting and response referral pathways and many interviewed teachers, across all four countries, indicated they have not received adequate training on these topics. In most cases where school counsellors have been appointed as a focal point for cases of violence, the counsellor had not received training to provide front line mental health and psychosocial support to children. **Development partners and ministries of education could work together to develop a specific teacher training module on child safeguarding and reporting/response obligations, in line with existing policies.** The training module could then be incorporated into pre- and in-service training curricula and made open source and accessible to development partners delivering in-service training.

Ministries of education in Nepal and Uganda have developed national guidelines for districts and schools on **how to establish safe and confidential reporting and response mechanisms for violence.** Districts and schools were partially aware of these guidelines and approximately half the students were aware of reporting and response mechanisms in their school. This suggests dissemination has reached some people and places, but not all.

In some contexts, reporting and referrals may take place in an ad hoc manner, without a clear step by step process. This can be improved by mapping the use of existing reporting and response guidelines and disseminating and communicating the guidelines through the system to reach and capacitate all sub-national officers, teachers and students.

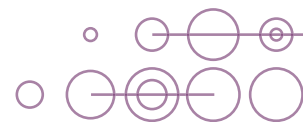
Good examples of **confidential reporting mechanisms** exist in some schools, across all four countries. For example, some schools reported to have a focal person for cases of violence and Uganda, Nepal and Pakistan have a **national helpline for children.** A confidential helpline is a valuable provision. More must be done to communicate this service to young people, as across all countries few students are aware of the helpline.

Ministries of Education in Nepal and Uganda have developed national guidelines for districts and schools on how to establish safe and confidential reporting and response mechanisms for violence.

Teacher Code of Conduct (or guidelines) have been developed in all four countries to clearly outline norms and standards of ethical behaviour. In Pakistan, Uganda, and Nepal, the Code of Conduct also includes zero-tolerance towards all forms of violence in school. This is a laudable achievement that needs to be matched with strong dissemination and enforcement in a way that requires all teachers to understand and comply. **Some good examples of dissemination include painting on classroom walls in Nepal and posting in headteacher's office in South Sudan.** However, across all countries, teachers reported a lack of awareness of the Code of Conduct, despite it being publicly displayed in some schools. To alleviate this, all teachers could receive an induction on the code and education officers at sub-national level could monitor whether teachers are reading and signing the code on an annual basis.

A **robust policy that regulates hiring of new teachers and staff** and their transfer can ensure suitability for working with children. Both Nepal and Pakistan have such regulations in place. Pakistan requires a police clearance certificate and Nepal requires teacher licencing. These regulations could be made more robust to keep children safer, as some weaknesses remain in them. For example, the licencing process in Nepal could be tightened by also conducting criminal record checks. A teaching licence could be implemented in Pakistan and other countries to regulate the teaching workforce and ensuring suitability for working with children. In countries where a licensing system is not feasible, existing databases that record teachers' details to facilitate the payment of salaries could be reviewed and updated to record clearance on criminal record checks and no transfer or dismissal from previous schools or government positions due to unsuitable or illegal conduct.





Call to Action 3

Shift social norms and behaviour change

Governments, in all countries, support from the national level to disseminate information and engage stakeholders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence against children. Such activities are included in the education sector plan (Pakistan), teacher training materials (Nepal, South Sudan), child friendly schools framework (Nepal), Ministry website and communications (South Sudan). The National Strategic Plan on Violence against Children in Schools in Uganda (NSP VACiS), is a good example of government guidance on national, contextualized communication initiatives to raise awareness on preventing violence in schools. It includes a focus on communication, media and arts to advocate for a violence-free learning environment and to popularise the existing prevention, reporting, tracking, referral, response mechanisms and services.

Schools in all countries are engaging in **communication initiatives to raise awareness on violence in schools**. For example, children in Nepal reported participating in awareness rallies on children's day. However, not all schools and not all teachers and students within these schools participate in activities. It may be that it depends upon the will of the headteacher or District Officer. More could be done to widen participation.

Where schools are involved in initiatives to address violence they tend to focus on advocating for peace or non-violence. **It is not evident that the initiatives challenge the social norms that drive violence**, such as addressing unequal power dynamics, gender discrimination or taboos on sexuality. This may be because none of the countries have policies or guidelines that provide guidance on implementing interventions to address social norms surrounding violence.

Initiatives addressing social norms are typically led by development partners in collaboration with government. They should be evaluated, and effective approaches should be scaled up to reach more children.



Call to Action 4

Invest resources effectively

National policies and plans include prevention of violence in schools: including **an accompanying budget** specifically for these activities could strengthen their implementation.

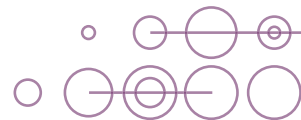
The study found few sub-national governments and schools have a budget specifically for violence prevention activities. One reason cited for this is that within constrained budgets it is not considered a priority alongside other issues.

However, there are examples where government funds have been allocated to making schools safe. For example, after the earthquake in Nepal and an attack on a school in Pakistan some budget was transferred to re-build school structures and make them safer. In Uganda, the Gender Mainstreaming Unit financially supports the operationalisation of violence prevention activities. Lack of domestic resourcing is a significant gap that could prevent progress in ending violence. It should be further reviewed considering economic, political and social constraints.

Evidence indicates that, in all countries in the study, **development partners provide funds**, technical assistance, and programmes through implementing partners for prevention and response to violence in schools. This is clearly much needed in the sector. It could have greater impact if government co-ordinate all development partner activities to ensure a joined-up approach and sharing of lessons learnt.

If an explicit education sector plan objective can be developed for reducing violence in schools, the Ministry of Education (perhaps in collaboration with other ministries responsible for child protection) should ensure that all development partner activities and funds are aligned and coordinated to support it.





Call to Action 5 Generate and use evidence

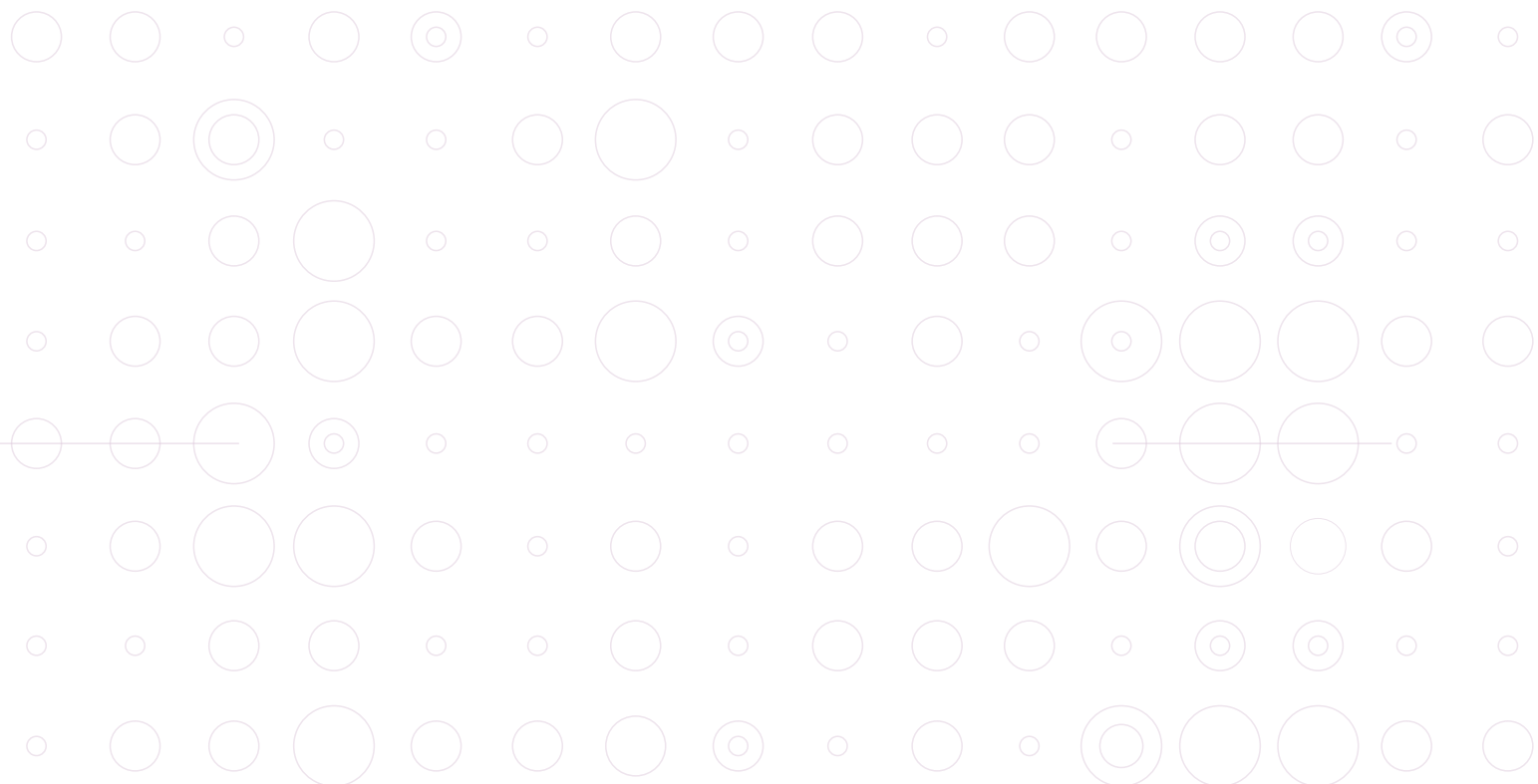
Some functioning **processes for reporting and monitoring cases of violence** in school exist in all study countries.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province in Pakistan, provincial education authorities compile and digitalise reports of violence in school. In Uganda the MoES 'EduTrac' system collects real-time data from schools in 37 out of 134 Districts that includes monthly reports on child abuse.

These existing processes could be expanded to form a **robust, national data collection system that reports and monitors incidents of violence** from school level up to national level. To achieve this, governments should first look at what is working to collect and monitor information in the education system and then expand existing processes to include information on violence and consider how the relevant information can feed through the system in a confidential way. For example, reporting incidents through the country's education management information system (EMIS) for aggregation and review at the national and sub-national levels or through regular school monitoring and reporting live data through dashboards.

Governments should first look at what is working to collect and monitor information in the education system and then expand existing processes to include information on violence and consider how the relevant information can feed through the system in a confidential way.

Regular monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives will produce evidence on what works, which can be used to replicate and scale-up effective approaches. In all countries, some development partner violence-prevention interventions have been evaluated and findings disseminated. However, despite success, the interventions are not being scaled nationwide. This may be because the resources needed for scale up are not available from donors or government. Evaluations could include an analysis of scalability by the education system within current resources to make it immediately useable by government.





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Introduction

Safe to Learn is a global initiative dedicated to ending violence against children in and through schools. It was launched in 2019 by a core group of members of the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children: UNESCO, UNGEI, UNICEF and DFID and is now comprised of 14 partners.⁴ With a vision of ending all violence against children in and through schools by 2024, the programmatic and advocacy objectives of Safe to Learn (STL) are set out in a five-point Call to Action:

- 1. Implement policy and legislation:** National, regional and local governments develop, fund and enforce laws and policies that protect children from all forms of violence in and around schools, including online violence
- 2. Strengthen prevention and response at the school level:** School staff, students, and management committees provide safe and gender-sensitive learning environments for all children that promote positive discipline, child-centered teaching and protect and improve children’s physical and mental well-being
- 3. Shift social norms and behavior change:** Parents, teachers, children, local government and community leaders recognise the devastating impact of violence in schools and take action to promote positive social norms and gender equality to ensure schools are safe spaces for learning

⁴ Partners include: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the United Nations Girl’s Education Initiative (UNGEI), the Civil Society Forum to End Violence against Children, the World Bank, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the Global Business Coalition for Education, Global Affairs Canada, the World Health Organisation, the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, and the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children



- 4. Invest resources effectively:** Increased and better use of investments targeted at ending violence in schools
- 5. Generate and use evidence:** Countries and the international community generate and use evidence on how to effectively end violence in schools

This Call to Action was translated into a set of benchmarks, which were developed in relation to international child rights frameworks, United Nations (UN) tools and minimum standards, and best practice from the field of child safeguarding. The benchmarks are available in the **Safe to Learn Global Programmatic Framework and Benchmarking Tool**, which provides guidance to Safe to Learn partners in translating the Call to Action into practical actions. This tool also highlights technical resources to assist in the design of interventions and sets out a suggested framework for monitoring and tracking results.⁵ For each benchmark, there are national, sub-national/district and school-level ‘checkpoints’ or requirements that governments and the education sector should meet in order to achieve their accountabilities in ensuring that schools are safe and protective. These benchmarks and checkpoints formed the basis for a **Diagnostic Tool** that aimed to measure the degree to which governments were meeting these standards. This Diagnostic Tool was then used to conduct diagnostic exercises in five focal countries, including Jordan, Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda. The aims of these diagnostic exercises were to:

- 1. Gauge the degree to which governments were meeting the requirements** set out by the STL benchmarks/checkpoints
- 2. Identify best practices, gaps and priority actions** with governments in order to meet the STL benchmarks/checkpoints
- 3. Establish a baseline** that will then demonstrate focal country progress from 2019-2024

The diagnostic exercises consisted of a document review of relevant laws and policies, as well as interviews with stakeholders at the national, district and school-level to assess the degree to which these laws and policies are being implemented. The samples were not nationally representative, but they aimed to provide wide geographic coverage.

This synthesis report presents an overview of the results from the four diagnostic exercises conducted in Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda from November 2019 to March 2020. Findings from the fifth country diagnostic, conducted in Jordan, will be presented in a separate country report – as they are not available at the time of writing yet due to delays in the Jordan diagnostic, caused by the COVID-19 emergency.

This report includes an overview of the context and policy landscape regarding violence in schools, methodology, main findings on what countries are doing under each Call to Action and benchmark, good practices, challenges and gaps. It also identifies recommendations to better support governments to ensure that schools are safe environments that enhance learning for all children. The diagnostic exercises had different sample sizes and were completed by different researchers and so vary slightly in the analysis. For this reason, the scoring and analysis should not be compared across countries. This synthesis report does not aim to compare the countries to one another but rather to share good practices from individual countries as well as identify trends and gaps across all countries.

The findings are especially relevant in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many more children may have been exposed to violence and the recommendations in this report can be considered in efforts to ‘build back better’.

⁵ Safe to Learn, *Global Programmatic Framework & Benchmarking Tool: From Call to Action to Programme Responses*, New York, 2020





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Background

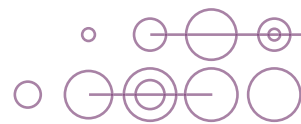
Violence in and around schools affects millions of children living in every country of the world. Around 150 million students aged 13–15 – about half of all students aged 13–15 worldwide – face peer-to-peer violence in and around schools; approximately one in three students in the same age group experience bullying, and about the same proportion is involved in physical fights. About 720 million children of school-age live in countries where laws do not fully protect them from corporal punishment at school.⁶ Violence can take place in different forms including bullying, physical fights, physical and sexual attacks, ‘sex for grades’ and gender-based violence, corporal and other degrading forms of punishment, and attacks on schools. It can also have an online dimension, enabled by or perpetrated through digital technology. It can be common for a child to experience multiple forms at the same time. In schools, violence can take place between students, between school staff and between school staff and students. Girls, children with disabilities and children from marginalised groups are often more likely to experience violence in school. Schools are a significant influence on children’s lives and society. When working well, schools can be a safe place for learning and development and provide protection to children from violence in the outside world. Schools can also bring society together to address harmful social norms and promote peace and equality.

DEFINING VIOLENCE

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines violence as ‘all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse’. All countries in this study have ratified the CRC. All countries also include a similar definition of violence in their Children Act / Child Protection Act. In line with these definitions, school violence includes physical, psychological and sexual violence.

6 United Nations Children’s Fund, *An Everyday Lesson #End Violence in Schools*, UNICEF, New York, 2018





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The *Safe to Learn* initiative addresses diverse forms of violence including:

- Violence perpetrated by teachers and other school staff, including corporal punishment, cruel and humiliating forms of psychological punishment, sexual exploitation and abuse, and bullying
- Violence that takes place between peers in and around schools, such as bullying, sexual and gender-based violence and physical and psychological violence; these forms of violence may also have an online dimension, which may include sexual exploitation and abuse, cyberbullying and digital harassment
- Violence in a home and family setting; insofar as teachers and other school staff are typically the first point of contact with children outside of their families, they also have a professional duty to identify warning signs and respond where indications of violence or abuse are apparent
- Violence in the community that has an impact on schools; this includes violence associated with gang culture, and armed violence in non-conflict settings
- Attacks on schools, understood as any intentional threat or use of force – carried out for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, religious or criminal reasons – against students, educators, and education institutions⁷

DRIVERS OF VIOLENCE

Any effort to prevent violence must also take into consideration the drivers and factors that enable violence to persist. These factors are found in social structures (such as inequality amongst different people), institutional structures (such as weak compliance processes) and community structures (such as social norms and silence on taboo issues).⁸

For example, corporal punishment is practiced by many teachers and is fed by traditional or religious perceptions that the child has a lower social status and an adult should instill obedience and compliance to make them into a good citizen. Sexual violence and harassment against girls in school can be fed by unequal power relations, gender inequality and stereotypes that allow males to dominate females.

PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS IN STUDY COUNTRIES

All countries in the study have data to show violence exists in schools. South Sudan is also affected by conflict and so children face greater risks of violence. Additional risks include attacks on schools and being coerced as child soldiers. The results of an Education Cluster Needs Assessment in South Sudan (2018)

⁷ Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, <www.protectingeducation.org/what-attack-education>, GPCEA, New York, accessed 7 May 2019

⁸ United Nations Children's Fund, *An Everyday Lesson #End Violence in Schools*, UNICEF, New York, 2018. Available from: https://www.end-violence.org/sites/default/files/paragraphs/download/An_Everyday_Lesson-ENDviolence_in_Schools.pdf





indicated that 21% of schools are non-functional with insecurity as the major cause. On average, schools lost 30 days of education during the year 2018, 50% of this interruption being due to insecurity.

Not all countries in the study have conducted recent research into the prevalence of different forms of violence and the existing studies often had quite small sample sizes. However, they are still useful to give an indication of the types of violence experienced by children. A summary of the information available on the prevalence of different types of violence in Nepal, Pakistan, Uganda and South Sudan is provided below. We have categorised violence into three categories: bullying, punishment by teachers and sexual violence, as these forms of violence were most prevalent in the research across all countries. However, other forms of violence still persist in schools in these countries.

BULLYING

Bullying incorporates different forms of violence, typically physical and psychological. The Global School-based Health Survey measures prevalence of bullying. In 2015, Nepal conducted this survey and 50.6% of the surveyed students aged 13 – 15 years old reported being bullied on one or more days during the 30 days before the survey. In 2009, Pakistan participated in the survey and 41.1% of the surveyed students aged 13 – 15 years reported being bullied on one or more days during the 30 days before the survey. Bullying is also very common in schools in Uganda. According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES) amongst 3615 learners in primary and secondary school, 43% of children interviewed had experienced bullying. The prevalence of bullying was higher in primary schools (46%) compared to secondary schools (31%).⁹

TEACHERS USING VIOLENCE AS A FORM OF DISCIPLINE

In all countries there is evidence of teachers using violence as a form of discipline. This typically includes physical violence (mostly corporal punishment) and psychological violence (often humiliation). Psychological violence by adults against children is rarely addressed as an issue within many societies and schools. Children are often expected to be completely submissive to the demands of people older than themselves, a dynamic that can sometimes lead to psychological violence if children are deemed to have spoken out of turn.¹⁰ It would be useful to include prevalence of psychological violence in schools in future studies.

