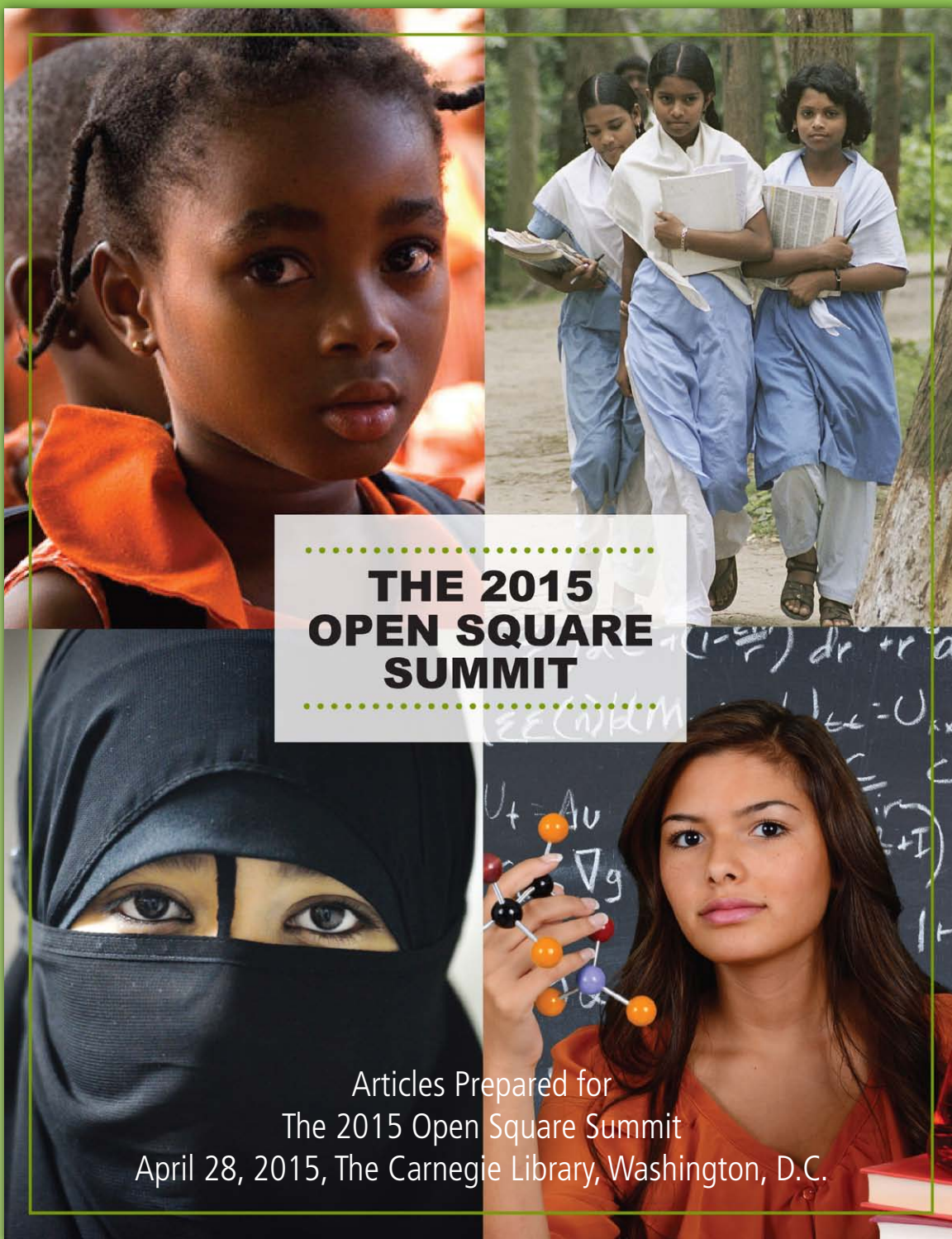


Research-Evaluations-Analysis-Data (READ) for SAFE PASSAGE:
Gender-Based Violence and Global Education



.....
**THE 2015
OPEN SQUARE
SUMMIT**
.....

Articles Prepared for
The 2015 Open Square Summit
April 28, 2015, The Carnegie Library, Washington, D.C.

PRESENTED BY:





“When I’m asked why I began this work and what Open Square means to me, I answer easily: it means everything.”

—Wynnette LaBrosse

Thank you for your eyes on this content... visibility to girls' issues means literally a world of potential progress. My fellow sponsors, Futures Without Violence and George Washington University thank you. Your dedication to take in more, your commitment to breaking down barriers for girls the world over matters. It matters a lot.

When I'm asked why I began this work and what Open Square means to me, I answer easily: it means everything. The name Open Square wasn't chosen lightly; we want women and our girls at the virtual and literal table of discussion with decision-making that impacts their lives... Where all sides of that discussion are equal. Where voice and visibility aren't an expectation for women and girls, where they are like breathing: a necessity. In an Open Square, all sides are equal, everyone is included.