In Nepal, a study conducted in 55 public and private schools by the Centre for Victims of Torture (CVICT) and Education Journalist Forum in 2007 found 82% of the student respondents were subjected to some form of punishment from the teachers. Likewise, a study by UNICEF and CVICT in 2004 revealed that children were subjected to various forms of physical and mental punishment by teachers in the name of either improving the students' learning or disciplining them.¹¹ The study reported that beating and humiliating in front of peers were some of the most common forms of punishment by the teachers.

In Pakistan, The Society for the Protection and the Rights of the Child's (SPARC) report, the State of Pakistan's Children (SOPC) 2018, revealed that "70% of the teachers in Pakistan endorse corporal punishment and find it useful".¹² The report also found that corporal punishment is practiced in at least 40% of government schools.

In Uganda, according to the School Violence, Mental Health, and Educational Performance study 2012, among 3706 students and 577 school staff members, 93.3% of boys and 94.2% of girls attending primary school reported experiences of physical violence from a school staff member and more than 50% reported an experience in the past week.

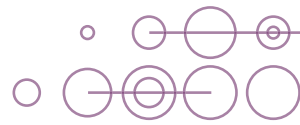
⁹ MoES, *Assessing Child Protection /Safety and Security Issues for Children in Ugandan Primary and Secondary Schools*, November 2012

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ UNICEF and CVICT, *Violence against children in Nepal: A study of the system of school discipline in Nepal*, 2004. Available from: www.cvict.org.np/publications/violence-children-nepal-study-system-school-discipline-nepal/

¹² Source: Society for the Advancement of Higher Education (SAHE) and Alif Ailaan, *The voice of teachers: learning from teachers across Pakistan*, Islamabad, 2016





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The 2015 Violence Against Children (VAC) Survey in Uganda highlighted that physical violence against children is common and that most girls (59.3%) and boys (68%) experienced physical violence in childhood. About 41% of boys and 31% of girls experienced physical violence by a community member in childhood. Nearly half (45.7%) of girls and 60.4% of boys who experienced physical violence by an adult in the community experienced the first incident by a male teacher. 48.7% of girls and 25.7% of boys experienced the first incident by a female teacher.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Evidence from South Sudan, Nepal, Pakistan and Uganda shows sexual violence in school, especially against girls, is commonplace.

In Uganda, the Assessing Child Protection / Safety and Security Issues for Children in Ugandan Primary and Secondary Schools 2012 study surveyed 3615 learners and reported 77.7% of the primary and 82% of secondary school learners experienced sexual abuse at school. The study further revealed that 67% of the learners in both primary and secondary schools indicated that the perpetrators were male teachers, 22% were fellow students, 5% were female teachers and 6% were non-teaching staff. Of those who experienced sexual violence, 60.2% of the learners indicated they never reported the cases mainly because they were afraid of being victimised, afraid of being laughed at and were afraid of being shamed.¹³

More recently, the 2015 VAC Survey, among 18-24-year olds, revealed that 35.3% of girls and 16.5% of boys in Uganda experienced sexual abuse before the age of 18 years. The survey also revealed that nationally, the most common type of sexual abuse was abusive sexual touching (girls, 24.7%; boys, 10.9%), followed by attempted forced or pressured sex (girls, 17.3%; boys, 8.1%), forced sex (girls, 10%; boys, 2%), and pressured sex (girls, 3.9%; boys, 2%).¹⁴

In Nepal, a 2006 study conducted in a public school revealed about 41% of the 150 respondents had experienced exposure to sexual abuse in the school¹⁵. With regards to gender-based violence in Nepal's schools, Parajuli et al. have stated that some common forms include: teasing at school or on the way to school, bad touch (including attempts to touch sensitive parts), use of vulgar words, gazing with "sexual flavour", coerce to unwanted sexual activity, discrimination based on sex¹⁶. They found that school dropout of Tamang girls is largely due to gender-based violence faced by these girls in the schools.

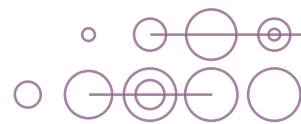
13 MoES: *Assessing Child Protection / Safety and Security Issues for Children in Ugandan Primary and Secondary Schools*, November 2012

14 Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, *Violence against Children in Uganda: Findings from a National Survey 2015*, UNICEF, Kampala, Uganda, 2015

15 Rajbanshi, Laxmi, 'Prevalence of sexual abuse among school children', *Journal of Chitwan Medical College*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2012, 69-71

16 Parajuli, M.N., Yamphu, I., Gurung, L. & Sapkota, S., *Tamang Adolescent Girls and Its Impact in School Dropouts: A Case of Rasuwa and Lalitpur Districts*, Kathmandu, 2012





In Pakistan, SAHIL, a local child rights organization focusing on child sexual abuse, mentions in its report, *Cruel Numbers*, that in 2019, 2,846 cases of child abuse were reported in Pakistan. SAHIL explains that their information is only collected via cases that have been reported by the press or directly to them and it therefore only presents the tip of the iceberg. Furthermore, the report states that out of 3,722¹⁷ child abusers documented by SAHIL in 2019, 31 were teachers and 1 was an ancillary staff working in the school¹⁸. Lastly, the report underlines that out of the total numbers of “closed places” (1,085) in which the identified cases of child abuses occurred in 2019, 24 were schools¹⁹.

EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN’S LEARNING

Many of the studies detailed above also demonstrate how exposure to violence has a detrimental impact on children’s health, development and well-being. For example, causing physical injury, death, increased anxiety or depression, anti-social behavior or causing victims to become perpetrators of violence in future^{20 21}. This was also reiterated by respondents in some of the interviews and is evident in global research²². Research also suggests children who experience violence in school often have poor attendance or drop out completely. Findings from the Uganda VAC 2015 survey amongst 13-17-year olds highlighted that about one in four children missed school as a result of physical violence in childhood/ in the past year²³. In Pakistan, SPARC, in its SOPC 2018 report, reiterates that “the widespread use of corporal punishment...affects children’s willingness to go to school and their behaviour in the classroom”. In a press article, SPARC claims that “around 35,000 high school students in Pakistan drop out of the primary education system annually due to corporal punishment”²⁴. A study by the United Nations found that 14% of dropouts had left school in Nepal due to fear of the teacher²⁵. A more recent study by the Education Review Office, Nepal, National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) showed that the average performance of students that experienced bullying was substantially lower than that of students that did not experience bullying²⁶.

Given that many governments put significant focus (and therefore resources, out of the available budget) on enrolment and retention of children in school, it may be pertinent to reconsider the level of priority accorded to countering violence in schools, to ensure value for money invested. **Violence in schools can undermine investments made in other areas of education, health, social welfare and be detrimental to society as a whole**²⁷.

There is urgent need for appropriate gender-sensitive and inclusive support services to enable children to recover from the impact of violence as well as work on long term strategies to prevent violence against children in schools. In efforts to prevent and respond to violence against children, the governments, in collaboration with development partners, have aimed to prevent and respond to violence against children in and around schools through the implementation of policies and interventions. However, gaps remain and this diagnostic exercise will help to highlight them and provide concrete strategies moving forward.

17 SAHIL, *Cruel Numbers*, 2019, p.6

18 SAHIL, *Cruel Numbers*, 2019, p 11

19 SAHIL, *Cruel Numbers*, 2019, p 13

20 Devries, Keren M, et al., *School Violence, Mental Health, and Educational Performance in Uganda*, 2012

21 www.newslens.pk/in-pakistan-corporal-punishment-in-schools-is-still-a-tradition/

22 United Nations Children’s Fund, *An Everyday Lesson #End Violence in Schools*, UNICEF, New York, 2018. Available from: https://www.end-violence.org/sites/default/files/paragraphs/download/An_Everyday_Lesson-ENDviolence_in_Schools.pdf

23 Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, *Violence against Children in Uganda: Findings from a National Survey 2015*, UNICEF, Kampala, Uganda, 2015

24 www.newslens.pk/in-pakistan-corporal-punishment-in-schools-is-still-a-tradition/

25 Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, *World Report on Violence against Children*, United Nations, 2006, (as cited in UNICEF ROSA 2016 above).

26 Education Review Office, *Report on the National Assessment of Student Achievement in Mathematics and Nepali for Grade 5*, Kathmandu, 2019

27 United Nations Children’s Fund, *An Everyday Lesson #End Violence in Schools*, UNICEF, New York, 2018. Available from: https://www.end-violence.org/sites/default/files/paragraphs/download/An_Everyday_Lesson-ENDviolence_in_Schools.pdf





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Methodology

This diagnostic exercise had three main aims: **1) to identify good practices and gaps in government efforts to address violence in schools, 2) to identify priority actions with ministries moving forward, and 3) to establish a baseline from which to measure progress from 2019-2024.**

The sampling strategy, research tools and information collection process were designed to meet these aims.

SAMPLING APPROACH

The sampling approach for the focal country diagnostic exercises aimed to ensure national coverage but without encompassing a nationally representative sample. Representative sampling entails great expense, time and human resource; given the three aims of the diagnostic exercise, nationally representative samples were not necessary.

To ensure a balance between national coverage and a manageable sample, the following principles guided sampling across all four contexts:

1. All significant regions/provinces of the countries were included
2. Ministry of Education (MoE) selected one district from each region/province
3. Within each district, MoEs randomly selected two secondary schools and two primary schools (based on urban/rural settings). A third school for each level was added if peri-urban contexts were relevant
4. Pre-primary/tertiary levels were not included as they do not contain as high a proportion of students as primary/secondary schools
5. Private/Community schools and Internally Displaced Persons /refugee schools were included where they constituted a high proportion of students



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These principles guided the overall number of schools that were visited, which was generally between 20-30 schools. Upon determining the districts and schools in which interviews were to be conducted, the following principles were used to guide the selection of respondents for interviews:

- **At the national level:** respondents included relevant officers within the Ministry of Education (i.e., Director of Policy/Planning, Director of Teacher Development, Director of the Gender Unit). Additional respondents included stakeholders from UN Agencies, INGOs, National NGOs working to reduce violence in schools
- **At the district level:** respondents included the District Education Officer (DEO), an Inspector, a Gender Officer and a focal person for violence. If a Gender Officer and/or violence focal person did not exist, the first two officers were interviewed and a third relevant officer, if available
- **At the school level:** respondents included the 1) Headteacher; 2) Deputy headteacher; 3) two female teachers and two male teachers who were randomly selected from any grade/subject²⁸; 4) two female students and two male students who were also randomly selected. Students were picked from upper primary grades and from second year and up at the secondary level²⁹

INFORMATION COLLECTION PROCESS

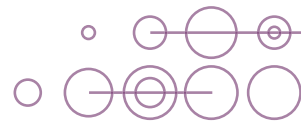
Research teams across the four countries had different configurations and sizes. For example, in South Sudan (which had a sample of 24 schools across three districts) and Nepal (which had 28 schools across 7 municipalities), one researcher (with some support from an assistant) was contracted to conduct the document review and all the interviews. In Pakistan, with a significantly larger sample of schools (80 schools across 10 districts)³⁰, a research firm was contracted to simultaneously deploy a number of researchers. In Uganda, where the sample of schools was relatively manageable (30 across seven districts), time was

28 In some schools a gender balance was not possible, so all four teachers were the same sex

29 In single-sex schools, four students of the same sex were randomly picked from these upper grade levels

30 This sample was enlarged to cater to the political need to equally represent all four provinces with a significant number of schools





a factor as schools were about to close for a long holiday. Thus, a research firm was contracted to deploy researchers simultaneously and conduct the interviews in a relatively short period of time.

The diagnostic exercise entailed a review of relevant laws, policies, guidelines and reports to determine the degree to which governments are meeting benchmarks related to the first STL Call to Action, as well as stakeholder interviews to identify the degree to which the relevant laws and policies were being implemented.

As the Safe to Learn Diagnostic Tool and accompanying interview guides were developed at global level, it was necessary to contextualise them before implementing them in-country. Questions in the interview guides were directly aligned with the Diagnostic Tool and were developed to be clear and straight forward. Many questions were structured so that respondents could give a simple 'Yes/No/Don't know' answer and tick boxes were provided for quick notation of these answers. Several 'contingent' questions aimed to follow up on details, particularly with regard to exploring/understanding best practices (i.e., At your school, are there any confidential reporting procedures for students to use if they see or experience violence? If so, what are these procedures?). Thus, while many of the yes/no questions allowed for a quantification of answers, could also be collected through the interviews qualitative data, particularly with regard to elaborations or descriptions of processes and activities in place.

Each interview guide also included an introduction for researchers to read to respondents prior to starting. This script explained the purpose of the diagnostic exercise, how respondent interviews were to be used and confidentiality/safeguarding protocols before asking respondents to provide voluntary consent in writing. Headteachers were able to give consent in loco parentis for the pupils, who in turn were briefed on the purpose of the exercise and thereafter gave their oral consent.

The researcher(s) who conducted the interviews reviewed the interview guides (both the questions and the scripts) and adjusted these with respect to context-appropriate terminology and language, particularly with regard to students. In some contexts, in two of the focal countries, political sensitivity around conflict also prompted the need to reword questions. Once revised, the guides were translated into the relevant language(s) in relation to the sample schools and districts.

Depending on the size of the sample and team, responses from interviews were collected via paper or digital tablets. The research firms utilised tablets and had their own digital platforms for data submission, as this was helpful when dealing with a large number of schools and researchers. However, for the smaller studies and in contexts where digital tablets were not always appropriate³¹, paper copies of the interview guides were used. At the end of each day, researchers systematically entered answers into an online data management platform³², which allowed for the storage and analysis of answers.

Upon completion of stakeholder interviews, researchers used a common country report template that provided a structure and prompt questions to guide researchers with their analyses for the document review and interviews. The following findings section utilises the tables that featured in this template as they provide a clear overview of the degree to which countries are meeting the STL benchmarks.

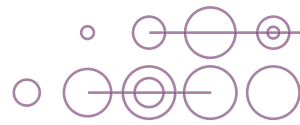
FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND GOOD PRACTICES

The following tables outline each of the Safe to Learn benchmarks and checkpoints/standards. The analysis of the information collected by this Diagnostic Exercise allowed to assess each checkpoint/standard and to allocate the following measures: A: in place; B: partially in place; C: not in place. A discussion of findings across the four countries is provided in the following box.

³¹ In some rural contexts, digital devices can be viewed with suspicion

³² The researchers utilised *Solstice*, which is a free, online platform that was designed for this purpose





Findings for Call to Action 1 Implement laws and policies

Assessment scale regarding national, district and school-level checkpoints/requirements:

 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
1.1 The national government includes prevention of violence in around schools as a specific strategy in education sector policies, plans and budgets.	Prevention of violence in and around schools is identified as a specific strategy in the national education sector policy or plan. ³³	The District authorities support the implementation of the national (or sub-national) plan or policy in schools.	School implements violence prevention activities in conformity with national or subnational objectives.
	Assessment		
	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan
	 Pakistan Uganda	 Pakistan Uganda	 Pakistan Uganda

- The national governments in all study countries recognise the importance of safe learning environments that are free from violence and make some reference to this in their education sector plans and policies. In South Sudan, Punjab and Baluchistan in Pakistan, it is identified as a specific strategy.
 - In South Sudan, providing safe learning spaces, promoting schools as zones of peace and sensitising communities on school related gender-based violence are mentioned explicitly within the strategies of the General Education Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022.
 - In Uganda, the Education and Sports Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2017 – 2020 includes a priority intervention to develop and implement a School Health and Safety Policy under strategic objective one, with an aim to ensure that the learning environment in schools and training institutions is safe for learners and teachers.
 - In Nepal the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP; 2016–2021), includes a specific strategy to prevent bullying and harassment in and around schools and strengthen the grievance and referral system in schools. The SSDP also refers to some broader, related objectives and strategies to reduce violence.
 - In Pakistan ending violence in schools is recognised as a priority by national and provincial governments, two provinces (Punjab and Baluchistan) include it as a specific strategy in the Education Sector Plan.

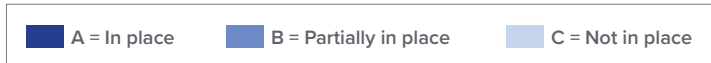
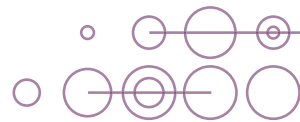
An explicit objective within the Education Sector Plan to prevent and reduce violence within schools, accompanied by strategies, key performance indicators and budgets for its implementation and enforcement, would be much more powerful and effective. Government and donor funding could be consolidated through support for or alignment with this strategy.

- At the sub-national level, most education officers in Nepal, Uganda and Pakistan indicate they are supporting prevention of violence in schools. However, there is no clear link to following the strategies and priorities of the Education Sector Plan to prevent violence. For example, in Punjab, Pakistan Provincial representatives state that there is often no specific strategy/objective to counter violence in schools but they highlight “ending violence in schools” as one of their government priorities usually communicated via administrative circulars; in Punjab, the campaign “**Maar Nahi Piyar**”³⁴ has been cited as an illustration of this policy priority in schools.
- At the school level, findings are mixed on the extent to which schools implement violence prevention activities in conformity with national or subnational objectives. It is more common for schools to implement violence prevention activities following a national or local campaign/priority rather than to implement them in line with national objectives of the ESP. For example:
 - In Uganda, 91% of interviewed headteachers and teachers indicated they were implementing some violence prevention activities in conformity with national/sub-national objectives. 22 schools reported that they were advocating for a violence-free school environment and nine schools reported they use guidance and counselling. It is possible that although there is not an explicit ESSP objective, some schools are implementing violence prevention activities in accordance with a national policy that they believe might be the ESSP.
 - In Pakistan 50% of the teachers (60% male, 43% female) interviewed for this study reported to be “aware” of a specific strategic objective to curb violence in school and implement some activities accordingly. Interviewed female teachers were mostly not aware of any government strategy to prevent violence in school.
- In South Sudan, copies of the GESP were not available at State or school level during the study. Copies were either not disseminated, had been lost or were published in English and inaccessible to Arabic speakers and therefore had been shelved. Lack of access to ESP was not recorded in other countries, however it is likely they face similar challenges. Within the ESP it would be useful to include specific strategies for developing a clear, concise user-centred summary in relevant languages and printing and disseminating to sub-national offices and schools.

33 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Global Partnership for Education, *Guidelines for education sector plan preparation*, iiep and GPE, 2015 or United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Children’s Fund and Global Partnership for Education, *Guidelines for developing gender-responsive education sector plans*, GPE and UNGEI, 2017

34 “Be nice, do not hit”





Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
1.2 There is explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in schools, and policies are in place to support positive discipline and classroom management. ³⁵	Laws that prohibit corporal punishment include clear guidance on implementation, with a process for non-compliance.	District oversees implementation of law and details compliance measures.	School implements law or has an independent policy and there are repercussions for non-compliance.
	Assessment		

- At the national level, all study countries have laws prohibiting violence against children in schools.** Uganda, South Sudan and Nepal ban corporal punishment in schools. Pakistan has laws prohibiting corporal punishment in some provinces. Countries where prohibition was attained, need to strengthen capacities and build systems for implementation and enforcement, including strong dissemination and monitoring of schools' compliance.
 - In South Sudan, according to section 21b of the Child Act 2008, "no child shall be subjective to corporal punishment by chiefs, police, and teachers, prison guards in any place or institution including schools, prison and reformatories". According to section 35, anyone who fails to comply with the Act commits an offence and shall upon conviction be sentenced to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or a fine or both. Under subsection 34, it is the general duty of every member of the community who suspects that a child's rights are being infringed to report the matter to the chief, social worker, local government official, police or public attorney who shall investigate and take appropriate action.
 - In Uganda, a third circular prohibiting corporal punishments in schools was issued in August 2006 by the Director of Education and copied to primary schools, post-primary, tertiary institutions, colleges and polytechnics forbidding corporal punishment in schools. This circular requires each school's Management Committee or Board of Governors to approve a school disciplinary policy. It further requires the recording of any incident of punishment in a specific punishment book maintained by the school. The circular clearly states that anyone ignoring these guidelines would be committing an offence and would be held responsible in the courts of law.
 - In Pakistan, the Pakistan Penal Code prohibits violence against children in schools, and there are laws prohibiting corporal punishment in some provinces. This could be extended to all schools throughout the country, for example by enacting the anti-corporal punishment bill drafted by the MoHR.
 - In Nepal, both the Constitution of Nepal 2015 and the Children's Act 2018 have explicit provisions related to violence against children and punitive measures for the same. The Eighth Amendment to the Education Act has included new provisions related to making schools safe spaces for teaching-learning and prohibiting physical and mental torture in schools. However, there is no explicit provision of punitive measures in the Amended act. Likewise, the Free and Compulsory Basic Education Act 2018 has not explicit provisions on violence against children and punitive measures for the same.
- At sub-national level, awareness of the law prohibiting corporal punishment and associated responsibilities for implementing the law varies from country to country.** In Nepal and Uganda, almost all interviewed sub-national officers demonstrate awareness of a law prohibiting corporal punishment. In South Sudan and Pakistan, just over half demonstrate awareness. In Pakistan, male District Education Officers (DEOs) (68%) showed more awareness than female DEOs (38%) interviewed for this study. In all countries fewer sub-national respondents were able to articulate their role in overseeing implementation of law or detail compliance measures. In Uganda, 93% indicated they oversee implementation of the laws on corporal punishment by emphasising zero tolerance to corporal punishment in schools, advocating for guidance and counselling, sensitisation about effective policy implementation, and ensuring perpetrators are brought to justice. However very few respondents could provide concrete details of cases they have personally dealt with. This brings to light the possibility of 'respondent bias', in which respondents tend to provide what they believe to be 'the right' or socially acceptable answer. Given that 46% of interviewed students believed that teachers were not following a law that prohibits caning in schools, it is likely there is some bias in the teachers' responses.
- At the school-level, a large proportion of interviewed teachers reported they are unaware that corporal punishment is prohibited in school.** When comparing the four countries there was a mixed response for implementing prohibition of corporal punishment and repercussions for non-compliance in school:
 - In Uganda, almost all interviewed headteachers and teachers (93%) reported to be implementing the law through reporting cases that happen in their schools to relevant authorities such as the police.
 - In South Sudan, most teachers interviewed (86%) were not aware of a policy that prohibits corporal punishment.
 - In Nepal and Pakistan, just over half of interviewed headteachers and teachers stated that they were aware of explicit laws regarding the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools. In both countries, fewer students were aware: In Pakistan, 48% of male students and 42% of female students were aware of those laws and only 6% in Nepal.
- This suggests that prohibition of corporal punishment exist, in some cases included within laws prohibiting violence, but it could be better enforced so that children are fully aware of their rights to be protected from corporal punishment. Where violence is prohibited in law, explicit reference could be made to corporal punishment. This needs to be communicated clearly and accessibly to District and School stakeholders alongside guidance on how to implement the law and repercussions for non-compliance.

35 See Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, *Teaching without violence: prohibiting corporal punishment*, 2019



A = In place
 B = Partially in place
 C = Not in place

Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
1.2	Teacher training on positive discipline and classroom management is included in pre- and in-service training.	District ensures that teachers receive thorough training in techniques of classroom management.	Teachers have received training on positive discipline and classroom management in the last three years.
Assessment			
	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda

- In Pakistan and Nepal, national pre-service training programmes include some content on practical and effective positive discipline and non-violent classroom management.
- Pakistan is the only country in the study standardising its in-service curriculum across different Provinces. For in-service teachers' training, PITE curriculum³⁶ includes psycho-social support, peace education and child-friendly school concepts, which may contribute to building teachers' capacity to teach without resorting to violence against children.
- Other countries in the study do not implement a national in-service curriculum in all schools and the in-service training varies by location. In all study countries, at school level some teachers, but not all, report receiving training on positive discipline, suggesting there is no national coverage. I/NGOs tend to work with ministries to offer in-service training to teachers at a limited scale. There are some good examples of in-service training on positive discipline and non-violent classroom management that could be scaled to reach all schools. For example, in Uganda, The Journeys Activity Handbook for Teachers and School Staff (developed in 2017 by the MoES, with support from the United States Agency for International Development) provides activities that headteachers can lead in their schools as part of their administrative responsibility on preventing and protecting children from violence. In Pakistan, the Zindagi Trust initiative has launched a public-private partnership between a civil society organization and the education sector to pilot a training center in Karachi, Sindh, for pre and in-service training of teachers on positive discipline and non-violent classroom management, child safeguarding and violence reporting and response referral pathways for schools and child-sensitive pedagogy. The pilot will be evaluated by the Agha Khan University and if proven successful, may be replicated and scaled.
- Few sub-national respondents reported to be engaged in overseeing in-service training. There could be an opportunity to work more closely with sub-national education officers to upskill them on issues and strategies relating to positive discipline and build government oversight and co-ordination.

36 <https://pitesindh.edu.pk/in-service-teacher-training/>



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A = In place
 B = Partially in place
 C = Not in place

Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
1.3 The roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education in response and referral to incidents of violence are clearly set out in the multi-sectoral national child protection policy framework.	A national policy framework, strategy or other system that outlines the role of the Ministry of Education as part of the national child protection system alongside other formal actors (Health, Social Welfare, Justice, Police). ³⁷	There is district-level coordination of national policy framework and support for implementation in schools.	School follows national and/or district policy and coordinates with local authorities and other duty bearers.
Assessment			
	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan
	 Pakistan Uganda	 Pakistan Uganda	 Pakistan Uganda

- **All countries in the study have policies relating to child protection.** The most comprehensive example is in Uganda. The National Strategic Plan on Violence against Children in Schools (NSP VACIS) (2015 – 2020) provides a multi-sectoral approach to child protection. This is accompanied by the Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response Guidelines (RTRR). While the other countries in the study do not have an explicit multi-sectoral national child protection policy, framework or action plan, they all have child protection policies or action plans:
 - in Pakistan, a 5-year action plan on child rights that includes child protection,
 - in South Sudan, a national Girl Child Protection Policy,
 - in Nepal, the (outdated) National Plan of Action for Children (NPA/C; 2004–2015).
- **At sub-national level, there is a general acknowledgement of some form of national child protection policy framework in most countries, however its coordination and implementation at the district level do not appear to be robust.** In Nepal, there was a former district child protection committee at the district level and a ward level child protection committee. However, there was limited evidence of municipal child protection committees being formed after federalism even though the ward level committee continues to exist.
 - In Pakistan, most respondents who did not belong to the government education sector stated that there was no national or provincial child protection policy and deplored limited or inadequate multi-sectoral coordination at school level.
 - In Uganda, 67% of interviewed headteachers and teachers discussed how their schools follow the available policies and guidelines through advocating for a violence-free school environment, conducting sensitisation on children’s rights, reporting cases of violence to relevant authorities, conducting guidance and counselling sessions and reprimanding perpetrators through the school disciplinary committee. However, there is little evidence of coordination between the school and local authorities at district levels.
- A clear, concise, user-centred and multi-lingual version of relevant child protection policy guidelines should be printed/disseminated nationally for training of all relevant actors. It would also be worth further exploring the degree to which ‘District Child Protection Committees’ could be established or should be re-activated in places where they are dormant (Pakistan and Uganda) as these could provide a structure in which multi-sectoral actors could meet, be trained and coordinate action.

37 These set out the mandated roles and responsibilities of state actors in the national child protection system. See section 2.1, UNESCO/UN Women 2016 for a discussion of child protection systems





A = In place
 B = Partially in place
 C = Not in place

Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
1.3	The Ministry of Education has established a national child protection/safeguarding policy with the requirement that all sub-national authorities and schools under their purview develop their own localized policies. ³⁸	The district authorities support the establishment of localized and coordinated school child protection policies, and has identified one focal point with overseeing and responding to concerns.	School follows national policy or independently has established child safeguarding policies and procedures.
Assessment			
	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan
	 Pakistan Uganda	 Pakistan Uganda	 Pakistan Uganda

- Uganda has a promising example: the Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response (RTRR), which aims to provide clear reporting, tracking, referral and response mechanisms for schools to follow. As it is fairly directive, the RTRR does not require districts/schools to develop their own localised policies. In all other countries, a clear national child protection/safeguarding policy from the Ministry of Education is absent.
- At sub-national levels, in the absence of a clear directive from the Ministry, district authorities support the establishment of localized school child protection policies to differing degrees.** There are some examples of sub-national education offices creating child protection policies and running functioning committees to oversee and respond to concerns. However, this is not uniform throughout any of the study countries. This suggests that it relies on the individual members of the sub-national education office to take it forward with limited support or monitoring from national government.
- A similar picture is seen at school level, where some **schools are establishing their own child protection / safeguarding policy or guidelines overseen by an appointed focal person.**

Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
1.4	The country has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration and in situations of armed conflict is implementing the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict. ³⁹	The Guidelines are widely disseminated by District authorities so that all parties engaged in conflict are aware of and able to abide by them.	School level plans in place to reduce risk of attacks, to respond quickly to risks, and to have a clear plan for safe school re-opening after attacks happen.
Assessment⁴⁰			
	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan
	 Uganda	 Uganda	 Uganda

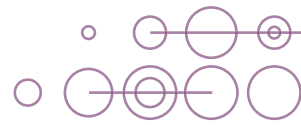
South Sudan has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration – the only country in this study. However, interviewed personnel from Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) appear unclear what the declaration means or what it stands for. The closest idea they have is that ‘schools are zones of peace’ which was an initiative supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) whereby schools were assessed against a checklist in order to become certified as ‘Zones of Peace’. To date, numerous schools have been certified as ‘Zones of Peace’ schools in South Sudan, although this conflicts with many schools’ experiences in reality. The study found that States and schools did not have guidelines or plans in place to reduce risk of attacks, to respond quickly to risks, and to have a clear plan for safe school re-opening after attacks happen.

38 See UNICEF 2012; Keeping Children Safe 2014

39 The Safe Schools Declaration is an inter-governmental political commitment that provides countries the opportunity to express support for protecting education from attack during times of armed conflict; the importance of the continuation of education during war; and the implementation of concrete measures to deter the military use of schools. See more details: <http://www.protectingeducation.org/safeschoolsdeclaration>

40 This sub-benchmark was not included in the Pakistan Diagnostic Exercise





SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES AND/OR PROMISING FINDINGS

- In South Sudan, the General Education Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022 includes **explicit strategies on providing safe learning spaces**, promoting schools as zones of peace and sensitising communities on school related gender-based violence. This is accompanied by clear laws prohibiting corporal punishment and a Girl Child Protection Policy.
- In Nepal, the School Sector Development plan has a **specific strategy to prevent bullying and harassment** in and around schools and strengthen the grievance and referral system in schools.
- In Uganda, there are a number of laws and policies to address violence against children, most notably the **NSP VACiS and RTRR guidelines**, which provide guidance on reporting, tracking, referral and response mechanisms for schools to follow. A number of district and school-level respondents were aware of these guidelines and had attributed some activities to them.
- In Punjab, Pakistan, the campaign “**Maar Nahi Piyar**”⁴¹ has been cited as an illustration of the policy to prevent violence being communicated in an accessible way in schools.
- In all countries, the education sector plans include references to preventing violence and making schools safe.
- Some school actors are aware of the need to implement or are implementing violence prevention activities. To varying degrees this is in conformity with national laws, policies and strategies.
- District/municipal/ward level **child-protection committees** have been established, although not always active, in some places in Uganda and Nepal.
- Child protection policies or plans exist in all countries. These could be updated and harmonised into multi-sectoral child protection policies.

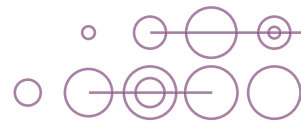
Child protection policies or plans are evident in all countries. These could be updated and harmonised into multi-sectoral child protection policies.

SUMMARY OF GAPS FOR EACH BENCHMARK INDICATOR

- Corporal punishment in schools is not specifically and unequivocally banned everywhere. In countries where prohibition was attained, there are still weaknesses in capacities and systems for implementation and enforcement.
- Nepal, Pakistan and South Sudan do not have a national **multi-sectoral Child Protection Policy**. However, they do have related policies that include child protection elements.
- All countries include prevention of violence in their education policies and plans. Most do not have an explicit objective in the education strategy to prevent and reduce violence in schools, accompanied by key performance indicators and budgets.
- National laws and policies prohibiting violence in schools are **not always communicated effectively to all stakeholders** at the school level. For example, many district officers and teachers could not show a hard copy of the relevant policies. In South Sudan, the documents are in English and not provided in Arabic or other languages deeming them inaccessible for many.
- Many sub-national government officers understand the national laws and policies prohibiting violence in schools and may give examples of sensitising schools on these laws, few are taking action to oversee implementation and ensure compliance in schools. Without this, schools are not held to account and can choose not to implement the policies.
- Where relevant laws and policies are in place, there is often a **lack of clarity on the roles and responsibility** of national level ministries to oversee implementation.
- Many teachers, across all four countries, indicate there has **not been adequate training** on practical and effective positive discipline and non-violent classroom management or on teachers’ obligation in child

41 “Be nice, do not hit”





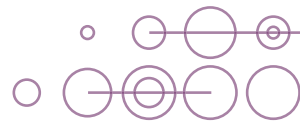
safeguarding and violence reporting/response referral pathways. Where in-service training has taken place on prohibiting corporal punishment it tends to be led by I/NGOs. Useful in some locations, this does not provide for all teachers.

- Three out of four countries in the study have not yet endorsed the **Safe Schools Declaration** and are not aware of the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict.

CONCRETE AND PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT COULD ACHIEVE THIS BENCHMARK INDICATOR

- **Benchmark 1.1 - Prevention of violence in and around schools is identified as a specific strategy in the national education sector policy or plan.** The education sector plan should include an explicit objective to prevent and reduce all forms of violence within schools. To be effective, this should be accompanied by strategies, key performance indicators and budgets for its implementation and enforcement. Such an objective could include specific strategies for developing a clear, concise and user-centred summary in all relevant languages to be printed and disseminated nationally to states and schools, and then incorporated into orientations and training programmes for teachers and other education actors. Government and donor funding could be consolidated through support for or alignment with this strategy.
- **Benchmark 1.2 - There is explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in schools, and policies are in place to support positive discipline and classroom management.** Where laws exist to prohibit violence against children in school, but not specifically outlawing corporal punishment, they may need to include specific prohibition of corporal punishment. For effective law enforcement, it is important to have strong dissemination and monitoring of schools' compliance. Improved dissemination could be achieved through a campaign such as Maar Nahi Piyar in Punjab, Pakistan. This could include preparation and printing of simple and visual posters on preventing violence in all appropriate languages, which could be distributed to schools for posting in prominent public spaces. It could also include guidance for teachers on how to manage their classrooms without violence or corporal punishment. Where I/NGOs are delivering teacher training on positive discipline and classroom management, the Ministry of Education should coordinate efforts to identify and scale good practice, perhaps by making materials open-source and readily available.
- **Benchmark 1.3 - The roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education in response and referral to incidents of violence are clearly set out in the multi-sectoral national child protection policy framework.** Existing violence-prevention, child rights and/or child protection policies could be revisited and ideally incorporated into a multi-sectoral national child protection policy framework. Ministries of education, health, social welfare, gender, and other relevant ministries should come together under a formal child protection framework to develop multi-sectoral referral and response processes. These processes should be practical and consistent across all sectors. Associated guidelines can be developed outlining the processes, streamlining information and coordinating actions between sectors. Such guidelines should be written into national and sub-national level development action plans with clearly defined targets and responsibilities to ensure that ownership sits with the government in the longer term. Once prepared, they could also be summarised into a shorter, user-centred document in all main languages for printing and dissemination to schools for compliance by registered and volunteer teachers.



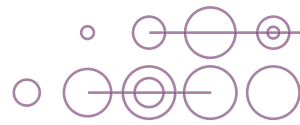


- **Benchmark 1.4 - The country has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration and in situations of armed conflict is implementing the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict.** As a first step, governments should explicitly endorse the Safe Schools Declaration. The GCPEA, the global partnership behind the Safe Schools Declaration, has collected examples of concrete measures to protect students and teachers from attack and schools and universities from attack and military use, which can serve as inspiration to fellow states and other stakeholders. Ministries could review these examples, or directly draw on GCPEA for support, to develop some short and simple guidelines to disseminate to schools. These should set out what the Safe Schools Declaration means in practice, channels of recourse and the key factors for them to consider in planning how to react to or mitigate the effects of future conflict. They should be disseminated in local languages and key stakeholders trained. Where possible, they can be incorporated in existing trainings or disseminations and build upon what is working well.



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Findings for Call to Action 2

Strengthen prevention and response at school level

Assessment scale regarding national, district and school-level checkpoints/requirements:

 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
2.1 Key violence prevention strategies are embedded in curriculum-based activities for children. ⁴²	National curriculum includes age appropriate approaches that (i) develop life skills, (ii) teach children about violence and safe behavior, (iii) challenge social and cultural norms and promote equal relationships.	District supervises and assures information and curriculum is implemented in schools.	Schools deliver formal school syllabi that includes life skills, safe behavior, and equal relationships.
Assessment			
	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda

- In Uganda, Nepal and South Sudan, the national curriculum includes approaches that (i) develop life skills, (ii) teach children about violence and safe behavior, (iii) challenge social and cultural norms and promote equal relationships.** The extent to which these topics are covered in detail and provide opportunity for students to deeply engage with the issues varies. They are often mainstreamed within subjects such as arts, social studies, and environment.
 - In Uganda, in 2011, MoES developed a Life Skills Curriculum for Primary School Teachers. Alongside a handbook, this provides teachers with strategies to support learners to develop life skills including relating to others, empathy, managing peer relationships, negotiation, non-violent conflict resolution and effective communication.
 - In South Sudan, the curriculum is new and has not yet been rolled out nationwide.
 - In Nepal, municipalities are authorised to develop their own curriculum but none of the municipalities that were covered in this study had developed local curriculum with content focusing on making schools safe from all forms of violence.
 - Pakistan does not follow a national curriculum and instead each province has developed its own curriculum. In all four provinces, topics relating to life skills, safety and respecting different religion, race and culture are mentioned in the curriculum. However, these areas are not explored thoroughly to teach children about all forms of violence or challenging social and cultural norms.
- The role of the sub-national government in overseeing curriculum implementation varies.** In Nepal, the responsibility for monitoring of curricular implementation has not been delegated to the municipality, but the Constitution gives the responsibilities to the municipalities for the implementation of the local curriculum. In some countries it is to be conducted through school inspections, but this is not done effectively due to lack of budget to observe schools and lessons.
- Responses from headteachers, teachers and learners indicate that **the delivery of the curriculum on life skills, safe behaviour and equal relationships is not universal** and that when it is delivered, this is done to different degrees. In all countries, at least half of the teachers reported that these elements are not included in the curriculum. In some countries most students said they were included whilst in other countries most students said they weren't included. The mixed responses could be caused by several reasons, including: if the topic has been embedded within a subject pupils may not quickly identify it at interview; the teachers interviewed may not teach that subject, as these topics are not examinable they are omitted by teachers in an effort to focus more on examinable content.