This year's Summit focuses on the obstacles to education globally, with far too many girls in far too many places. My hope is that this publication has gems that you'll reflect on, reference more than once, and share freely. The only way to break down these barriers is to identify them, call them out with confidence, insist on open discussion, and commit to eliminating them for girls and young women the world over.

A girl's journey to adulthood is screaming for inclusivity: Are enough people listening? For safety. No dismissing. No diminishing. Access to school levels the playing field and provides a freedom of being, and a self-sufficiency that changes a girl's life.

Why would we accept anything less? The ripple effect of her education could bring such definite progress to her community and beyond. The time for change was thousands of years ago! This rite of passage should be a right of passage for all girls — something that is theirs without question.

In partnership and steadfast commitment to our girls,

Wynnette M. LaBrosse
President, Open Square



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To access these articles and other critical research, evaluations, analysis, and data for preventing and responding to gender-based violence and addressing these issues in educational programming, visit: www.FuturesWithoutViolence.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANK YOU

Each and every one of you is critical to improving the status of women and girls around the world and ending gender-based violence. We could not advance this work without you. Thank you for participating in the 2015 Open Square Summit. We look forward to your collaboration and to making continued progress together in the coming year.

FUTURES would like to acknowledge the generous support and partnership of Open Square in making possible the annual Open Square Summit. In 2015, FUTURES benefited greatly from the close collaboration with The Global Women's Institute of The George Washington University in designing the program agenda. Finally, the breadth of activities related to the 2015 Open Square Summit and the accompanying collection of the articles would not have been possible without the exceptional involvement of key institutional partners: Girl Be Heard, The Inter-American Commission of Women at the Organization of American States, The Inter-American Development Bank, The McCain Institute for International Leadership, Plan International: Because I am a Girl, Syria Relief Network, Theater and Dance Department of The George Washington University, The United Kingdom's Department for International Development, United Nations Girls Education Initiative, UN Women, United States Agency for International Development, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, The World Bank Group, and World Learning.

To learn more, visit: www.FuturesWithoutViolence.org and follow us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/FuturesWithoutViolence>, and Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WithoutViolence>



2015 INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

THEATRE & DANCE

ABOUT RESEARCH–EVALUATIONS– ANALYSIS–DATA (READ) FOR SAFE PASSAGE AND THE OPEN SQUARE SUMMIT

Each year, the Open Square Summit examines a core sector that is critical to achieving results in a strategic, comprehensive, dynamic and multi-sector approach to reduce, prevent and respond to gender-based violence. The goal of the annual Summit is to influence policy implementation, lift up best practices, learn from diverse leaders and innovators, and mobilize all actors to be part of the solutions that can bring about long-term change. The gathering brings together international experts, government officials, local leaders, corporate partners, media, donors and philanthropists who are working to end gender-based violence. In designing the Open Square Summit, FUTURES embraces the central tenet of Open Square, that of all sides being equal.

The 2015 Open Square Summit followed the life of a girl from childhood through adulthood—tracking the obstacles she may encounter, and exploring the solutions that exist to ensure quality education, enhance learning, and prevent sexual assault and gender-based violence. Will she suffer assault at home or school? Will she be kidnapped at school and trafficked into labor or sex slavery? Or will she have the good fortune to gain safe passage through primary, secondary, and onto higher education?

At every stage in a girl's life – from childhood until she becomes an adult – she faces opportunities and obstacles that impact her ability to access a quality education. Safe passage through primary, secondary and on to higher education can change the outcomes for girls and make an enormous difference in their futures. Although many global leaders are committed to investing in girls' education, school-related gender-based violence is less understood. In short, violence can be a critical deterrent to education, and education can be a critical deterrent to violence. When girls and women learn free from violence, they are better prepared to participate fully in every aspect of society, economy, and government.

In advance of the 2015 Open Square Summit, FUTURES approached leading institutional partners that play a major role on the world stage in crafting and investing in policies and programs that affect education and prevention of gender-based violence. These institutions agreed to prepare critical articles that offer recent research findings, new analysis, promising pilot programs, as well as recommendations for improving policy and strategies on education and gender-based violence. The articles offer participants in the 2015 Open Square Summit an opportunity to delve deeper into the topics presented during the day-long event in Washington D.C.

To access these materials and other important resources on preventing and responding to school-related gender-based violence, visit: www.FuturesWithoutViolence.org



:2015 OPEN SQUARE SUMMIT AGENDA

8:30 AM Registration and Breakfast

9:00 AM Welcome

Setting the Stage: Gender-Based Violence and Global Education

Kibera School for Girls, Kenya

Esta Soler, President and Founder, Futures Without Violence

Wynnette LaBrosse, President, Open Square

Mary Ellsberg, Founding Director, The Global Women's Institute, The George Washington University

Master of Ceremonies: **Maria Alexandra "Alex" Arriaga**, Managing Partner, Strategy for Humanity and Senior Advisor, Futures Without Violence

Ending Violence, Enhancing Learning

Introduction by **Sanam Milani**

The Honorable **Cathy Russell**, Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, United States Department of State

The Rt. Honorable the Baroness Northover, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for International Development, United Kingdom

Poem: Voice of a Girl Child

Written by **Kowsar Asad Warsame**, Dadaad Refugee Camp

Read by **Zinhle Essamuah**, Student, The George Washington University

In the Spotlight: Safe Passage for Young Girls

Moderator: Christine Brennan, Journalist, TV and Radio Commentator

Yvonne Akoth, Post-2015 Development Agenda Ambassador, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and Chair of Pan-African Youth Leadership Network of the United Nations, Kenyan Chapter, Kenya

Willington Ssekadde, Program Manager, Good School Program, Raising Voices, Uganda

Ravi Verma, Regional Director, Asia Regional Office, International Center for Research on Women, India

Nora Fyles, Head of Secretariat, United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)

Girl Be Heard: Dear Father

A Universal Story of Children at Risk for Gender-Based Violence

Moderator: **Mary Ellsberg**, Founding Director, The Global Women's Institute, The George Washington University

Brisa Liliana De Angulo, Founder and Co-President, A Breeze of Hope, Bolivia

Child Trauma and Violence: Overcoming the Impact of Traumatic Stress

Introduction by **Kimberlyn Leary**, Advisor to the Council on Women and Girls, the White House

Dr. Theresa Betancourt, Director of Research Program on Children and Global Adversity and Associate Professor of Child Health and Human Rights, Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard School of Public Health

Charting a Path to Participation

Moderator: **Bob Cohn**, President and Chief Operating Officer, The Atlantic

Terri McCullough, Director, No Ceilings: The Full Participation Project, The Clinton Foundation

Nangyalai Attal, Ambassador, A World at School, Afghanistan

12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK

12:30 PM Reconvene Open Square Summit

Investing in Girls and Gender Equality

Introduction by **Ruth Wooden**, Board Chair, Futures Without Violence

Susan Markham, Senior Coordinator, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

In the Spotlight: Safe Passage for Adolescent Girls

Moderator: **Caroline "Carrie" Bettinger-Lopez**, White House Advisor on Violence Against Women, Office of the Vice President of the United States

Kula V. Fofana, Founder, Paramount Young Women Initiative, Liberia, and Champion, Let Girls Lead

Claudia Piras, Lead Social Development Economist, Social Sector, The Inter-American Development Bank

Judithe Registre, Program Director, Because I Am A Girl Campaign, Plan International USA

Girl Be Heard: Nadia's Story

Personal Witness: Syria's Humanitarian and Refugee Crisis

Moderator: **Jane Little**, Partnership Editor, PRI's "Across Women's Lives"



Saniya Alhalabia (Pseudonym), Chief Executive Officer, Syria Relief Network, Syria / Turkey

In the Spotlight: Safe Passage for Young Women

Moderator: **Barbara Klein**, Weekend Anchor, National Public Radio

Karen Sherman, Executive Director, Akilah Institute for Women, and Senior Associate, Georgetown University's Institute for Women, Peace and Security

Nadine Niyitegeka, Graduate, Akilah Institute for Women, Rwanda

Elevating Attention Among Political Leaders

Moderator: **Kimberly Abbott**, Vice President, Communications, World Learning

Charity Wallace, Vice President of Global Women's Initiatives, The George W. Bush Presidential Center and Senior Advisor to Mrs. Laura Bush

Transformational Investment in Women and Girls

Julie T. Katzman, Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer, The Inter-American Development Bank

The Promise of Political Leadership and Investments

Moderator: **Marcela Sanchez**, Communications Officer, The World Bank Group

Donald Steinberg, President and Chief Executive Officer, World Learning

Luis Benveniste, Education Practice Manager, Global Engagement and Knowledge, The World Bank

Kolleen Bouchane, Director of Policy and Advocacy for A World at School and Director of Policy and Research for the Global Business Coalition for Education

CALL TO ACTION

Girl Be Heard: Girl Be Heard!

3:45 PM

POST-SUMMIT RECEPTION & GLOBAL IMPACT AWARDS

2015 Global Impact Award Recipients:

The Honorable Donald Steinberg

Julie T. Katzman

Brisa Liliana De Angulo

Syrian Women Who Risk Their Lives For Others

Special Performance By:

The Voice Gospel Choir, The George Washington University

INTRODUCTION



“...girls who are educated have more opportunities and greater chances of being able to support themselves should they try to leave a violent relationship.”