42 Section 3, World Health Organization, United Nations Children's Fund and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Preventing school-based violence: A practical handbook*, WHO, Geneva, 2019. This links to Benchmark 3.2 and 5.3



 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School												
<p>2.2 Child safeguarding principles and procedures are in place in schools, inclusive of codes of conduct, and safe recruitment standards⁴³.</p>	National guidelines detail process by which all schools respond to child protection concerns, including referral to services. The Ministry of Education has a focal point.	District has step-by-step procedures for schools to follow and has identified one focal point with overseeing and responding to concerns.	System for responding to child protection concerns is in place following district or central guidelines, or school if no policy. School has focal point with responsibility for responding to protection incidents.												
	Assessment														
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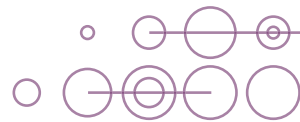
- **Two out of four study countries have national guidelines providing guidance to districts and schools on how to establish safe and confidential reporting and response mechanisms for violence.**
 - In Nepal, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) issued Complaint Response Guidelines 2016 to implement procedures at the school level for receiving and addressing complaints from students, especially those related to incidence of physical, mental and sexual violence. These guidelines require all the secondary schools to appoint a female teacher as gender focal person and to set up a complaint box in the school premises within easy access for all students. The guidelines also require the school to form a committee consisting of the gender focal person, School Management Committee (SMC) chairperson or woman member of committee, school Principal, two students (one girl and one boy) from the Child Club. These members should be present during the opening of complaint box and their main role is to hear the issues and solve them. It does not include referral to services outside of school.
 - In Uganda, in 2014, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) with support from UNICEF, developed the Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response (RTRR) Guidelines on VACIS (Violence Against Children in Schools). The primary aim of the RTRR Guidelines on VACIS is to respond to violence against children in schools through clear reporting, tracking, referral and response mechanism. The specific objectives of the guidelines are to⁴⁴:
 1. Educate children, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff and the community on the importance of reporting, tracking, referring and responding to cases of violence against children in schools.
 2. Equip children, teaching and non-teaching staff in schools, parents and community leaders with tools to enable them to report and track cases of violence against children to relevant authorities for appropriate action in conformity with the existing laws, administrative procedures and guidelines.
 3. Provide guidance to institutions that have the mandate to protect children against violence on the appropriate actions and support required when they encounter cases of violence against children in schools.
- At sub-national level, responses from district officers indicate that there are no clear step-by-step procedures for schools to follow, even in Uganda and Nepal where a reporting guideline exists. Reporting and referrals may take place at this level, but they happen without clear step-by-step processes. Some respondents in South Sudan and Uganda reported that a focal person has been appointed at the sub-national level. However, the extent to which this person is overseeing and responding to concerns is unclear.
- **In the two countries where national guidelines for responding to violence exist, responses from school actors indicate that the system for responding to child protection concerns is in place but only approximately half of the students know about it.**
 - In Nepal, more than 50% of the students stated that there is a grievance or complaint box in accordance with the Complaint Response Guideline. However, only about 38% of the students said that they had been formally informed by the school management of the mechanism. Of the headteachers, 71% stated that such complaints handling mechanism exists at the school and that all students have been informed of this.
 - In Uganda, 83% of the headteachers reported that schools have a step-by-step process for responding to students' reports of violence, with the school disciplinary committee and the office of the headteacher being the main reporting channels in the process. That said, when asked for physical documents outlining this process, none were provided to researchers. Of the learners, 47% reported that schools have a step-by-step process for responding to violence.
 - In South Sudan, in the absence of national guidelines, headteachers and teachers described their own school procedures for reporting violence, including establishing disciplinary committees. Of the students, 15% stated their school had a step-by-step process for reporting violence.



43 See UNICEF 2012; Keeping Children Safe 2014; UNGEI 2108. This links to benchmark 1.3 above

44 Ministry of Education and Sports, Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response (RTRR): Guidelines on Violence Against Children in School, Uganda, 2014





 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School												
2.2	National guidelines clearly outline norms and standards of ethical behavior to be included in Teacher Codes of Conduct.	Codes of conduct required for all staff including District and Schools. District/sub-national authorities ensure compliance of Codes of Conduct in schools.	School has Code of Conduct that is publicly posted and requires all teachers to understand and comply; Ramifications for violations are proscribed and enforced; Requires written signatures by all staff; includes Codes of behavior for students.												
Assessment															
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- In Pakistan, Uganda and Nepal, the Teacher Codes of Conduct (Guidelines) clearly outline norms and standards of ethical behavior and zero-tolerance towards all forms of violence in school. In South Sudan, the Code of Conduct outlines ethical behavior but has no specific provision regarding zero-tolerance to all forms of violence.
- **Implementation of the Code of Conduct and monitoring to ensure compliance varies between countries.**
 - In Nepal, the Code of Conduct could be seen on the walls of all classrooms in the study. However, there was no clear role for the municipality in overseeing compliance. Further, not all teachers had read it or signed it.
 - In Uganda, District Education Officers described actions they had taken to monitor teachers however they do not explicitly entail ensuring compliance with the Teacher Code of Conduct, particularly the sections relating to violence. School actors broadly reported a lack of awareness regarding the development or implementation of a School Code of Conduct, which is understandable as the RTRR guidelines do not explicitly provide guidance on this. Some school actors stated that they have communicated codes of behaviour for all members of the school community regarding all forms of violence and sought compliance.
 - In South Sudan, headteachers are responsible for enforcing the Code of Conduct in school. Only two schools visited in the study had the Code of Conduct posted on the wall for public viewing, one of which was in Arabic. In some of the schools, the headteacher was in possession of the Code, but the majority of schools did not have copies. Two different versions were seen in use, one being the old Sudanese Code of Conduct.
 - In Pakistan, the national standards specify that “Each school must have a visible Code of Conduct for all stakeholders” and national guidelines clearly lay out norms and ethical behavior for a Code of Conduct. Nevertheless, no explicit and formal Code of Conduct for teachers exists at national or provincial level. Schools visited in the study did not have a Code of Conduct publicly posted and requiring all teachers to understand and comply with it. Ramifications for violations are therefore not clearly proscribed and enforced substantially. There is no requirement for written signatures by all staff of such code. There is no formal codes of behaviour for students. One respondent explained that the Code of Conduct was an “institutional culture” rather than a written set of rules. This unwritten Code of Conduct may explain the decreasing awareness among field respondents, especially among females, at school level. The “oral tradition” largely prevails to convey messages to men (foremost) aiming to regulate behaviours and practices. Accordingly, there is a need to develop and disseminate a written Code of Conduct for school staff and children. This should take into consideration children and would guide and legally bind teachers to enforce laws and policies for a safe environment in school, with zero tolerance for violence and discrimination clearly mentioned as a fundamental principle. This may be the case for other countries as well.





 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School												
2.2	The establishment of safe and confidential reporting mechanisms for students is mandated for all schools. There is a working, accessible national reporting mechanism such as a national child helpline.	District supports schools in implementation of reporting mechanisms and ensures availability of support mechanisms. It has its own mechanism for response when reports are elevated.	Students are aware of and use reporting mechanisms to report experiences of violence. It is linked to support services and includes a monitoring system for reporting and accountability.												
	Assessment														
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- **Three out of four countries in the study have a national helpline for children.** Additionally, in Pakistan, the National Commission on Human Rights (NCHR) has a complaint cell where any complaint for human rights violation can be submitted online or via written application sent by courier to the NCHR. The Provinces in Pakistan also have their own child protection helplines.
- **Two out of four countries have a safe and confidential reporting mechanism for students in school.**
- While Uganda and Nepal have a safe and confidential reporting mechanism for students in school, there are no guidelines for how sub-national government should support this. In Nepal, responses from 6 (out of 8) municipal officers indicates limited awareness regarding the need to support schools in implementation of reporting mechanisms and ensure availability of referral and support mechanisms. In Uganda, district education officers reported that districts support schools in implementation of reporting mechanisms and that they ensure availability of support mechanisms to respond to escalated reports of violence in schools. However, there were no concrete examples or evidence given.
- In Uganda and Nepal where national reporting mechanisms exist, approximately **half of the interviewed learners (62% in Uganda and 50% in Nepal) reported having confidential reporting procedures at their school** for students to use if they see or experience violence. In Uganda, the most commonly cited confidential reporting procedures are: suggestion box, senior female/ male teacher, and reporting to teachers directly. In Nepal, the complaint box was most commonly cited.
- **Across all countries with a helpline few interviewed students are aware that it exists** and the number to call. Only 15% of the students in Nepal had full information about the national child helpline (including the exact toll-free number). In Uganda, 31% of interviewed students were aware the helpline existed and in Pakistan only 20% of the male students interviewed for the study and 22% of the females said there was a helpline to report cases of violence in school.
- In Pakistan, 41% of the interviewed male teachers and 38% of the female teachers knew about a functioning helpline to report cases of violence, which limits the support that these very same teachers (especially female teachers) can provide to their students. Out of interviewed headteachers, only 33% of the males and 26% of the females know about a helpline to report cases of violence.



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 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School												
2.2	National pre- and in-service training for school staff includes their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations.	District authorities ensure that teachers receive pre- or in-service training on their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations.	All school staff receive pre- or in-service training on their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations. Staff are adequately trained to prevent revictimization of children and are knowledgeable about the referral pathway in place in the locality.												
Assessment															
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● **No country in the study has a comprehensive national pre- or in-service teacher training curriculum with course content on:**

- 1) practical and effective positive discipline and non-violent classroom management,
- 2) teacher obligations on child safeguarding,
- 3) violence reporting and response referral pathways for districts and schools.

Practical and effective positive discipline and non-violent classroom management is covered in the Nepal curriculum as well as province of Punjab, Pakistan curriculum and covered lightly in other countries. For child safeguarding, teachers are often referred to the Code of Conduct (e.g. in Uganda and South Sudan) rather than receiving training. Similarly, for violence reporting and referral pathways teachers are referred to guidelines (e.g. RTRR in Uganda) rather than receiving training.

● **Across all countries, at sub-national level there is little oversight to ensure that teachers receive pre- or in-service training on their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations.** This is partially because training on child safeguarding content is not a national requirement. In some cases, this is because the government is structured such that the sub-national level does not oversee teacher training. In Uganda, 64% of district education officers reported that teachers in their districts have regularly received in-service training on practical and effective positive discipline and non-violent classroom management, teacher obligations on child safeguarding, and violence reporting and response referral pathways.

● **The responses at school-level show disparity in the number of teachers receiving training on positive discipline, child safeguarding and violence reporting.**

- In Uganda, only 23% of the headteachers and 37% of the teachers reported adequate pre-service training on these topics. In addition, only 32% of the headteachers and 42% of the teachers claimed that the teachers have regularly received in-service training on these issues in the last three years. This is almost half the number reported by district education officers.
 - In Nepal, few teachers and headteachers (12% and 29%, respectively) indicated they have received any training on their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations in the past three years.
 - In Pakistan, 60% of the headteachers and 58% of the teachers interviewed for the study stated that they had pre-service training on 1) practical and effective positive discipline and non-violent classroom management, 2) teacher obligations on child safeguarding, 3) violence reporting and response referral pathways. This is high considering there is no formal curriculum for these topics in Pakistan.
- The disparity between field respondents' statements and curricula content may be linked to the fact that a) respondents have received training on some of the areas but not all and so give mixed responses, b) respondents wished to provide "socially acceptable answers" during the information collection process, or simply because c) field respondents received trainings that were organised by NGOs, INGOs or UNICEF and did not know that it was not part of the teachers' curriculum as such. In South Sudan, respondents indicated that insufficient budget means that government are unable to provide in-service training to teachers.





A = In place
 B = Partially in place
 C = Not in place

Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
2.2	There are national policies that regulate hiring of new teachers and staff and their transfer to ensure suitability for working with children.	Districts implement the policy requiring background checks when recruiting or transferring teachers.	School follows or has individualised methods to vet staff to ensure their suitability for working with children; it requests new hires or districts to report previous convictions or reasons for transfer.
Assessment			
	Nepal	South Sudan	Nepal
	Pakistan	Uganda	South Sudan
		Pakistan	Uganda
		Pakistan	Uganda

- **None of the study countries have a robust policy that regulates hiring of new teachers and staff and their transfer to ensure suitability for working with children.**
 - In Nepal, all teachers are required to have a teaching licence. The regulations deem candidate’s ineligible for a licence if they have been convicted of a criminal offence of “moral turpitude” from a court or dismissed from service having been rendered disqualified for government service or teachers service in the future. However, there is no background check or requirement to submit evidence against these regulations.
 - In Pakistan, background checks are required for teachers and consist of a police clearance certificate delivered by the police station from the teacher’s place of residence. The absence of a national database for adult citizens having been accused, prosecuted or convicted of child abuse limits the efficacy of this efficacy of the clearance process in minimizing the risk of unsuitable adults having contact with children. Provinces have enacted their own employment and dismissal rules that are quite aligned with the federal rules. Respondents unanimously indicated that no government servant could be recruited in another government institution after having been dismissed.
- **In absence of robust background checks at national and sub-national levels, schools are still unlikely to conduct their own checks.**

Most schools do not play a role in recruitment as this is handled centrally by the Ministry or institutions such as Teaching Service Commission, so the schools do not perceive they have the role to undertake checks. In Pakistan, 79% of male teachers and 89% of female teachers interviewed for this study stated that no background check was conducted prior to any teacher’s recruitment. In Uganda, only 15% of the interviewed headteachers and 23% of the interviewed teachers reported that their school follows or has individualised methods to vet staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. In Nepal, all teachers reported that the school does not conduct background check of teachers deployed through the Teachers Service Commission.

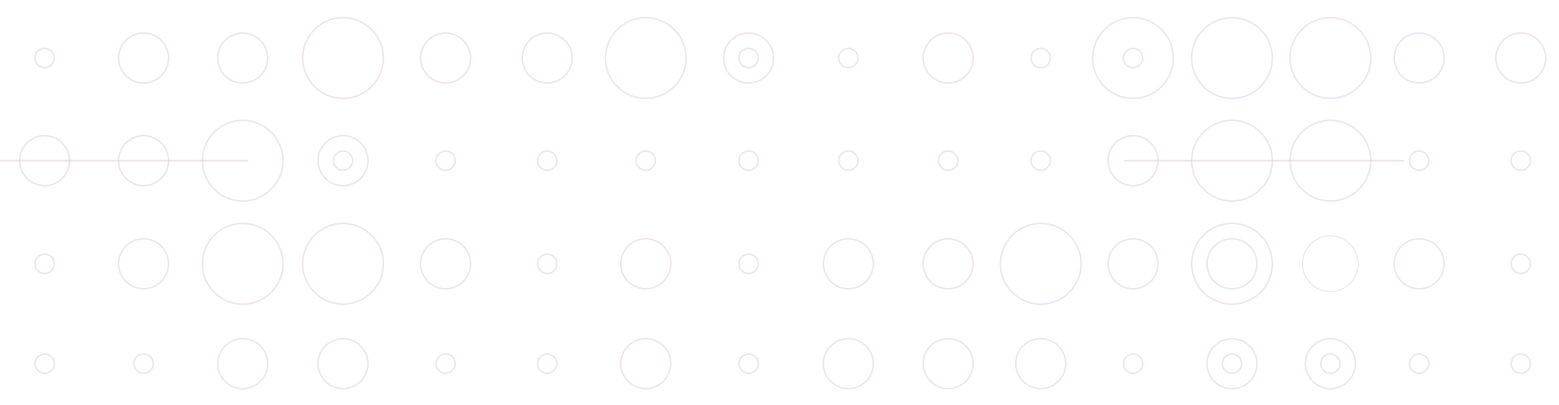


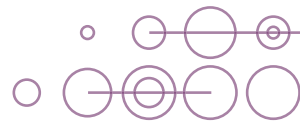


 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School											
2.3 Each school has at least one focal point who is capacitated to provide frontline mental health/psychosocial support to children experiencing violence.	Ministry of Education has a training programme or special curriculum for school counsellors that includes children’s mental health and well-being; and has arrangement or referral procedures when a child or his/her family needs specialised services.	District has support mechanism for school counsellors and refers to specialised services to assist schools when necessary.	School counsellor is in the school and is capacitated to provide frontline mental health/psychosocial support to students; and has identified a referral source for range of specialised services (mental health, medical, family services...)											
	Assessment													
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- All study countries reported having school counsellors in some schools in some form. In most cases this role is not professionalised.
- There is no evidence of the pre- and in-service teacher training curriculum including course content for school counsellors on: children’s mental health and well-being, and referral procedures for when a child needs specialised services/care. In all countries, some teachers are reported to be acting in the role of counsellors without training.
- The extent to which schools have a school counsellor or focal teacher capacitated to provide frontline mental health/psychosocial support to children experiencing violence varies by country:
 - In Nepal, there is no resource allocation to recruiting or training counsellors and teachers may voluntarily take on this role. Districts do not support this function nor oversee which schools have counsellors and which do not. Nearly 84% of the headteachers and 74% of the teachers stated that there is no counsellor in the schools to provide such counselling to students as required. In schools where they exist, they have been designated from among existing teachers and are mainly responsible for maintaining student discipline. Some have been supported in their role by NGOs.
 - In South Sudan, 15% of students surveyed - most of them from Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites or camps - reported awareness of counsellors in school to support children particularly those affected by violence. In these locations, humanitarian agencies have provided qualified counsellors through health facilities to provide comprehensive support to learners in this environment. However, at government schools there is stigma attached to these services and their use is often discouraged for fear of being labelled as sick or considered victims.
 - In Uganda, the MoES established a dedicated Department of Guidance and Counselling in 2008 and an accrediting body for the profession in 2010. About 49% of the interviewed headteachers and 43% of the interviewed teachers reported that the school has a designated school counsellor. Of the interviewed district officers, 68% said that the designated school counsellors had received training for their role. This finding indicates that there may be respondent bias occurring given there is no national training provided; however, external programmes/projects may have also provided some training.
 - In Pakistan, findings indicate that the appointment and training of counsellors is not systemic or uniform across the targeted provinces and schools. Approximately half the schools reported having a school counsellor and 62% of interviewed male teachers and 54% of interviewed female teachers stated that appointed counsellors had attended training. Of the DEOs, the 60% who mentioned that counsellors had been appointed in schools, stated that those had received trainings. Interestingly, 80% of the male DEOs who stated that counsellors had been appointed declared that those counsellors had been trained, whereas according to 80% of the female DEOs having stated that counsellors had been appointed in schools, those counsellors had not been trained.