— Esta Soler

LETTER FROM ESTA SOLER

Founder and President, Futures Without Violence

This month, we recognize the one-year anniversary of the kidnapping of almost 300 girls from a school in Nigeria and the Bring Back Our Girls campaign that galvanized international attention around their plight. In this same year, the world recognized its youngest ever Nobel Peace Prize winner ---Malala Yousafzai for her determined advocacy to educate girls even after men opposed to girls' education attempted to assassinate her. These girls, one famous, the others likely dead or enslaved, will forever be joined for their simple desire to go to school and the violence that was inflicted on them because they are girls.

Why is an educated girl such a dangerous thing? And what can we all do about it?

With this year's Open Square Summit we draw attention to these critical questions, and delve deeply into nexus of gender-based violence and girls' education. The relationship between girls' education and gender-based violence cuts both ways and includes both direct and indirect pathways. We know gender-based violence can limit girls' ability to attend school, for instance, if parents are afraid their daughter may be raped or attacked on the way, or she is sexually harassed or abused by her teachers or peers. GBV also leads girls to become pregnant or "married" when they are young, forcing them to drop out of school, and often starting them down a path that forever curtails their education.

On the flipside, we know an education can be protective against violence. While intimate partner violence cuts across all socio-economic classes, girls and ultimately women who are educated have more opportunities and greater chances of being able to support themselves should they try to leave a violent relationship. In addition, they have better health and economic status, which is also protective against violence.

Importantly, schools provide a critical avenue through which the next generation learns about the social norms and values that will guide their lives, in addition to numeracy and literacy. This is true for boys and girls. While education itself is valuable, the school as a place for socialization and as a means of communicating values and social learning should not be overlooked.



Finally, we are living in a time of exciting new brain research that is dramatically changing how we understand the power of childhood experiences in adult health, educational achievement and use of violence. While much of the research to date has been in high income countries the fundamental biology of toxic stress and trauma on the developing mind and body is universal. Childhood matters and exposure to violence and traumatic experiences early on will have a direct impact on educational success, economic prosperity and political stability.

Through the partnership and enormous generosity of Open Square and its founder Wynette LaBrosse, and in collaboration with the George Washington University Global Women's Institute, and an array of influential institutions, we have gathered some of the most important thinkers and doers working on gender-based violence and education. In the essays that follow and the Summit taking place on April 28, 2015, we will tackle these issues and challenge our assumptions. We will hear the powerful stories of girls leading the way and draw inspiration from their bravery and energy. Importantly, we will begin a journey that brings together these two fields in a new way and connects them to the lived wisdom of girls and young women from around the world.

I am honored to join you in this journey and look forward to the day when all girls are safe, educated and free to be whatever they want to be.

Esta Soler

April 28, 2015

POLICY BRIEF: SCHOOL-BASED INTERVENTIONS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

Amber L. Hill, MSPH, Manuel Contreras, PhD, and
Emma Louise Backe, The Global Women's Institute,
The George Washington University

The Global
Women's Institute

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



BACKGROUND

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a human rights violation that affects millions of women worldwide. According to the most recent estimates from the World Health Organization, more than one in three women globally have experienced physical and/or sexual partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lifetime.¹ Historically, the international community has focused heavily on responding to VAWG by providing support services for survivors. In recent years, however, there has been an increase in attention to interventions that aim to prevent violence before it starts.² While the evidence base is still in a relatively early stage, rigorous evaluations have been conducted that demonstrate sustainable ways to reduce VAWG. Existing reviews suggest that there are common elements to these effective interventions^{2,3}:

1. Collaborating with entire communities (both men and women, boys and girls) in an interactive and participatory way during all phases of the intervention;
2. Engaging communities in a culturally sensitive and relevant manner to address structural drivers of violence, such as deeply entrenched social norms that perpetuate gender inequalities;
3. Using a multi-sectoral approach that is both comprehensive and integrated;
4. Exposing participants to subject matter through multiple intervention components over a sustained period (at minimum six months);
5. Conducting rigorous evaluations using mixed-methods approaches and disseminating results widely to inform current and future prevention programs.

One of the most important sectors in the efforts to prevent VAWG is that of education. ***The intersection of education and VAWG is particularly relevant as schools are environments where children and adolescents learn and develop social and behavioral norms.*** By working with the education sector at multiple levels, we are presented with a unique entry point to help shape future generations' (both boys and girls) ideas of healthy relationships and balanced power dynamics.^{4,5} At the highest level, policy makers can develop and enforce laws and policies that outline how education systems will work in an integrated manner with other sectors to prevent VAWG. At the institutional level, administrators can implement training curricula for teachers and students that focus on fostering gender equitable attitudes and norms. Reforms can be instituted to create a safe environment for VAWG survivors to access necessary counseling and referral services. Finally, at the community level, teachers and school administrators can work with other influential community members to hold conversations, workshops, and other activities that will strengthen community knowledge and capacity to respond to and prevent VAWG, potentially leading to broader social change.⁵





It is important to recognize that in order for schools to be sites of social and intellectual empowerment, they, themselves, must be free of violence. Too often, schools are sites where violence is perpetrated, whether as corporal punishment on behalf of a teacher, dating violence among classmates, sexual assault, or bullying, among others.⁴ Girls are particularly vulnerable to violence. As of 2012, it was estimated that approximately 60 million girls are sexually assaulted on their way to or at school every year. ***In some countries, this translates to a higher probability for a girl to experience sexual violence than to become literate.***⁶ Within the United States, a report for the National Institute of Justice revealed that approximately 14% of female students (aged 18-25) had experienced sexual violence during her time at university.⁷ Violence against women and girls at school is a pandemic issue that must be resolved globally in order to avoid and alleviate the detrimental effects of violence on individuals and communities. Concerted efforts must focus on breaking the intergenerational cycles of violence, poor education, ill health, and poverty.

ABOUT THIS POLICY BRIEF

The objective of this brief is to provide a concise overview of select school-based interventions that aim to prevent VAWG or improve knowledge and attitudes that perpetuate VAWG. It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive review of the literature. While we recognize the immense complexities associated with the multiple forms of violence that occur within schools and the various ways in which they manifest, we will solely address VAWG in this brief.⁴ Relevant school-based interventions were pulled from nine recently published reviews.^{2-4,8-13} Targeted hand searches were also conducted. The interventions that are highlighted are categorized as effective, promising, or emerging.

For the purpose of this brief, we will be looking at a range of outcomes in addition to the reduction of perpetration/victimization of VAWG. It can be problematic to solely measure VAWG prevalence, as effective programs may initially cause an increase in reporting of violence due to a variety of reasons, including higher confidence among participants, knowledge of formal reporting mechanics, among others.¹⁴ Since VAWG is an extreme manifestation of systemic gender inequality, it is important to examine a program's impact on gender equitable attitudes and related behaviors that drive VAWG.

* For the purpose of this brief, we only focus on the following types of VAWG: intimate partner violence (IPV), dating violence, and non-partner sexual assault.

† By rigorous evaluation, we refer to experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations.



SCHOOL-BASED INTERVENTIONS

Effective interventions

The effective interventions are those that have been rigorously evaluated and show significant reductions in VAWG and/or improve behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge that promote gender equality and healthy power dynamics. A total of nine interventions were found that fall under this category (**Table 1**). The majority of these interventions included elements similar to those identified in the background section (engaged communities with a gender approach using a comprehensive methodology over a sustained period of time).

Both the *Stop Violence against Girls in Schools (SVAGS)* and *Safe Schools* programs demonstrate how multi-faceted and culturally-relevant school-based interventions implemented over a longer period of time can affect change not only among students and teachers, but also within the surrounding communities. Within these interventions, religious and community leaders, parents, and community organizations, among others, were engaged in sensitization training and broader discussions about gender, different types of violence, and girls' education. Students and teachers showed significant improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and key behaviors (i.e. help-seeking behaviors) related to the structural drivers of VAWG.^{14,15} Looking specifically at the Girls' Clubs in the SVAGS program, participating girls had higher mean attitude index scores and significantly improved knowledge on relevant laws and policies, reporting mechanisms, and support organizations at the end of the intervention. SVAGS has been adapted to the Tanzanian and Nigerian context, *Transforming Education for Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania (TEGINT)*, extending beyond the focus on violence against girls to encompass more of a "whole-school approach" to address other forms of school-related violence.^{14,16}

Similarly, the rigorously evaluated *Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS)* program in India involved multi-modal and gender-specific interventions over a relatively lengthy period of time. They did not, however, explicitly involve activities that engaged the broader community outside of the school.

GEMS consisted of a series of educational activities for groups of boys and girls centered around gender, healthy relationships, health, and violence. In addition, a week-long school-wide campaign was launched to engage all students in participatory activities on issues related to VAWG. Students in the intervention groups obtained higher gender equality scores and there were improvements in self-reported positive behavior changes.¹⁷ It is important to note that while one of the main objectives of the effective interventions mentioned thus far was to reduce VAWG, methodological challenges, especially for community-wide and multi-level interventions, limit measurability.