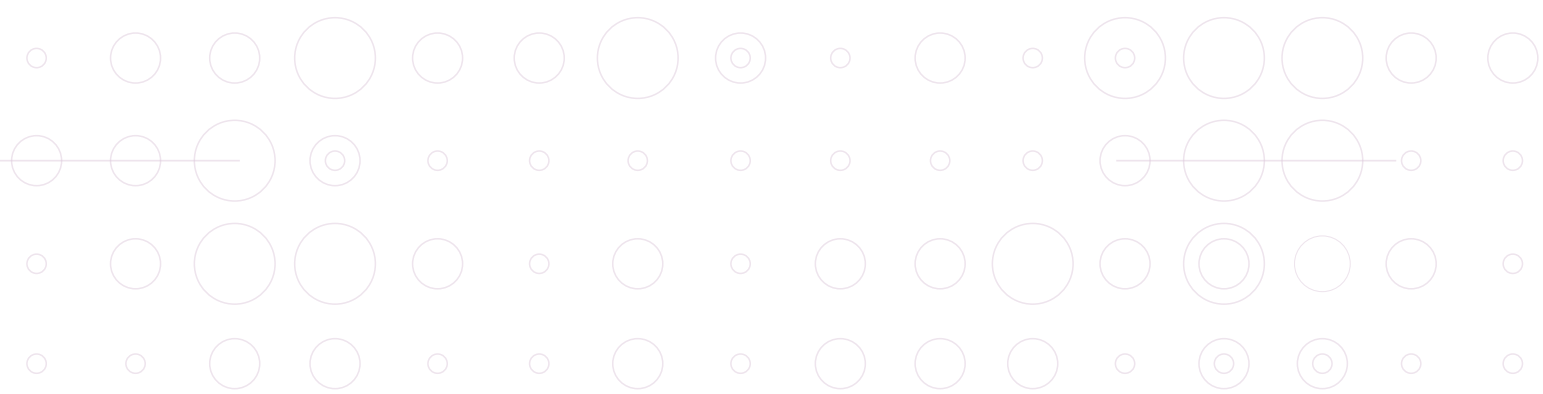
A = In place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
<p>2.4 The physical environment in and around schools is safe and designed with the well-being of children in mind.⁴⁵</p>	<p>There are established national standards for school buildings and grounds that address student safety.</p>	<p>The District authorities are aware of national standards and monitor improvements to schools' physical environment.</p>	<p>School design reflect national guidelines. The community, students and staff have mapped unsafe areas and have identified solutions for these areas. Sanitary facilities are safe and secure, classroom architecture and design are gender-responsive, and students move freely to and from school.</p>
Assessment			
<p> Nepal South Sudan </p> <p> Pakistan Uganda </p>		<p> Nepal South Sudan </p> <p> Pakistan Uganda </p>	

- All countries in the study have some form of national guidelines that provide standards to ensure school buildings and grounds keep students safe. Each country's policies vary in how comprehensively they cover pupils' safety and help prevent violence in school.
- The Pakistan School Safety Framework⁴⁶, developed in 2014, is an example of good practice for this benchmark. Its objectives clearly include "To promote a safe learning environment for students (taking into account the requirements of those with special needs), teachers and school staff against natural and man-made disasters". The document also mentions "To protect learners, teaching and non-teaching staff from death, injury and harm in school" as a goal. The document includes 1) assessment for security hazards as part of the process, 2) standards to ensure sanitary facilities that are safe and secure, 3) standards for gender-responsive classroom design, 4) standards for school grounds that allow students move safely and freely to and from school. The safety perspective relates more to natural disasters and attacks, than safety from abuse such as child sexual abuse for example.
- In Uganda and Nepal, robust national standards guide the development of school buildings and classrooms. These include focus on safety, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and gender-responsiveness however do not have guidance on mapping unsafe areas, standards to ensure sanitary facilities that are safe and secure, standards for gender-responsive classroom design, standards for school grounds that allow students to move safely and freely to and from school.
- In South Sudan, the MoGEI has national guidelines that provide standards to ensure school buildings and grounds keep students safe. The majority of Directorate officers (67% of those surveyed) were largely aware of these policies but faced challenges in their implementation. Many schools currently occupy old buildings and most structures do not meet the standards. The responsibility for maintaining and renovating structures often lies with the school as the MoGEI does not have an allocated budget line, but this leaves spaces unsafe and sanitary facilities inadequate. Insecurity in many areas of the country has also forced some schools to vacate their intended locations of operation.
- Responses from school actors in all countries indicate that the schools reflect national guidelines to some extent. Funding should be allocated to the school safety standards to enable schools to access resources to carry out renovations to make the school safe in line with national standards. More can be done by the school communities to map unsafe areas and identify no-cost solutions especially in relation to keeping children safe from forms of sexual violence.



45 UNGEI 2018 Domain 7; WHO 2019 Section 6
 46 <http://web.ndma.gov.pk/publications/PSSF%20v10%203.pdf>





SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES AND/OR PROMISING FINDINGS

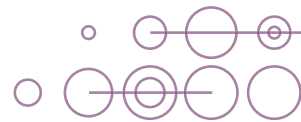
- In Uganda, Nepal, and South Sudan, the **national curriculum includes approaches that (i) develop life skills, (ii) teach children about violence and safe behaviour, (iii) challenge social and cultural norms, and promote equal relationships**. These topics are also included to some extent in Provincial curricula in Pakistan.
- In Uganda, in 2011, MoES developed a Life Skills Curriculum for Primary School Teachers. Alongside a handbook, this provides teachers with strategies to support learners to develop life skills including relating to others, empathy, managing peer relationships, negotiation, non-violent conflict resolution and effective communication.
- In Uganda and Nepal, there are national guidelines that provide guidance to districts and schools on how to establish safe and confidential reporting and response mechanisms for violence. In Nepal, MOEST issued **Complaint Response Guidelines** 2016 to implement procedures at the school level for receiving and addressing complaints from students, especially those related to incidents of physical, mental and sexual violence. In Uganda, in 2014, the MoES and MoGLSD with support from UNICEF, developed the **Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response (RTRR) Guidelines** which has the primary aim to respond to violence against children in schools through a clear reporting, tracking, referral and response mechanism.
- In Uganda, South Sudan and Nepal, the **Teacher Code of Conduct** (Guidelines) clearly outline norms and standards of ethical behaviour and to some degree zero-tolerance towards violence in school.
- Pakistan, Nepal and Uganda have a **national helpline for children**. Pakistan has also a complaint cell of the National Commission on Human Rights (NCHR), where complaints for human rights violation can be submitted (online or via written application sent by courier). The Provinces in Pakistan also have their own child protection helplines.
- All countries in the study have some form of national guidelines that that provide **standards to ensure school buildings and grounds keep students safe**. Pakistan's School Safety Framework is a good example.
- All study countries reported having a **focal person for violence** in some schools in some form, often a teacher appointed with the additional role of **school counsellor**.

All study countries reported having a focal person for violence in some schools in some form, often a teacher appointed with the additional role of school counsellor.

SUMMARY OF GAPS FOR EACH BENCHMARK INDICATOR

- Responses from headteachers, teachers and learners indicate that the curriculum on life skills, safe behaviour, and equal relationships is **not fully implemented by all teachers**. In all countries, at least half of the teachers reported that life skills, safe behaviour, and equal relationships are not included in the curriculum.
- In the two countries where national guidelines for responding to violence exist, responses from schools suggest that most teachers and headteachers confirm reporting mechanisms are in place and **approximately half of the students know about it**.
- The Teachers' **Code of Conduct is not always disseminated** and enforced in a way that requires all teachers to understand and comply nor are ramifications for violations always proscribed and enforced. In Nepal, it is on all classroom walls, but not all teachers had read it. In Pakistan, one respondent said it is an "institutional culture" rather than a set of written rules. In South Sudan, many schools did not have a copy of the Code of Conduct.





- All countries have a helpline, but few students are aware that it exists and about the number to call.
- No country in the study has a comprehensive national pre- or in-service teacher training curriculum with course content on:
 - 1) practical and effective positive discipline and non-violent classroom management
 - 2) teacher obligations on child safeguarding
 - 3) violence reporting and response referral pathways for districts and schools
- Policies that regulate hiring of new teachers and staff and their transfer **could be made more robust** to ensure suitability for working with children. For example: Pakistan conducts police checks that could be strengthened by also identifying potential candidates convicted of child abuse through a national database. Teachers in Nepal are required to have a teaching licence. That process could be tightened by also conducting **criminal record checks**.
- In all countries, some teachers are reported to be acting in the role of counsellors/focal persons **without training**. There is no evidence of the pre- and in-service teacher training curriculum including course content for school counsellors on children’s mental health and well-being, and referral procedures for when a child needs specialised services/care.
- In Uganda, Nepal and South Sudan, the national school safety standards do not include mapping unsafe areas, standards to ensure sanitary facilities that are safe and secure, standards for gender-responsive classroom design, standards for school grounds that allow students move safely and freely to and from school. They also lack funding for schools to make renovations in line with the standards.

In countries where teachers are not trained on child safeguarding and reporting/response, pre and in-service curricula should be updated to include a specific module on child safeguarding and reporting/response obligations.

CONCRETE AND PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT COULD ACHIEVE THIS BENCHMARK INDICATOR

• **Benchmark 2.1 - Key violence prevention strategies are embedded in curriculum-based activities for children.**

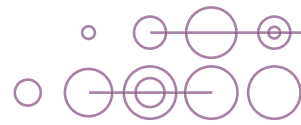
Often life skills are included in the curriculum but are not explicit enough to include preventing violence, ensuring safe behavior, promoting inclusion of marginalised groups and gender-equitable relationships. In this instance, the syllabi, teacher professional development courses and teaching and learning materials can be reviewed and improved to include these aspects. To support delivery in the classroom, the link between violence prevention and improving learning outcomes should be made explicit to all teachers and government officers who monitor and support them. This should ideally be accompanied by continuous professional development for teachers. Effective teaching of these topics is unlikely to happen without greater allocation of resources to provide teachers with the necessary skills to facilitate the learning.

• **Benchmark 2.2 - Child safeguarding principles and procedures are in place in schools, inclusive of codes of conduct, and safe recruitment standards.**

1. National guidelines to establish safe and confidential reporting mechanisms.

In countries where reporting processes are in place, such as a national helpline, communication to students can be improved so that they are aware of them and feel confident and empowered to use them. Where child safeguarding, reporting and referral currently takes place on an ad hoc basis, there is a need to develop explicit user-centred guidelines for schools on how to create step-by-step, efficient and confidential procedures for responding to school-based violence in accordance with the applicable legislation and Teacher Code of Conduct.





Such guidelines should: outline confidential reporting mechanisms for students at the school level; identify a focal person within each sub-national government education office and school to respond to protection incidents; specify different mechanisms and procedures for dealing with different types of incidents (for example, depending on the nature of the violence or the identity of the perpetrator) and their repercussions; and identify coordinated sub-national referral pathways with clearly defined responsibilities for key bodies such as the Ministries of Gender, Welfare, Health, Justice and Internal Affairs.

They should be clear and concise for printing and dissemination to all schools at minimum cost; available in all relevant languages; and written for delivery via a school-based training modality so that all teachers can participate.

In addition to this, capacity building should be undertaken to train sub-national government actors across sectors on issues including monitoring and enforcement, and a national helpline should also be established for children to report violence, with details communicated widely for example through school assemblies and radio programmes.

2. Norms and standards of ethical behaviour in Teacher Codes of Conduct.

In countries where there is no comprehensive, widely disseminated Teacher Code of Conduct, the code should be written or updated to explicitly include a strict prohibition on corporal punishment and other violence against children. Children can also contribute to the update with descriptions of what kinds of teachers and school environments would make them feel safe. The code, or a summarised form, could then be printed and disseminated to all schools. A simple poster or painted sign setting out the key expectations on teachers should also be shared with schools for display in a prominent location. Where possible, all teachers should receive an induction on the code and officers at sub-national level should monitor whether teachers are signing the code on an annual basis.

3. Policies that regulate hiring of new teachers and staff and their transfer to ensure suitability for working with children.

A teacher licencing system can be an effective way of monitoring employment and transfer of teachers and ensure their suitability for working with children. It is important that the licencing follows strict procedures for conducting background checks including convictions of child abuse and dismissal from a school or government position for violent or other unsuitable behaviour. Where a licensing system is not feasible, existing databases that record teachers' details to facilitate the payment of salaries could be reviewed and updated to record clearance on criminal record checks and no dismissal from previous schools or government positions.

4. Pre- and in-service training on obligations for child safeguarding and reporting/response.

In countries where teachers are not trained on child safeguarding and reporting/response, pre and in-service curricula should be updated to include a specific module on child safeguarding and reporting/response obligations. The training module can be made open source and accessible to development partners delivering in-service training. In places where many teachers are unqualified, are volunteers or do not have access to regular in-service training a more direct, low-cost approach should be taken to inform them of their obligations for child safeguarding and reporting/response. In such a situation, strengthening teachers' awareness and skills around child safeguarding and violence reporting can best be addressed by ensuring that each school has at least one copy of the Teachers Code of Conduct (see above). Headteachers can then provide training to their staff, including volunteers, through staff meetings or school-based professional development sessions.





- **Benchmark 2.3 - Each school has at least one focal point who is capacitated to provide frontline mental health/psychosocial support to children experiencing violence.**

Many schools have identified one person as a focal point for cases of violence. However, these focal points are rarely qualified school counsellors who have been capacitated through training to provide frontline mental health/psychosocial support to children experiencing violence. Thus, training material should be developed and made open source with content on children’s mental health, positive discipline, gender equality, inclusiveness and well-being. In many contexts, this can be done by building upon what has already been developed and implemented effectively by development partners. In addition, the focal persons would benefit from concise and standardised guidance for performing their role. This could be a written guide, video, audio or where resources are scarce it could be written into the Teacher Code of Conduct. The headteacher should be responsible for monitoring and supporting the focal person in this role.

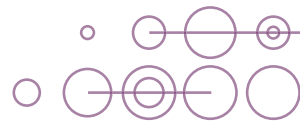
- **Benchmark 2.4 – The physical environment in and around schools is safe and designed with the well-being of children in mind.**

While many governments have national school safety guidelines, they do not comprehensively address all forms of violence. School safety guidelines should be reviewed to ensure they address all forms of violence. Where necessary, they may be revised to ensure they directly address safety such as requiring schools to map unsafe areas to identify solutions, providing clear criteria for ensuring sanitary facilities are safe and secure, providing clear criteria for ensuring that classroom architecture and design is gender-responsive, and providing guidance on how to ensure students can move freely to and from school. Even when countries have appropriate national guidelines that address school safety, they can be difficult to maintain and ensure compliance when resources are limited or when schools are affected by national emergencies such as conflict. It may be possible for governments to review where they can draw funds outside the education ministry to allocate to school safety guidelines to ensure compliance. Where funds are insufficient respective ministries may reach an agreement with school parent-teacher associations, boards of governors and other community bodies to take on responsibility regarding the upkeep of school buildings. When more funding is available, the Ministry of Education should then take greater responsibility in bringing all schools up to the appropriate standard.



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Findings for Call to Action 3

Shift social norms and behaviour change

Assessment scale regarding national, district and school-level checkpoints/requirements:

A = In place
 B = Partially in place
 C = Not in place

Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
3.1 There is wide dissemination and engagement with stakeholders to build knowledge and appreciation of child rights and laws prohibiting violence.	National government and policy support the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage stakeholders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence at the national level.	Districts support the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage schools, community members/leaders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence at the district level.	Schools support the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage students, teachers, parents and community members on child rights and laws prohibiting violence at the school level.
Assessment			
	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda

- In all countries there is national support for the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage stakeholders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence against children.** Such activities are included in, but not limited to, the education sector plan (Pakistan), teacher training materials (Nepal, South Sudan), child-friendly schools framework (Nepal), violence prevention plan (Uganda), Ministry website and communications (South Sudan). This is typically achieved through ministries collaboration with development partner activities, for example UNICEF. In all of the countries, while the national government supports dissemination, it does not provide guidelines that provide districts/schools with strategies on how to widely disseminate information to school and community members on child rights with regard to violence, and laws prohibiting violence against children
- At sub-national level government officers in Uganda, South Sudan and Pakistan indicate that they support the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage schools, community members/leaders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence. However, in South Sudan implementation is limited as State officers do not have an official budget for the activity (information on budgets was not collected in other countries). In Nepal, officers are engaged in similar activities but those interviewed had not conducted awareness-raising specifically on prohibiting violence.
- Responses from school actors indicate that some schools support the dissemination of information and to some extent engage some students, teachers and parents on child rights and laws prohibiting violence.** In Uganda, 45% of the headteachers and 47% of the teachers reported to have helped their school disseminate information about laws prohibiting violence against children. It is difficult to discern how robust such activities were and whether respondent bias was at play, as respondents did not share the documented details of these activities or reference to specific laws. In Pakistan, while most district officials said they had been involved in dissemination activities in schools, the majority of interviewed headteachers (73% males, 60% females) declared that they had not been involved in the dissemination of information related to such laws. The same statement was given by 68% of the male and 63% of the female teachers interviewed for the study, and worryingly by 86% of the male and 81% of the female students interviewed for the study. Most of the interviewed teachers who stated that they had been involved in dissemination activities indicated that they had shared the information with parents.





 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School											
<p>3.2 Specific, evidence-informed interventions are researched and implemented, addressing social norms that drive key forms of violence and/or helping children manage risks⁴⁷.</p>	National policy supports the development and implementation of evidence-informed initiatives ⁴⁸ that address broad social norms that drive key forms of violence (e.g. bullying and online harms, sexual abuse and exploitation, youth and gang violence).	Districts support the implementation and monitoring of initiatives in schools/communities that address social norms that drive key forms of violence.	Schools support the implementation and monitoring of initiatives in the school and surrounding community that address social norms that drive key forms of violence.											
	Assessment													
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- None of the four countries has national policies or guidelines that provide guidance on implementing or researching interventions to address social norms surrounding violence (like bullying and online harms, sexual abuse and exploitation, youth and gang violence). However, in Pakistan and South Sudan there is evidence of synergies between the Ministry of Education and other Ministries, government institutions and NGOs to collect information related to social norms that drive violence in order to inform evidence-based decision-making and policy reform. In all countries, development partners are active in developing and implementing evidence-informed initiatives addressing social norms that drive violence, and this is conducted in partnership with governments.
- Some district officers indicate that they support the implementation and monitoring of initiatives in schools/communities to address social norms that drive key forms of violence. However, those who affirmed this in Uganda were unable to provide concrete examples. In Pakistan, the School Education Sector Plan and Road Map for Sindh talks about “field research included in the ESA (Education Sector assessment)”. There is room to add some research parameters linked to social norms in those ongoing research processes so that schools can implement evidence-based interventions to challenge social norms that drive violence in school.
- At school-level in Uganda, 58% of the headteachers and 62% of the teachers reported they have participated in school interventions to address social norms surrounding certain types of violence (like bullying, online harms, sexual abuse, gang violence) and 47% of students reported that their school has implemented activities addressing social norms surrounding certain types of violence, including advocacy for a violence-free school environment. In Pakistan, 14% of headteachers, 9% of teachers and 9% of students stated they were part of actions aiming to address social norms that drive key forms of violence. Most of those limited interventions seem to have taken place in collaboration with NGOs. Headteachers mentioned seminars, teachers mentioned protests and trainings and students quoted plays (“tableaux”) and “class activities” that focused on promoting peace and conflict mitigation. Where schools are involved in initiatives, they tend to be focused on advocating for peace or non-violence. It is not evident that the initiatives challenge the social norms that drive the violence such as addressing gender discrimination or taboos on sexuality. This limited support to implement and monitor initiatives in the school and surrounding community that address social norms driving key forms of violence may be linked to the fact that district officials, teachers and students are not well equipped/empowered enough to lead a communication activity that may contravene some prevailing norms, or that the district and school staff themselves are so engrained in those abusive social norms that they do not see the need of it. A critical group of target beneficiaries do not receive the necessary message to foster behaviour change.