The *Fourth R* program, on the other hand, was a comprehensive program implemented in Canada that did show a sustained decrease in the prevalence of VAWG. There were sig-

nificantly lower odds of perpetrating violence for boys in the intervention than those in the control after 2.5 years of follow-up.¹⁸ The healthy relationships approach, which is the foundation of the *Fourth R* program, has also been applied in a variety of other settings across Canada through programs such as *Making Waves*, *Respectful Relationships (R+R)*, and *Healthy Relationships in Rural Youth*, although evaluation results for these three programs have not been published.¹⁹ The *Youth Relationships Project*, which utilized a similar *Fourth R* approach, has been rigorously evaluated and also resulted in a reduction in the perpetration of dating violence by boys against girls.²⁰

While the body of evidence is still largely conflicting, there have also been targeted interventions directed specifically towards college students that aim to prevent sexual assault. After reviewing the evidence, there were two programs that were shown to be effective in reducing rates of sexual violence: an *Acquaintance Rape Prevention Program* and a *Revictimization Prevention Program*, both implemented in the United States.²¹⁻²² The first intervention led to a significant decrease in sexual assault incidence among participants who had never previously experienced sexual assault.²¹ The second intervention measured significant differences in the level of rape revictimization among participants who had received the program compared to those who had not.²² These programs shared some similar characteristics, such as a focus on underlying risk factors. Nevertheless, these interventions worked with very specific populations (white, middle-to-high income, college-educated women), making it difficult to draw strong conclusions about generalizability to different contexts.

Other targeted school-based interventions include those that have engaged coaches and male athletes to reduce perpetration of violence as well as improve gender equitable attitudes. *Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM)* is an innovative intervention, which trains coaches to facilitate discussions about norms and attitudes on gender inequalities to high school athletes. A rigorous evaluation showed increases in reported intentions to intervene and positive bystander intervention behaviors.²³ The program is currently being expanded to middle schools and universities throughout the United States.²⁴ *CBIM* has also been adapted to the Indian context into a program known as *PARIVARTAN*, which engages cricket coaches and their athletes on gender and VAWG prevention in both schools and the community. An initial rigorous evaluation of the school-based programs showed significant increases in positive attitudes on gender equality.²⁵ The program is now being expanded to include girls in an effort to empower and create safe spaces for participants.²⁶

It is important to note that most of the effective interventions used a gender-specific approach with a focus on empowerment, providing participants with the tools to question and challenge attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate gender inequalities and drive VAWG.

‡ Only students in Kenya and Mozambique showed statistically significant differences in the mean attitudes index score.

§ “Challenging violence and gender equality index”: score between 0 (does not challenge attitudes on gender inequality) to 1 (challenges attitudes on gender inequality) based on a series of 8 statements. ** Although they were not measured, this does not mean that ripple effects of the intervention into the community were not possible.

Promising interventions

There were several interventions (**Table 2**) that showed promising results that were either **(1)** not rigorously evaluated/did not provide enough information on the evaluation methodology or **(2)** they were rigorously evaluated but did not disaggregate results by sex. Either way, it is difficult to draw conclusions on the programs’ effectiveness on the reduction of VAWG and/or improvement of related knowledge and attitudes.



BOX 1 – *Child Friendly Schools*²⁷

Child Friendly Schools (CFS) is a UNICEF-led initiative that has now been implemented in 95 countries and is premised around the principles of child-centeredness, democratic participation, and inclusiveness. By applying the *CFS* framework, schools can develop a series of actions to better improve learning conditions for students, thereby ensuring a safe environment in which their rights are protected. A recent evaluation showed that the *CFS* model was effective in creating a space for engaging stakeholders in the development of child-centered curricula and programs, providing a concrete framework to guide policy decisions at the Ministerial level, and generating positive attitudes around inclusive learning. Some of the main challenges include: limited accommodation for students with disabilities, inability to create fully safe environments, and lack of fidelity to program guidelines. Challenges aside, the *CFS* initiative provides an overarching framework to develop and implement school-wide programs to ensure safe schools for all students. This type of holistic approach that seeks to create a safe space for girls can have very important implications in the prevention of VAWG.

A total of three interventions fit under the first category.²⁸⁻³⁰ Similar to those in the effective category, all three interventions applied participatory approaches that engaged students and teachers over a long period of time. Activities included awareness campaigns and the development of curricula that addressed healthy relationships, balanced power dynamics, human rights, and/or harmful gender norms. The *Young Men Initiative (YMI)*, coordinated by CARE International Balkans, is an adaptation of the innovative and well-evaluated *Program H* developed by Pro-mundo.^{28,31} The *YMI* program focuses on adolescent boys and consists of several sessions, integrated into the school curricula, where participating boys learn about gender, sexual health, and violence. An initial evaluation showed a significant improvement in gender equitable attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors in some of the schools.²⁸ In the United Kingdom, WOMANKIND implemented an education program in several schools by integrating lessons on violence and other gender-related issues into “citizenship lessons”.²⁹ The *C-Change Program*, implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo, went a step further to involve parents and other community members. While we cannot say for certain that these programs were effective, preliminary evidence shows promising results.³⁰

In addition, there were four other interventions that demonstrated very encouraging results, but results were not disaggregated by sex.³²⁻³⁵ As such, the programs’ true effect on the levels of VAWG, specifically, remains unknown. At the middle/high-school level, *Shifting Boundaries* and *Safe Dates* showed overall reductions in the perpetration/victimization of dating violence among participating adolescents as a result of a series of gender-sensitive and multiple component interventions implemented over a long period of time.³²⁻³³ Another program, *Connections*, evaluated in six high schools in California, also showed reduction in the perpetration of violence through teaching high school students about healthy relationships.³⁴

The fourth intervention, *Bringing in the Bystander*[®], is a targeted program that teaches participants potential ways to intervene to prevent sexual assault on university campuses, support survivors, and raise awareness within their communities. A rigorous evaluation showed

significant improvements in a series of outcomes, including how confident the participant felt in intervening, whether they believed there were more positives to intervening than negatives, rejection of common rape myths, and other bystander attitudes and behaviors.³⁵ This program has since been adapted to a variety of contexts.³⁶

Emerging interventions

Finally, innovative school-based programs exist that are currently being implemented, but have yet to be fully evaluated. In the primary school setting, *Good School Toolkit* is a comprehensive program implemented in several schools throughout Uganda by Raising Voices. Utilizing a long-term approach that involves three phases, administrators, teachers, community members, and students were engaged in discussions around violence and creating safe schools. A rigorous evaluation has been conducted and results will be released shortly.³⁷



Expect Respect®, a long-standing program implemented by SafePlace in Texas, includes school-based support groups to help engage middle and high school students on healthy relationships. A preliminary evaluation demonstrates an improvement in healthy conflict resolution skills among participants.³⁸ SafePlace is also working in partnership with EngenderHealth on the *Gender Matters* project to reduce levels of teenage pregnancy through dis-

cussions and campaigns around healthy relationships, sexual and reproductive health, and support networks.³⁹

Dating Matters®, a CDC-led initiative, is also in the implementation phase and includes a series of interventions that help prevent dating violence among young adolescents (aged 11-14 years) in high-risk schools and communities throughout four cities in the United States. This project specifically emphasizes the need to work with children during early adolescence, in addition to engaging their schools, families, and broader communities.⁴⁰

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTIONS WITH SCHOOL-BASED COMPONENTS

In addition to the school-based interventions that involve community-based components, there exist several community-based interventions with school-based components, such as *Program H*, *Somos Diferentes*, *Somos Iguales*; *Stepping Stones*; *SASA!*; and *Soul City*.^{31,41-44} These programs have demonstrated significant reductions in the rates of violence against women and girls and/or improvements in related knowledge and attitudes and encompass all elements discussed in the Background section. In Nicaragua, Puntos de Encuentro has implemented the wide-spread communications strategy known as *Somos Diferentes*, *Somos Iguales* (*SDSI*) or “We are Different, We are the Same” in English. Included in this strategy are several “edutainment” (education + entertainment) interventions that help raise awareness and build communities’ capacity to respond to gender inequalities. The most well-known component is a TV drama, *Sexto Sentido*, which addresses HIV prevention, violence, and other relationship issues, and is broadcast in six countries throughout Central



and North America on a weekly basis. The program involved schools through cast tours, during which discussions were facilitated on health and gender and materials were disseminated.⁴¹ *Stepping Stones* is a very well-known community-based HIV-prevention program that has been adapted in numerous countries. By engaging youth through participatory group discussions, mostly held in schools, facilitators are able to address communications skills and sexual and reproductive health, as well as violence against women.⁴²

BOX 2 – Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse (CSA) still remains a widespread problem globally. While school-based interventions that specifically address CSA are not within the scope of the review, they are a fundamental part of creating a safe school environment conducive to learning. Four reviews⁴⁵⁻⁴⁸ were recently conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions designed to prevent CSA. Most interventions taught children self-protective knowledge: how to recognize CSA and ways to seek help, among others. According to these reviews, the school-based interventions that were most effective in reducing levels of CSA included similar elements as those mentioned in this policy brief. In general, they involved participatory and active learning methods, such as role-play and role-modeling. They were often implemented over a longer duration of time in smaller increments to maximize exposure, while being mindful of attention spans. In addition, these effective interventions tended to involve parents in the discussion. There exist substantial methodological limitations in this field of research. Managing disclosure of CSA is very challenging and difficult to measure with accuracy. The authors of the reviews offer recommendations for future researchers, including examining prevention efforts for ages beyond early elementary school, studying the cumulative impact of CSA over longer durations of time, increasing diversity in the distribution of research, and conducting rigorous evaluations.⁴⁵⁻⁴⁸

DISCUSSION

The international community has made evident the importance of engaging the education sector to help eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls over the past few decades. The *Beijing Platform for Action* (1995) calls for comprehensive approaches to reduce VAWG and specifically outlines the role educational systems have in fostering gender equitable attitudes.⁴⁹ The *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women* (1994) recognizes that VAWG can occur in educational facilities, which is why it is so important to develop appropriate educational programs inside and outside of schools to combat attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate VAWG.⁵⁰ In addition, the *Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence* (2011) explicitly states that schools, along with the rest of the education sector, play a vital role in the prevention of VAWG, particularly related to dispelling harmful stereotypes, building capacity and agency, and encouraging non-violent conflict resolution.⁵¹

As a result of these declarations⁴⁹⁻⁵¹, among others, there have been several sustained efforts to develop and implement holistic approaches to integrate violence prevention programming into school curricula and activities. This policy brief presented a concise review of the evidence that exists and identified common elements that are shared among those that are effective and promising, including a comprehensive and multi-level approach that actively engaged communities over several sessions.