47 WHO 2019 Section 3

48 INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children, WHO, Geneva, 2016 offers strategies to draw from





A = In place
 B = Partially in place
 C = Not in place

Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
3.3 Young people, parents, teachers and community members in and around schools are engaged and active on the topic of school violence.	Ministry of Education supports national, contextualized communication initiatives to raise awareness on violence in schools.	District level strategy for implementation of media, arts, or other awareness-raising activities.	Extra-curricular or community-based arts, drama, print documents, or other activities that promote awareness at the school and for parents and families.
	Assessment		
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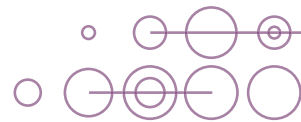
- Contextualised communication initiatives can play a key role in opening up discussion on taboo topics and challenging social norms. They can support policy implementation by engaging young people, parents, teachers and community members on the key messaging.
- In all study countries the government supports national contextualised communication initiatives to raise awareness on violence in schools. Interestingly in Pakistan the Ministry of Health is more active than the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) has positioned itself as the custodian of child rights and child protection in Pakistan. Communication initiatives from Ministry of Health or Social Welfare were not reviewed within the other country studies.
- Good practice can be seen in Uganda where the MoES has adopted the UNICEF Communication for Development (C4D) approach that utilises a mix of communication tools, channels and approaches to facilitate participation and engagement with children, families, communities, media professionals on issues related to violence against children in school. Communication initiatives are included in the strategic objectives of NSP VACiS. For example “To strengthen the capacity of existing student led school clubs to create awareness on VACiS and provide peer support to children at risk and those who have experienced violence to report and seek care and support services; and facilitate the establishment of peace school clubs in schools where they do not exist”. Additionally, under the leadership of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD), the Government of Uganda developed the National Child Participation Strategy (2017 – 2022), with the support of UNICEF and Save the Children. This strategy will set Uganda on a transformative journey to break the silence and amplify the voices of children across all spheres decision-making that have an impact on their lives⁴⁹.
- While the strategic objectives are helpful, they do not provide a specific policy or guidelines for schools that outline communication initiatives (i.e. media, arts, awareness-raising and empowerment activities) to engage students, parents and communities in dialogue and action against violence. Only 37% of students reported that their school had implemented awareness-raising and empowerment activities that engage students, parents and communities in dialogue and action against violence.
- There is evidence of some sub-national engagement in awareness-raising activities and school-level engagement in all countries.
- In Pakistan and in Uganda, fewer people report participating in activities the researchers moved through the system. 27% of the responding DEOs, 19% of the interviewed headteachers, 11% of the teachers and 6% of the students interviewed for the study stated they took part in extra-curricular or community-based arts, drama, print documents, or other activities that promote awareness at the school and for parents and families to end violence in school.

49 The Republic of Uganda, *National Child Participation Strategy, 2017/18 - 2021/22*



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SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES AND/OR PROMISING FINDINGS

- In all countries, there is national support for implementing activities to **disseminate information and engage stakeholders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence against children**. Such activities are included in the education sector plan (Pakistan), teacher training materials (Nepal, South Sudan), child-friendly schools framework (Nepal), violence prevention plan (Uganda), Ministry website and communications (South Sudan).
- In all study countries, the government supports national contextualised communication initiatives to raise awareness about violence in schools.
- **In all countries**, there is evidence of both sub-national government engagement and school level engagement in **awareness-raising activities to prevent violence**. This is often led by development partners.
- In Uganda, the **NSP VACiS** (2015 - 2020) developed by MoES in 2015 discusses designing and implementing national violence-free schools campaigns, national training programmes on violence against children in schools for all the key actors and strengthening the capacity of existing student-led school clubs to create awareness on violence against children in school and provide peer support to children at risk and those who have experienced violence. The NSP also includes a focus on communication, media and arts to advocate for a violence-free learning environment and to popularise the existing prevention, reporting, tracking, referral, response mechanisms and services. This is reinforced in the adoption of UNICEF's C4D approach.

Many schools participate in initiatives promoting violence-free schools but not all initiatives address social norms.

SUMMARY OF GAPS FOR EACH BENCHMARK INDICATOR

- While sub-national officers support awareness-raising in schools and community, the impact is limited by constrained budgets (evidenced in South Sudan) and limited focus specifically on prohibiting violence in school (evidenced in Nepal).
- No country in the study has a national policy or guideline on implementing or researching **interventions to address social norms surrounding violence** (like bullying and online harms, sexual abuse and exploitation, youth and gang violence).
- Where schools in the study are involved in initiatives to address violence, these tend to be focused on advocating for peace or non-violence. It is **not evident that the initiatives challenge the social norms** that drive the violence, such as addressing gender discrimination or taboos on sexuality for example.
- There is limited evidence of schools, districts or national government taking the lead to **monitor interventions that challenge social norms**. This is typically done by development partners.
- While governments support communication initiatives that raise awareness on violence in schools, they do not have a specific policy or guidelines for schools that outline communication initiatives (i.e. media arts, awareness and empowerment raising activities) to engage students, parents and communities in dialogue and action against violence. There needs to be genuine commitment from government to address social norms in school.
- Despite national and sub-national support for communication initiatives to raise awareness on violence in schools, few students report participating in such activities. This suggests only a **limited number of schools and students within those schools are engaged**.

Not all initiatives are evidence-based nor get evaluated and findings are not always shared with government to inform policy and planning.





CONCRETE AND PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT COULD ACHIEVE THIS BENCHMARK INDICATOR

- **Benchmark 3.1 - There is wide dissemination and engagement with stakeholders to build knowledge and appreciation of child rights and laws prohibiting violence.**

It is necessary to increase and reinforce awareness of children's rights and laws prohibiting violence for school staff, children, parents and communities to achieve positive behaviour change and create a safer, more participatory and inclusive learning environment. In some cases, this may require a genuine increase in commitment from government to prioritise communication activities that challenge social norms. To this effect, child protection policies, and all education sector plans could include communication guidelines and dissemination strategies, as well as specific activities which sub-national government and school actors could implement to build knowledge and appreciation of child rights and laws prohibiting violence. The activities should address the barriers to child rights and safe schools and promote more equality, peace, tolerance, inclusion. It is vital that dissemination strategies use local languages and references so that all stakeholders can build a better understanding of child rights and laws prohibiting violence.

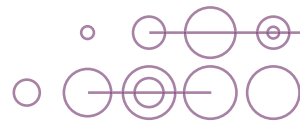
- **Benchmark 3.2 - Specific, evidence-informed interventions are researched and implemented, addressing social norms that drive key forms of violence and/or helping children manage risks.**

Many schools participate in initiatives promoting violence-free schools but not all initiatives address social norms. Not all initiatives are evidence-based nor get evaluated and findings are not always shared with government to inform policy and planning. Existing research and communication processes can be utilised to gather information on effective interventions that address social norms and reduce violence in school. Development partner project evaluations, action research, annual education reviews, conferences, and webinars can be used to gather information on what works to address social norms and reduce violence in school. Details on effective strategies should be continuously researched and communicated to improve intervention design. Evidence on what works, and associated evidence-based interventions could be included in education sector plans and child protection plans. They can be communicated clearly to development partners and to districts and schools for implementation. This should not be undertaken by the Ministry of Education alone but rather cross-sectorally in collaboration with ministries of health, gender, social welfare, justice, information, and with development partners working on child protection, gender-based violence and inclusion.

- **Benchmark 3.3 - Young people, parents, teachers and community members in and around schools are engaged and active on the topic of school violence.**

Findings indicate that not all young people, parents, teachers and community members in and around schools are actively engaged on school violence. An action plan could be created at sub-national level for engaging all young people, parents, teachers and community members on issues of school violence - including specific school and community activities, roles and responsibilities, fully costed budgets, monitoring and evaluation. This will work well if it is incorporated within existing government plans or guidelines such as the education sector plan, child protection plan, reporting referral and response plan. UNICEF Communication for Development (C4D) provides a good guide for child participatory and inclusive approaches. Successful national communication campaigns and platforms can also be utilised and adapted specifically for communication on issues of school violence - for instance through radio programmes, assemblies, extra-curricular activities, special days in the calendar and child film festivals.





Findings for Call to Action 4

Invest resources effectively

Assessment scale regarding national, district and school-level checkpoints/requirements:

A = In place
 B = Partially in place
 C = Not in place

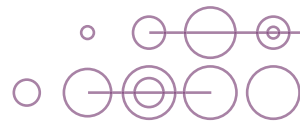
Standard	National	Sub-national/District	School
4.1 Domestic resources have been allocated to support interventions and capacity building activities to prevent and respond to violence in schools.	Educational system budget includes costed strategies for violence prevention and response, adequate resourcing and reflections in budgets.	District receives and allocates resources for violence prevention and response.	School receives earmarked budget for violence prevention and response.
	Assessment		
	Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda

- In the four countries, at the national level the education budget does not include a specific line for developing and implementing violence prevention and response interventions.** One reason cited for this is that within constrained budgets this is not considered a priority alongside other issues. This does not mean that Ministry resources are not used for making schools safe. After the earthquake in Nepal and attack on a school in Pakistan some budget was transferred to re-build school structures and make them safer. Similarly, government budgets are used to make school buildings safe including fences, separate toilets for boys and girls. In Uganda, the Gender Mainstreaming Unit financially supports the operationalisation of violence prevention activities.
- At sub-national level, most respondents stated that they do not receive resources for violence prevention and response. Similarly, at school level, most schools state they do not receive resources allocated to these activities. In Uganda, 29% of district officers reported that they had received funds and that these were used for advocacy activities such as advocating for a violence-free learning environment. Of schools, 10% said they had received resources. Similarly, in Pakistan a small proportion of teachers said they had received earmarked budget for violence prevention and response.



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A = In place
 B = Partially in place
 C = Not in place

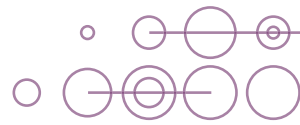
Standard	National	Sub-national/District	School
4.2 Development partners provide resources targeting national or subnational level to end violence in schools, investing in effective approaches.	Development partners provide targeted funds, technical assistance, and programmes through implementing partners for prevention and response to violence in schools.	District coordinates, monitors and reports on use of targeted resources.	School accesses targeted resources for prevention and response to violence.
	Assessment		
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> </div>

- In all countries, development partners** – including bilateral and multilateral organizations and institutions (such as UNICEF, UNHCR, CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), DFID, USAID, EU (European Union), GIZ (German International Cooperation), JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and I/NGOs including Save the Children, World Vision, Plan International, and Raising Voices, as cited in the country studies) - **provide targeted funds, technical assistance and programmes through implementing partners to prevent and respond to violence in schools.**
- Some large bilateral programmes focus on supporting girls’ access and learning in school, but do not include components addressing prevention and response to violence in school. These programmes could be strengthened by understanding the impact of violence on girls’ access and learning and including some activities to address this. Similarly, bilateral programmes focused on rebuilding and rehabilitating schools do not all have a violence prevention component.
- There is weak coordination, monitoring and reporting on the use of targeted resources at sub-national level in all study countries.** Some education officers reported they undertake this role, but this was not supported with documentary evidence. The evidence shows that development partners work collaboratively with District/State/Federal officers. Government officers specific roles as part of the partner intervention tend to be in implementation rather than co-ordination, monitoring and reporting on the resources (technical assistance, funds or interventions) in their district. In Uganda, for instance, district officers reported that they sensitised school staff and the local government leaders at the subcounty level on issues relating to violence against children, reporting and referral mechanisms. They provided materials (RTRR guidelines) to schools and trained teachers on violence prevention and response as well as documentation of violence cases. Coordination, monitoring and reporting will help put government in the driving seat to obtain more impact from development partner inputs.
- At school-level, the responses from school actors indicate that most schools do not receive funds specifically for violence prevention and response. However, some schools do receive resources from development partners in the form of technical assistance, materials and interventions that support preventing and responding to violence. Examples include the establishment of girls’ clubs in Nepal, teacher training, safe WASH facilities in Nepal, funds for school-based communication and sensitisation and peace clubs in Uganda.

Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
4.3 There is private sector engagement in the provision of financial and non-financial resources including technical support, expertise and advocacy towards ending violence in schools.	Private philanthropy, foundations, corporate social responsibility (CSR), social impact investors, etc., provide targeted funds, technical assistance and programmes through implementing partners for prevention and response to violence in schools.	District coordinates, monitors and reports on use of targeted resources.	Schools access targeted resources for prevention and response to violence.
	Assessment		
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Nepal South Sudan </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Pakistan Uganda </div> </div>

- The private sector (i.e., private philanthropy, foundations, faith-based organizations, corporate social responsibility, social impact investors) has not provided specific earmarked funds or technical assistance for the development and implementation of violence prevention and response in any of the study countries.** This could be because they typically support education in private schools or faith-based schools.
- A very small number of respondents said funds may come from the Parent-teacher association (PTA), teachers themselves or people in the community but it is not clear if these are used towards interventions that targeted violence in schools. Where school resources are limited, any funding to the school may be used for other things, for example to pay stipends to teachers who are not receiving salaries from government.





SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES AND/OR PROMISING FINDINGS

- In all countries, **development partners provide targeted funds, technical assistance, and programmes** for prevention and response to violence in schools.
- The resources from development partners to address violence are evident at **national, sub-national and school levels**.

In all countries, development partners provide targeted funds, technical assistance, and programmes for prevention and response to violence in schools.

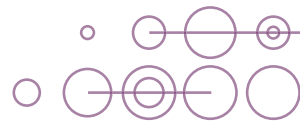
SUMMARY OF GAPS FOR EACH BENCHMARK INDICATOR

- In all countries, there is a **lack of earmarked domestic budget** to end violence against children in schools.
- Programmes funded or supported by development partners may not specifically focus on ending violence in school and may not address all forms of violence.
- Limited evidence of collaboration with **private sector** to fund interventions to end violence in schools.
- There is a lack of coordination, funding, monitoring and evaluation of the existing interventions by district officers and schools, which may limit the district and school ownership.

CONCRETE AND PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT COULD ACHIEVE THIS BENCHMARK INDICATOR

- **Benchmark 4.1 - Domestic resources have been allocated to support interventions and capacity building activities to prevent and respond to violence in schools.**
As discussed in relation to benchmark 1.1, many education sector plans acknowledge the importance of preventing violence in schools but do not include a specific strategy or objective for this. An explicit objective to prevent and reduce violence in schools would be much more powerful, targeted and effective to raise the issue as a priority. Government, donor and private sector funding could then be consolidated through support for and alignment with this strategy.
- **Benchmark 4.2 - Development partners provide resources targeting national or subnational level to end violence in schools, investing in effective approaches.**
The government should aim to coordinate all development partner activities to ensure a joined-up approach and sharing of lessons learnt. If an explicit education sector plan objective can be developed for reducing violence in schools, the Ministry of Education (perhaps in collaboration with other ministries responsible for child protection) should ensure that all development partner activities and funds are aligned and coordinated to support it.
- **Benchmark 4.3 - There is private sector engagement in the provision of financial and non-financial resources including technical support, expertise and advocacy towards ending violence in schools.**
There is little evidence of private sector providing resources towards ending violence in schools. It will be useful to start the dialogue between private sector and government around the positive role private sector can play in education, health, social welfare. This can lead to dialogue on preventing violence and the kind of financial and technical collaboration that might suit both stakeholders. If an explicit strategy can be defined within education sector plan for reducing violence, the Ministry of Education can use this to ensure all private sector activities and funds are aligned and coordinated to support it.





Findings for Call to Action 5

Generate and use evidence

Assessment scale regarding national, district and school-level checkpoints/requirements:

 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Standard	National	Sub-national/District	School
5.1 Information and reporting of incidents ⁵⁰ allow for disaggregated baseline information and monitoring of trends and that reflect needs and gaps in the system. ⁵¹	Central information system that records incidents and monitors trends, fed by District or local authorities.	District has record keeping of incidents occurring in schools.	Maintenance of confidential records about protection related incidents in the school.
	Assessment		
	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	 Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda

- Across all study countries no Ministry of Education has a centralised national system to collect data from districts on violence-related incidents. While no centralised system exists, there are data systems in place which could be strengthened into a central information system on violence-related incidents.
 - In Pakistan, several information systems record incidents and monitor trends, fed by provinces or local authorities regarding reported cases of violence. These include the police (which only covers the cases for which a First Information Report has been registered), the NCHR, the helpline from the MoHR, the Prime Minister's citizens' portal, the data from the Ombudsperson and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) information system for cybercrimes. However, relevant non-sensitive data on these incidents is not centralised or communicated with Ministry of Education to monitor trends.
 - In 2011, UNICEF and Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sport developed a mobile phone-based data-collection system, 'EduTrac', to collect real-time data about schools. School administrators and headteachers send data into the system on a regular basis using mobile phones. Monthly reports are shared on instances of child abuse. The data collected by EduTrac generates reports for the government's EMIS to help improve education planning and complement existing monitoring and reporting structures. By January 2020, EduTrac was operational in 37 districts throughout Uganda. The system has about 10,000 registered reporters in more than 3,800 schools.
- **More evidence of incident recording is available at sub-national level. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provincial education office in Pakistan keeps digital record of incidents occurring in schools.** In South Sudan, headteachers are expected to report instances to the Director General at the state level, who then updates the Ministry at national level. However, the state does not yet have an established system to record and retain this information, much of which is verbal or kept in paper format. In Uganda, 54% of district officers reported that schools share anonymised data or logbooks with the district and 43% reported that there is someone at the district who analyses school level data and shares it with the MoES and with schools.
- **In Uganda and Pakistan, responses from school actors indicate that some schools maintain confidential records about protection related incidents in the school.** Of the interviewed school actors, 34% in Uganda reported that headteachers regularly monitor the logbook and share a summary of reports with district, teachers, SMCs or parents. In Pakistan, 57% of the interviewed headteachers and 52% of the interviewed teachers stated that there was no confidential logging report system.
- The inconsistencies in information collection at different levels show that most of the education systems do not follow a formal and standardised mechanism for the maintenance of confidential records about protection related incidents in the school.

50 Protection-related incidents

51 Section 2.6 of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UN Women, *Global Guidance on Addressing School-related Gender-based Violence*, UNESCO and UN Women, 2016



A = In place
 B = Partially in place
 C = Not in place

Standard	National	Sub-national/District	School
5.2 There is regular data collection on prevalence and forms of violence in schools using methods that follow high ethical standards. ⁵²	National Statistics Office and Ministry of Education monitor data on prevalence and forms of violence through regular participation in international school-based survey programmes (every 3-5 years).	District support implementation of school-based survey programmes.	Comprehensive questions on prevalence and forms of violence are included in regular school-based survey programmes.
	Assessment		
	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan	 Nepal South Sudan
	 Pakistan Uganda	 Pakistan Uganda	 Pakistan Uganda

- In all study countries, the Ministry of Education and National Statistics Office have not collected data on prevalence and forms of violence through a national or international school-based survey programme. However, **countries have engaged in one-off surveys. For example, in 2015 Nepal conducted the WHO Global Schools-Based Student Health Survey. In Uganda, in November 2012, MoES with support from UNICEF conducted a study on Assessing Child Protection, Safety & Security Issues for Children in Uganda Primary and Secondary Schools.**
- There is limited district engagement in implementing school-based surveys. In South Sudan, despite limited intervention at national level, at the state level MOGEI appoints a partners' coordinator who is responsible for guiding NGO partners and supporting different types of data collection processes at the state level. The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (MGCSW) at the state level also visits schools regularly and engages both learners and staff on violence and related issues happening in schools. This was particularly evident in Wau and Western Equatoria where headteachers reported MGCSW data collection as part of reports to the Director General. The data collected by this office is however unofficial and there are queries concerning whether it can be relied upon for decision-making.
- Schools in all countries reported that they have not participated in providing information for surveys on prevalence and forms of violence. This could be because the sample size is small and does not include schools, teachers or students included in other surveys.
- Given that national surveys are resource intense, it might be valuable to also consider developing digital dashboards that can collect information on instances of violence in real time. Technology can be used to quickly record and report relevant issues to stakeholders. For example, using EduTrac in Uganda to generate a dashboard with reports and communications on prevalence of violence.

52 Such as through the relevant modules of the Global Schools-Based Student Health Survey (GSHS)



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■ A = In place ■ B = Partially in place ■ C = Not in place

Standard	National	Sub-national/District	School
5.3 Decisions on replication and scale-up of violence prevention initiatives are based on evaluations of trialled models and approaches. ⁵³	National Governments conduct robust monitoring and evaluations of violence prevention initiatives in order to inform replication and scale-up.	Districts support implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities for violence prevention initiatives to inform replication and scale-up.	School supports implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities for violence prevention initiatives to inform replication and scale-up.
	Assessment		
	■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda

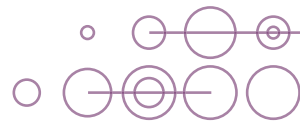
- Across all countries, at national and sub-national levels, the Ministry of Education has not planned nor conducted monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives in order to inform replication and scale-up.
- Donor-funded evaluations were conducted on violence prevention, often in collaboration with government or shared with government:
 - In Nepal, a recent evaluation was undertaken of the mid-term review report⁵⁴ of the “Zero Tolerance: Gender Based Violence Free Schools in Nepal” project implemented collaboratively by USAID and UNICEF through national and local NGOs in about 200 public schools in four districts of the Tarai Region. In 2017, Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) conducted a “Situational Assessment for Improved Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response in Selected Districts of Nepal” with support from UNFPA.
 - In Uganda, in 2013, a two-arm cluster randomised controlled trial study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the ‘Good School Toolkit’ developed by Raising Voices to prevent violence against children in Ugandan primary schools. A total of 42 schools participated and either received the Toolkit plus implementation support or were allocated to a wait-list control condition. Findings showed that treatment schools were able to reduce violence against students in 18 months⁵⁵.
 - In Pakistan, a pilot initiative launched by Zindagi Trust in collaboration with Agha Khan University and the Sindh education department, monitored and evaluated the extent to which certain types of teachers’ training contribute to a safer learning environment and a reduction of violence in school.
- At school-level teachers did not provide evidence indicating that the schools support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives to inform replication and scale-up. In Pakistan, interviewed headteachers and teachers mentioned the supervision by the school administration and several of them (36% of the headteachers and 16% of the teachers who were interviewed) stated that it led to a reduction of violence in school. Despite an absence of formal, standardised and structured implementation, monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives, it is possible that an ad-hoc system that relies more on direct personal and hierarchical interactions may have contributed to reducing violence in schools. However, since no formal mechanism is in place, this cannot be verified. It is also possible that interviewed teachers and headteachers may have given a socially acceptable answer.

53 See WHO 2019 Section 9

54 The report is available online at: https://www.youthpower.org/sites/default/files/YouthPower/files/resources/Mid%20term%20report%20zero%20tolerance-gender%20based%20violence%20free%20schools%20in%20Nepal_0.pdf

55 Devries, Karen, et al., *The Good Schools Toolkit to prevent violence against children in Ugandan primary schools: Study protocol for a cluster randomised controlled trial*, 2013





SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES AND/OR PROMISING FINDINGS

- In 37 out of 134 Districts in Uganda, the **MoES EduTrac system collects real-time data from schools including monthly reports on cases of child abuse.**
- In KP province in Pakistan, **cases of violence are compiled and digitalised by provincial education authorities.** Other countries also mentioned ad hoc methods for collating and monitoring cases of violence at district level.
- In Uganda, the **RTRR national guidelines provide guidance to school actors on how to confidentially log reports of violence** against children in schools.
- Some countries have engaged in one-off surveys on prevalence of violence and prevention. For example, in 2015, Nepal conducted the WHO **Global School-based Student Health Survey**. In Uganda, in November 2012, MoES with support from UNICEF conducted a study on Assessing Child Protection, Safety & Security Issues for Children in Uganda Primary and Secondary Schools.
- Some development partners have collaborated with governments to monitor and evaluate interventions to prevent and reduce violence.

SUMMARY OF GAPS FOR EACH BENCHMARK INDICATOR

- **No country in the study had a national system that collects and monitors data on violence-related incidents.**
- No country in the study conducts regular (every 3-5 years) school-based survey programmes to monitor information on prevalence and forms of violence through regular participation in international.
- Monitoring and evaluations of violence prevention initiatives take place but tend to be led by development partners and linked to their specific projects.
- There is **limited evidence of government scaling-up violence prevention activities.**

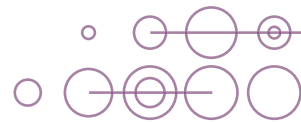
Governments should first look at what is working to collect and monitor information in the education system and then expand existing processes to include information on violence and consider how the relevant information can feed through the system in a confidential way.

CONCRETE AND PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT COULD ACHIEVE THIS BENCHMARK INDICATOR

- **Benchmark 5.1 - Information and reporting of incidents allow for disaggregated baseline information and monitoring of trends and that reflect needs and gaps in the system.**

No country in the study has a robust system for reporting and monitoring incidents of violence through the different levels of the system. However, each country has some functioning processes for reporting and monitoring cases of violence. Governments should first look at what is working to collect and monitor information in the education system and then expand existing processes to include information on violence and consider how the relevant information can feed through the system in a confidential way. In countries where there is no structured or coordinated approach for capturing confidential data on school violence, this could be addressed by expanding the country's education management information system (EMIS) to record data on cases of violence and thereby monitor trends. This could involve integration with any existing case management systems, although this would require careful design and implementation to ensure the confidentiality of information shared between ministries, for example Ministry of Education and Ministries of Gender and Social Welfare. Related to this, the national guidelines for schools to create safe and confidential reporting systems (see benchmark 2.2) could include a mechanism for reporting incidents through the EMIS for aggregation and review at the state and national levels. Further, there is a need for the government to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education at the national and sub-national levels to ensure the long-term sustainability of high-quality systems to monitor violence in schools. Technology can be utilised to improve data collection, for example digital data collection using EduTrac in Uganda could then feed into a dashboard with real-time data reports such as number a type of cases.





- **Benchmark 5.2 - There is regular data collection on prevalence and forms of violence in schools using methods that follow high ethical standards.**

Many countries collect data on prevalence and forms of violence but this is done in an ad hoc manner. The Ministry of Education together with relevant government institutions and departments such as the national statistics office could consider regular participation in international or national school-based surveys such as the Global Schools-Based Student Health Survey. Where budget allows, the education sector plan or child protection plan should include school-based survey programmes that will adequately inform design of relevant and efficient strategies to counter violence in school. To encourage this, examples of where survey findings have been used to inform successful strategies could be widely disseminated. Technology could be used to collect real time data collection and communicate key metrics on a dashboard, for example building on EduTrac in Uganda.

- **Benchmark 5.3 - Decisions on replication and scale-up of violence prevention initiatives are based on evaluations of trialled models and approaches.**

Robust monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives provides reliable and pertinent information to design replication and scale-up to end violence in school. All education sector plans and child protection plans should include support for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives to inform replication and scale-up. Child protection bodies as well as donors should strongly advocate for this evidence-based approach with the national and sub-national governments. While interventions by development partners often include rigorous evaluations, the findings show that, despite success, these are not being scaled nationwide. This may be because the financial, material and human resources needed for scale up are not available from donors or government. There is the need for evaluations of these projects to include an analysis of ‘scalability by the education system’. The development partner could review the intervention together with government to see if it is scalable within current resources and, if not, how intensive resources could be pared down while still retaining the components that facilitate intended outcomes.



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Conclusion and recommendations

This diagnostic exercise aimed to assess national efforts to prevent and respond to violence in schools across four countries: Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan, and Uganda.

All study countries have laws prohibiting violence against children in schools. Uganda, South Sudan and Nepal ban corporal punishment in schools and Pakistan has laws prohibiting corporal punishment in some provinces. Several effective policy documents exist on violence in schools to varying degrees, including but not limited to: 1) Uganda's Reporting, Tracking, Referral, and Response (RTRR) guidelines; 2) The Pakistan School Safety Framework; 3) Uganda's NSP VACiS outlines the country's strategic direction and priorities towards the elimination of violence against children as well as response to cases of violence in schools.

Major good practices were also identified beyond the policy landscape including:

1. Three countries have a national helpline for children;
2. All countries have school counsellors in some schools serving as a focal points for cases of violence;
3. All countries support the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage stakeholders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence against children;
4. In all countries there is some evidence of young people, parents and community members taking action to prevent violence in school;
5. In three countries, the national curriculum includes approaches that develop life skills, teach children about violence and safe behaviour and promote equal relationships.



Shortcomings include the inadequate implementation of laws and policies or insufficient compliance measures for enforcing laws and policies; the capacity building of government officials and teachers; insufficient budgets; poor use of evidence and challenges addressing social norms.

Each country has individual examples of strengths, gaps and recommended next steps. There are also some thematic lessons learned that are common across all countries. The main recommendations from the study are discussed below. The full set of recommendations by benchmark, as detailed in the previous section, are collated together in Annex 2.

Ensure strategies to prevent violence in and around school are explicitly included in the education sector plan and accompanied by key indicators, action plans and budgets and that these strategies are resourced. When designing the strategies, it is important to include teachers' and children's voices so that the strategies are appropriate and implementable. Government, donor and private sector resources can then be consolidated through support for or alignment with this strategy.

Strengthen dissemination of national policies, plans and guidelines on preventing violence in school to sub-national and school levels and ensure stronger enforcement at these levels. Many national laws and policies prohibiting violence in schools are not communicated effectively to the school level. For example, in the two countries where national guidelines for responding to violence exist, responses from school actors indicate only approximately half of the students know about it.

Ensure the Ministry of Education is included in the national child protection policy framework and participates in the multi-sectoral child protection coordination mechanism. Many sub-national government officers understand the national laws, policies and guidelines prohibiting violence in schools, few are taking action to oversee implementation and ensure compliance in schools. Without this, schools are not held to account and can choose not to implement the policies. A multi-sectoral child protection policy could support this by outlining roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders at different levels of the system.

Increase focus on shifting social norms to end violence against children in school, including through greater use of existing platforms. (For example: student curriculum, teacher training, radio, etc.) Where schools are involved in interventions to address violence they tend to be focused on advocating for peace or non-violence. It is not evident that the interventions challenge the social norms that drive the violence, address gender discrimination or taboos on sexuality. This is difficult to address when they are a taboo issue or are practiced by those in power, but it is important. Teachers and students can contribute ideas and solutions on how this can be achieved.

Ensure better coordination, monitoring and evaluation of interventions to improve prevention of violence in schools. There are good examples of development partners providing resources (e.g. technical assistance, training, materials, activities in schools) to address violence in schools. These are especially important in places where governments have no resources to implement activities themselves. However, there is limited evidence of schools, districts or national government taking the lead to monitor or coordinate these interventions. **All education sector plans should include support for coordination, monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives. At sub-national level, the role of government officials in oversight of the implementation of violence prevention and response measures, should be strengthened.**

Finally, there is the need to increase investments targeting at ending violence in schools – including domestic resources, donor funding and private sector financial and non-financial resources. While progress has been made in many countries developing robust policies to prevent violence in school, the good practices from these studies can be reflected upon and scaled to support implementation of policies and end violence in schools.





ANNEX 1 – SUMMARY TABLE OF ALL BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS BY COUNTRY

Assessment scale regarding national, district and school-level checkpoints/requirements:

 A = In place	 B = Partially in place	 C = Not in place
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Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District/State/Province	School
1.1 The national government includes prevention of violence in around schools as a specific strategy in education sector policies, plans and budgets.	Prevention of violence in and around schools is identified as a specific strategy in the national education sector policy or plan ⁵⁶ Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	The District authorities support the implementation of the national (or sub-national) plan or policy in schools. Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	School implements violence prevention activities in conformity with national or subnational objectives. Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda
1.2 There is explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in schools, and policies are in place to support positive discipline and classroom management. ⁵⁷	Laws that prohibit corporal punishment include clear guidance on implementation, with a process for non-compliance Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	District oversees implementation of law and details compliance measures. Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	School implements law or has an independent policy and there are repercussions for non-compliance. Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda
	Teacher training on positive discipline and classroom management is included in pre- and in-service training. Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	District ensures that teachers receive thorough training in techniques of classroom management. Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	Teachers have received training on positive discipline and classroom management in the last three years. Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda
1.3 The roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education in response and referral to incidents of violence are clearly set out in the multi-sectoral national child protection policy framework.	A national policy framework, strategy or other system that outlines the role of the Ministry of Education as part of the national child protection system alongside other formal actors (Health, Social Welfare, Justice, Police) ⁵⁸ Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	There is district-level coordination of national policy framework and support for implementation in schools Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	School follows national and/or district policy and coordinates with local authorities and other duty bearers Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda
	The Ministry of Education has established a national child protection/safeguarding policy with the requirement that all sub-national authorities and schools under their purview develop their own localized policies. ⁵⁹ Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	The district authorities support the establishment of localized and coordinated school child protection policies, and has identified one focal point with overseeing and responding to concerns Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda	School follows national policy or independently has established child safeguarding policies and procedures Nepal South Sudan Pakistan Uganda
1.4 The country has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration and in situations of armed conflict is implementing the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict. ^{60 61}	The Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict have been brought into domestic policy and operational frameworks as far as possible and appropriate. Nepal South Sudan Uganda	The Guidelines are widely disseminated by District authorities so that all parties engaged in conflict are aware of and able to abide by them. Nepal South Sudan Uganda	School level plans in place to reduce risk of attacks, to respond quickly to risks, and to have a clear plan for safe school re-opening after attacks happen. Nepal South Sudan Uganda

56 See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Global Partnership for Education, *Guidelines for education sector plan preparation*, iiep and GPE, 2015 or United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Children's Fund and Global Partnership for Education, *Guidelines for developing gender-responsive education sector plans*, GPE and UNGEI, 2017

57 See Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, *Teaching without violence: prohibiting corporal punishment*, 2019














58 These set out the mandated roles and responsibilities of state actors in the national child protection system. See section 2.1, UNESCO/UN Women 2016 for a discussion of child protection systems

59 See UNICEF 2012; Keeping Children Safe 2014

60 The Safe Schools Declaration is an inter-governmental political commitment that provides countries the opportunity to express support for protecting education from attack during times of armed conflict; the importance of the continuation of education during war; and the implementation of concrete measures to deter the military use of schools. See more details: <https://ssd.protectingeducation.org>







61 This sub-benchmark was not included in the Pakistan Diagnostic Exercise












Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District/ State/Province	School
2.1 Key violence prevention strategies are embedded in curriculum-based activities for children. ⁶²	<p>National curriculum includes age appropriate approaches that (i) develop life skills, (ii) teach children about violence and safe behavior, (iii) challenge social and cultural norms and promote equal relationships.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>District supervises and assures information and curriculum is implemented in schools</p> <p>  </p>	<p>Schools deliver formal school syllabi that includes life skills, safe behavior, and equal relationships.</p> <p>  </p>
2.2 Child safeguarding principles and procedures are in place in schools, inclusive of codes of conduct, and safe recruitment standards. ⁶³	<p>National guidelines detail process by which all schools respond to child protection concerns, including referral to services. The Ministry of Education has a focal point.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>District has step-by-step procedures for schools to follow and has identified one focal point with overseeing and responding to concerns.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>System for responding to child protection concerns is in place following district or central guidelines, or school if no policy. School has focal point with responsibility for responding to protection incidents.</p> <p>  </p>
	<p>National guidelines clearly outline norms and standards of ethical behavior to be included in Teacher Codes of Conduct.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>Codes of conduct required for all staff including District and Schools. District/sub-national authorities ensure compliance of Codes of Conduct in schools</p> <p>  </p>	<p>School has Code of Conduct that is publicly posted and requires all teachers to understand and comply; Ramifications for violations are proscribed and enforced; Requires written signatures by all staff; includes Codes of behavior for students.</p> <p>  </p>
	<p>The establishment of safe and confidential reporting mechanisms for students is mandated for all schools. There is a working, accessible national reporting mechanism such as a national child helpline.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>District supports schools in implementation of reporting mechanism and ensure availability of support mechanisms. It has its own mechanism for response when reports are elevated.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>Students are aware of and use reporting mechanism to report experiences of violence. It is linked to support services and includes a monitoring system for reporting and accountability.</p> <p>  </p>
	<p>National pre- and in-service training for school staff includes their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>District authorities ensure that teachers receive pre- or in-service training on their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>All schools staff receive pre- or in-service training on their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations. Staff are adequately trained to prevent revictimization of children and are knowledgeable about the referral pathway in place in the locality.</p> <p>  </p>
	<p>There are national policies that regulate hiring of new teachers and staff and their transfer to ensure suitability for working with children.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>Districts implement the policy requiring background checks when recruiting or transferring teachers.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>School follows or has individualised methods to vet staff to ensure their suitability for working with children; it requests new hires or districts to report previous convictions or reasons for transfer.</p> <p>  </p>

62 Section 3, *Preventing schools-based violence: A practical handbook*, WHO, Geneva, 2019. This links to Benchmark 3.2 and 5.3

63 See UNICEF 2012; Keeping Children Safe 2014; UNGEI 2018. This links to benchmark 1.3 above

Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District/State/Province	School
2.3 Each school has at least one focal point who is capacitated to provide front-line mental health/ psychosocial support to children experiencing violence.	Ministry of Education has a training programme or special curriculum for school counsellors that includes children's mental health and well-being; and has arrangement or referral procedures when a child or his/ her family needs specialised services. 	District has support mechanism for school counsellors and refers to specialised services to assist schools when necessary. 	School counsellor is in the school and is capacitated to provide front-line mental health/psychosocial support to students; and has identified a referral source for range of specialised services (mental health, medical, family services...) 
2.4 The physical environment in and around schools is safe and designed with the well-being of children in mind. ⁶⁴	There are established national standards for school buildings and grounds that address student safety. 	The District authorities are aware of national standards and monitor improvements to schools' physical environment. 	School design reflect national guidelines. The community, students and staff have mapped unsafe areas and have identified solutions for these areas. Sanitary facilities are safe and secure, classroom architecture and design is gender-responsive, and students move freely to and from school. 

Standard	National	Sub-national/District/State/Province	School
3.1 There is wide dissemination and engagement with stakeholders to build knowledge and appreciation of child rights and laws prohibiting violence.	National government and policy supports the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage stakeholders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence at the national level. 	Districts support the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage schools, community members/leaders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence at the district level. 	Schools support the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage students, teachers, parents and community members on child rights and laws prohibiting violence at the school level. 
3.2 Specific, evidence-informed interventions are researched and implemented, addressing social norms that drive key forms of violence and/or helping children manage risks. ⁶⁵	National policy supports the development and implementation of evidence-informed initiatives ⁶⁶ that address broad social norms that drive key forms of violence (e.g. bullying, digital safety, sexual abuse and exploitation, youth and gang violence). 	Districts support the implementation and monitoring of initiatives in schools/ communities that address social norms that drive key forms of violence. 	Schools support the implementation and monitoring of initiatives in the school and surrounding community that address social norms that drive key forms of violence. 
3.3 Young people, parents, teachers and community members in and around schools are engaged and active on the topic of school violence.	Ministry of Education supports national, contextualized communication initiatives to raise awareness on violence in schools. 	District level strategy for implementation of media, arts, or other awareness raising activities 	Extra-curricular or community-based arts, drama, print documents, or other activities that promote awareness at the school and for parents and families 

64 UNGEI 2018 Domain 7; WHO 2019 Section 6.

65 WHO 2019 Section 3

66 INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children, WHO, Geneva, 2016 offers strategies to draw from

■ A = In place ■ B = Partially in place ■ C = Not in place

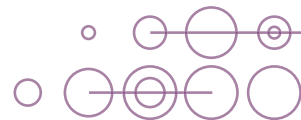
Standard	National	Sub-national/District/State/Province	School
4.1 Domestic resources that have been allocated to support interventions and capacity building activities to prevent and respond to violence in schools.	Educational system budget includes costed strategies for violence prevention and response, adequate resourcing and reflections in budgets. ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	District receives and allocates resources for violence prevention and response ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	School receives earmarked budget for violence prevention and response ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda
4.2 Development partners provide resources targeting national or subnational level to end violence in schools, investing in effective approaches.	Development partners provide targeted funds, technical assistance, and programmes through implementing partners for prevention and response to violence in schools ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	District coordinates, monitors and reports on use of targeted resources ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	School access targeted resources for prevention and response to violence. ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda
4.3 There is private sector engagement in the provision of financial and non-financial resources including technical support, expertise and advocacy towards ending violence in schools.	Private philanthropy, foundations, CSR, social impact investors, etc., provide targeted funds, technical assistance and programmes through implementing partners for prevention and response to violence in schools. ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	District coordinates, monitors and reports on use of targeted resources ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	Schools access targeted resources for prevention and response to violence. ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda

Standard	National	Sub-national/District/State/Province	School
5.1 Information and reporting of incidents allow for disaggregated baseline information and monitoring of trends and that reflect needs and gaps in the system. ⁶⁷	Central information system that records incidents and monitors trends, fed by District or local authorities ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	District has record keeping of incidents occurring in schools ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	Maintenance of confidential records about protection related incidents in the school ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda
5.2 There is regular data collection on prevalence and forms of violence in schools using methods that follow high ethical standards. ⁶⁸	National Statistics Office and Ministry of Education monitor data on prevalence and forms of violence through regular participation in international school-based survey programmes (every 3-5 years) ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	District support implementation of school-based survey programmes ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	Comprehensive questions on prevalence and forms of violence are included in regular school-based survey programmes. ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda
5.3 Decisions on replication and scale-up of violence prevention initiatives are based on evaluations of trailed models and approaches. ⁶⁹	National Governments conduct robust monitoring and evaluations of violence prevention initiatives in order to inform replication and scale-up. ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	Districts support implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities for violence prevention initiatives to inform replication and scale-up. ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda	School support implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities for violence prevention initiatives to inform replication and scale-up. ■ Nepal ■ South Sudan ■ Pakistan ■ Uganda

67 Section 2.6 of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UN Women, *Global Guidance on Addressing School-related Gender-based Violence*, UNESCO and UN Women, 2016

68 Such as through the relevant modules of the Global Schools-Based Student Health Survey (GSHS)

69 See WHO 2019 Section 9



ANNEX 2 – FULL RECOMMENDATIONS BY BENCHMARK

- **Benchmark 1.1 - Prevention of violence in and around schools is identified as a specific strategy in the national education sector policy or plan.**

The education sector plan should include an explicit objective to prevent and reduce all forms of violence within schools. To be effective, this should be accompanied by strategies, key performance indicators and budgets for its implementation and enforcement. Such an objective could include specific strategies for developing a clear, concise and user-centred summary in all relevant languages to be printed and disseminated nationally to states and schools, and then incorporated into orientations and training programmes for teachers and other education actors. Government and donor funding could be consolidated through support for or alignment with this strategy.

- **Benchmark 1.2 - There is explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in schools, and policies are in place to support positive discipline and classroom management.**

Where laws exist to prohibit violence against children in school, but not specifically outlawing corporal punishment, they may need to include specific prohibition of corporal punishment. For effective law enforcement, it is important to have strong dissemination and monitoring of schools' compliance. Improved dissemination could be achieved through a campaign such as Maar Nahi Piyar in Punjab, Pakistan. This could include preparation and printing of simple and visual posters on preventing violence in all appropriate languages, which could be distributed to schools for posting in prominent public spaces. It could also include guidance for teachers on how to manage their classrooms without violence or corporal punishment. Where I/NGOs are delivering teacher training on positive discipline and classroom management, the Ministry of Education should co-ordinate efforts to identify and scale good practice, perhaps by making materials open-source and readily available.

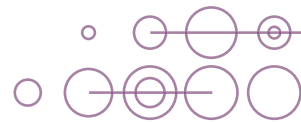
- **Benchmark 1.3 - The roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education in response and referral to incidents of violence are clearly set out in the multi-sectoral national child protection policy framework.**

Existing violence-prevention, child rights and/or child protection policies could be revisited and ideally incorporated into a multi-sectoral national child protection policy framework. Ministries of Education, Health, Social Welfare, Gender, and other relevant ministries should come together under a formal child protection framework to develop multi-sectoral referral and response processes. These processes should be practical and consistent across all sectors. Associated guidelines can be developed outlining the processes, streamlining information and coordinating actions between sectors. Such guidelines should be written into national and sub-national level development action plans with clearly defined targets and responsibilities to ensure that ownership sits with the government in the longer term. Once prepared, they could also be summarised into a shorter, user-centred document in all main languages for printing and dissemination to schools for compliance by registered and volunteer teachers.

- **Benchmark 1.4 - The country has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration and in situations of armed conflict is implementing the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict.**

As a first step governments should explicitly endorse the Safe Schools Declaration. The GCPEA, the global partnership behind the Safe Schools Declaration, has collected examples of concrete measures to protect students and teachers from attack and schools and universities from attack and military use, which can serve as inspiration to fellow states and other stakeholders. Ministries could review these examples, or directly draw on GCPEA for support, to develop some short and simple guidelines to disseminate to schools. These should set out what the Safe Schools Declaration means in practice, channels of recourse and the key factors for them to consider in planning how to react to or mitigate the effects of future conflict. They should be disseminated in local language and key stakeholders trained. Where possible they can be tied to existing trainings or disseminations and build upon what is working well.





- **Benchmark 2.1 - Key violence prevention strategies are embedded in curriculum-based activities for children.**

Often life skills are included in the curriculum but are not explicit enough to include preventing violence, ensuring safe behavior, promoting inclusion of marginalised groups and gender equitable relationships. In this instance, the syllabi, teacher professional development courses and teaching and learning materials can be reviewed and improved to include these aspects. To support delivery in the classroom, the link between violence prevention and improving learning outcomes should be made explicit to all teachers and government officers who monitor and support them. This should ideally be accompanied by continuous professional development for teachers. Effective teaching of these topics is unlikely to happen without greater allocation of resources to provide teachers with the necessary skills to facilitate the learning.

- **Benchmark 2.2 - Child safeguarding principles and procedures are in place in schools, inclusive of codes of conduct, and safe recruitment standards.**

- 1. National guidelines to establish safe and confidential reporting mechanisms.**

In countries where reporting processes are in place, such as a national helpline, communication to students can be improved so that they are aware of them and feel confident and empowered to use them. Where child safeguarding, reporting and referral currently takes place on an ad hoc basis, there is a need to develop explicit user-centred guidelines for schools on how to create step-by-step, efficient and confidential procedures for responding to school-based violence in accordance with the applicable legislation and Teacher Code of Conduct. Such guidelines should: outline confidential reporting mechanisms for students at the school level; identify a focal person within each sub-national government education office and school to respond to protection incidents; specify different mechanisms and procedures for dealing with different types of incident (for example, depending on the nature of the violence or the identity of the perpetrator) and their repercussions; and identify coordinated sub-national referral pathways with clearly defined responsibilities for key bodies such as the Ministries of Gender, Welfare, Health, Justice and Internal Affairs. Such guidelines should be clear and concise for printing and dissemination to all schools at minimum cost; available in all relevant languages; and written for delivery via a school-based training modality so that all teachers can participate. In addition to this, capacity building should be undertaken to train sub-national government actors across sectors on issues including monitoring and enforcement, and a national helpline should also be established for children to report violence, with details communicated widely for example through school assemblies and radio programmes.

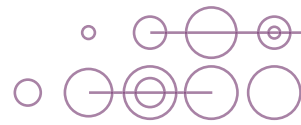
- 2. Norms and standards of ethical behaviour in Teacher Codes of Conduct.**

In countries where there is no comprehensive, widely disseminated Teacher Code of Conduct, the code should be written or updated to explicitly include a strict prohibition on corporal punishment and other violence against children. Children can also contribute to the update with descriptions of what kinds of teachers and school environments would make them feel safe. Such code, or a summarised form, could then be printed and disseminated to all schools. A simple poster or painted sign setting out the key expectations on teachers should also be shared with schools for display in a prominent location. Where possible, all teachers should receive an induction on the code and officers at sub-national level should monitor whether teachers are signing the code on an annual basis.

- 3. Policies that regulate hiring of new teachers and staff and their transfer to ensure suitability for working with children.**

A teacher licencing system can be an effective way of monitoring employment and transfer of teachers and ensure their suitability for working with children. It is important that the licencing follows strict procedures for conducting background checks including convictions of child abuse and dismissal





from a school or government position for violent behaviour. Where a licensing system is not feasible, existing databases that record teachers' details to facilitate the payment of salaries could be reviewed and updated to record clearance on criminal record checks and no dismissal from previous schools or government positions.

4. Pre- and in-service training on obligations for child safeguarding and reporting/response.

In countries where teachers are not trained on child safeguarding and reporting/response, pre and in-service curricula should be updated to include a specific module on child safeguarding and reporting/response obligations. The training module can be made open source and accessible to development partners delivering in-service training. In places where many teachers are unqualified, are volunteers or do not have access to regular in-service training a more direct, low-cost approach should be taken to inform them of their obligations for child safeguarding and reporting/response. In such a situation, strengthening teachers' awareness and skills around child safeguarding and violence reporting can best be addressed by ensuring that each school has at least one copy of the Teachers Code of Conduct (see above). Headteachers can then provide training to their staff, including volunteers, through staff meetings or school-based professional development sessions.

- **Benchmark 2.3 - Each school has at least one focal point who is capacitated to provide front-line mental health/psychosocial support to children experiencing violence.**

Many schools have identified one person as a focal point for cases of violence. However, these focal points are rarely qualified school counsellors who have been capacitated through training to provide front-line mental health/psychosocial support to children experiencing violence. Thus, training material should be developed and made with content on children's mental health, positive discipline, gender equality, inclusiveness and well-being. In many contexts this can be done by building upon what has already been developed and implemented effectively by development partners. In addition, the focal persons would benefit from concise and standardised guidance for performing their role, this could be a written guide, video, audio or where resources are scarce it could be written into the Teacher Code of Conduct. The headteacher should be responsible for monitoring and supporting the focal person in this role.

- **Benchmark 2.4 – The physical environment in and around schools is safe and designed with the well-being of children in mind.**

While many governments have national school safety guidelines, they do not comprehensively address all forms of violence. School safety guidelines should be reviewed to ensure they address all forms of violence. Where necessary, they may be revised to ensure they directly address safety such as requiring schools to map unsafe areas to identify solutions, providing clear criteria for ensuring sanitary facilities are safe and secure, providing clear criteria for ensuring that classroom architecture and design is gender-responsive, and providing guidance on how to ensure students can move freely to and from school. Even when countries have appropriate national guidelines that address school safety, they can be difficult to maintain and ensure compliance when resources are limited or when schools are affected by national emergencies such as conflict. It may be possible for governments to review where they can draw funds outside the education ministry to allocate to school safety guidelines to ensure compliance. Where funds are insufficient Ministry of Education may reach an agreement with school parent-teacher associations, boards of governors and other community bodies to take on responsibility regarding the upkeep of school buildings. When more funding is available, the Ministry of Education should then take greater responsibility in bringing all schools up to the appropriate standard.





- **Benchmark 3.1 - There is wide dissemination and engagement with stakeholders to build knowledge and appreciation of child rights and laws prohibiting violence.**

It is necessary to increase and reinforce awareness of children's rights and laws prohibiting violence for school staff, children, parents and communities to achieve positive behaviour change and create a safer, more participatory and inclusive learning environment. In some cases, this may require a genuine increase in commitment from government to prioritise communication activities that challenge social norms. To this effect, child protection policies, and all education sector plans could include communication guidelines and dissemination strategies, as well as specific activities which sub-national government and school actors could implement to build knowledge and appreciation of child rights and laws prohibiting violence. The activities should address the barriers to child rights and safe schools and promote more equality, peace, tolerance, inclusion. It is vital that dissemination strategies use local languages and references so that all stakeholders can build a better understanding of child rights and laws prohibiting violence.

- **Benchmark 3.2 - Specific, evidence-informed interventions are researched and implemented, addressing social norms that drive key forms of violence and/or helping children manage risks.**

Many schools participate in initiatives promoting violence-free schools but not all initiatives address social norms. Not all initiatives are evidence-based nor get evaluated and findings are not always shared with government to inform policy and planning. Existing research and communication processes can be utilised to gather information on effective interventions that address social norms and reduce violence in school. Development partner project evaluations, action research, annual education reviews, conferences, and webinars can be used to gather information on what works to address social norms and reduce violence in school. Details on effective strategies should be continuously researched and communicated to improve intervention design. Evidence on what works, and associated evidence-based interventions could be included in education sector plans and child protection plans. They can be communicated clearly to development partners and to districts and schools for implementation. This should not be undertaken by the Ministry of Education alone but rather cross-sectorally, in collaboration with Ministries of Health, Gender, Social Welfare, Justice, Information, and with development partners working on child protection, gender-based violence, inclusion.

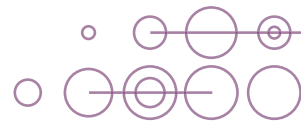
- **Benchmark 3.3 - Young people, parents, teachers and community members in and around schools are engaged and active on the topic of school violence.**

Findings indicate that not *all* young people, parents, teachers and community members in and around schools are actively engaged on school violence. An action plan could be created at sub-national level for engaging all young people, parents, teachers and community members on issues of school violence - including specific school and community activities, roles and responsibilities, fully costed budgets, monitoring and evaluation. This will work well if it is incorporated within existing government plans or guidelines such as the education sector plan, child protection plan, reporting referral and response plan. UNICEF Communication for Development (C4D) provides a good guide for child participatory and inclusive approaches. Successful national communication campaigns and platforms can also be utilised and adapted specifically for communication on issues of school violence - for instance through radio programmes, assemblies, extra-curricular activities, special days in the calendar, child film festivals.

- **Benchmark 4.1 - Domestic resources have been allocated to support interventions and capacity building activities to prevent and respond to violence in schools.**

As discussed in relation to benchmark 1.1, many education sector plans acknowledge the importance of preventing violence in schools but do not include a specific strategy or objective for this. An explicit objective to prevent and reduce violence in schools would be much more powerful, targeted and effective to raise the issue as a priority. Government, donor and private sector funding could then be consolidated through support for and alignment with this strategy.





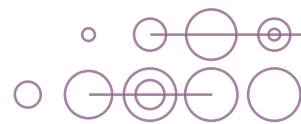
- **Benchmark 4.2 - Development partners provide resources targeting national or subnational level to end violence in schools, investing in effective approaches.**

The government should aim to coordinate all development partner activities to ensure a joined-up approach and sharing of lessons learnt. If an explicit education sector plan objective can be developed for reducing violence in schools, the Ministry of Education (perhaps in collaboration with other ministries responsible for child protection) should ensure that all development partner activities and funds are aligned and coordinated to support it.

- **Benchmark 4.3 - There is private sector engagement in the provision of financial and non-financial resources including technical support, expertise and advocacy towards ending violence in schools.**

There is little evidence of private sector providing resources towards ending violence in schools. It will be useful to start the dialogue between private sector and government around the positive role private sector can play in education, health, social welfare. This can lead to dialogue on preventing violence and the kind of financial and technical collaboration that might suit both stakeholders. If an explicit strategy can be defined within education sector plan for reducing violence, the Ministry of Education can use this to ensure all private sector activities and funds are aligned and co-ordinated to support it.





- **Benchmark 5.1 - Information and reporting of incidents allow for disaggregated baseline information and monitoring of trends and that reflect needs and gaps in the system.**

No country in the study has a robust system for reporting and monitoring incidents of violence through the different levels of the system. However, each country has some functioning processes for reporting and monitoring cases of violence. Governments should first look at what is working to collect and monitor information in the education system and then expand existing processes to include information on violence and consider how the relevant information can feed through the system in a confidential way. In countries where there is no structured or coordinated approach for capturing confidential data on school violence, this could be addressed by expanding the country's education management information system (EMIS) to record data on cases of violence and thereby monitor trends. This could involve integration with any existing case management systems, although this would require careful design and implementation to ensure the confidentiality of information shared between ministries, for example Ministry of Education and Ministries of Gender and Social Welfare. Related to this, the national guidelines for schools to create safe and confidential reporting systems (see benchmark 2.2) could include a mechanism for reporting incidents through the EMIS for aggregation and review at the state and national levels. Further, there is a need for the government to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education at the national and sub-national levels to ensure the long-term sustainability of high-quality systems to monitor violence in schools. Technology can be utilised to improve data collection, for example digital data collection using EduTrac in Uganda could then feed into a dashboard with data reports such as number a type of cases.

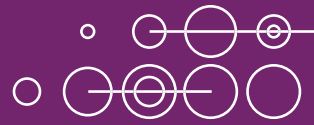
- **Benchmark 5.2 - There is regular data collection on prevalence and forms of violence in schools using methods that follow high ethical standards.**

Many countries collect data on prevalence and forms of violence, but this is done in an ad hoc manner. The Ministry of Education together with relevant government institutions and departments such as the national statistics office could consider regular participation in international or national school-based surveys such as the Global Schools-Based Student Health Survey. Where budget allows, the education sector plan or child protection plan should include school-based survey programmes that will adequately inform design of relevant and efficient strategies to counter violence in school. To encourage this, examples of where survey findings have been used to inform successful strategies could be widely disseminated. Technology could be used to collect real time data collection and communicate key metrics on a dashboard, for example building on EduTrac in Uganda.

- **Benchmark 5.3 - Decisions on replication and scale-up of violence prevention initiatives are based on evaluations of trialled models and approaches.**

Robust monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives provides reliable and pertinent information to design replication and scale-up to end violence in school. All education sector plans and child protection plans should include support for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention initiatives to inform replication and scale-up. Child protection bodies as well as donors should strongly advocate for this evidence-based approach with the national and sub-national governments. While interventions by development partners often include rigorous evaluations, the findings show that, despite success, these are not being scaled nationwide. This may be because the financial, material and human resources needed for scale up are not available from donors or government. There is the need for evaluations of these projects to include an analysis of 'scalability by the education system'. The development partner could review the intervention together with government to see if it is scalable within current resources and, if not, how intensive resources could be pared down while still retaining the components that facilitate intended outcomes.





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deserves
to be safe
and secure
in school.**



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