Many interventions, however, have not been evaluated and, as such, the evidence base is still relatively limited. Furthermore, when programs are evaluated, it is common that the data

are not disaggregated by sex, making it difficult to draw strong conclusions on how women and girls are specifically affected. This is often a result of the significant methodological or financial challenges that are associated with VAWG data collection.

Overall, a deeper understanding of effective programming at the intersection of VAWG and the education sector is desperately needed. The vast majority of school-related programs have occurred in relatively stable environments, however, it is important to consider how these interventions could be adapted to conflict-affected areas, where girls are often at a greater risk of suffering violence.⁵²⁻⁵⁴ To address this issue, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) has implemented a *Classroom Assistant Program* in Guinea and Sierra Leone, which recruited and trained female classroom assistants to help create a safe space conducive to learning for both girls and boys. While the program has its limitations, results showed some promise despite substantial challenges that were faced.⁵⁵ Overall, there is a dearth of information on school-based interventions to prevent VAWG in conflict settings.

Another under-researched area is how best school-based interventions can account for diversity and address inequities in the levels of violence between people of different races, ethnicities, gender, and/or sexual orientation. Evidence shows that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) youth are disproportionately affected by violence, particularly in schools.^{4,56} Therefore, a more inclusive approach is necessary for future research and programming.

In addition, questions remain about how to effectively scale-up many of these community-based interventions to the national level. Ultimately, it is our goal to have government sponsored programs that are implemented at a national level to integrate curricula that address VAWG and gender equality in all schools. In the United Kingdom, for example, the *London-wide Schools Domestic Violence Prevention Project (LSDVPP)* was implemented in several middle and high schools throughout London. The program mostly consisted of training staff to develop and implement curricula that address domestic violence. While the evaluation does not provide a great amount of detail on the impact of the program, initial evidence shows an overall improvement in knowledge and awareness on VAWG among both students and teachers.⁵⁷

Within the United States, specifically, there has been a large push towards raising awareness around sexual assault on university campuses and creating effective solutions to prevent sexual violence. Under the Obama Administration, the *White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* was created in early 2014 to collect and disseminate accurate prevalence data, develop prevention programs that engage both men and women, and establish effective and integrated response systems for survivors that are strongly enforced.⁵⁸ While the task force is in the early stages of its work and yet to be evaluated, this national strategy focused not only on increasing transparency and improving services for survivors, but also on preventing violence before it occurs shows promise.

CONCLUSION

The evidence base has improved over the years, yet gaps still remain. We call for increased collaboration among researchers, programmers, and governments to share best practices and work together to scale-up effective and promising interventions, while also leaving room for adaptation to ensure cultural relevance.⁴ Sustainability is at the center of the post-2015 global development agenda. In order to truly achieve the sustainable development goals that are being developed⁵⁹, we need to work within a human rights framework and accelerate efforts across sectors to address pervasive issues that drive inequity. Schools, as part of the education sector, are key institutions that have



the power to challenge harmful and discriminatory norms that perpetuate issues, such as VAWG. ***Every woman and girl deserves a life free from violence in a society where she is treated with respect and dignity.***

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Table 1 – Effective interventions that reduce VAWG or improve behaviors, knowledge, and attitudes

PROGRAM NAME, YEAR^{##}	LOCATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION & DURATION OF INTERVENTION	POPULATION OF INTEREST	MAIN RESULTS
Stop Violence against Girls in Schools (SVAGS), 2008-2013	Ghana Kenya Mozambique	Over five years (2008-2013), Action Aid implemented a multi-component intervention in 45 primary schools and associated communities, which included girls' and boys' clubs to increase knowledge on gender equality for students, Reflect Circles to engage parents and community members in discussions on gender, sensitization training for community leaders and teachers on VAWG-related issues and with parents on the importance of girls' education, as well as community-wide campaigns and national-level advocacy work.	Primary school students, teachers, community leaders, parents	After the intervention, girls in both Ghana and Mozambique were more likely to report experiencing violence. Positive effects on knowledge and attitudes related to gender were seen among participants of Girls' Clubs.
Safe Schools Program, 2003-2008	Ghana Malawi	From 2003-2008, Safe Schools, implemented by DevTech Systems, Inc., included interventions at multiple levels: national (advocacy campaigns to raise awareness on violence that occurs at and on the way to and from schools), institutional (sensitization training of teachers and supervisors and creating relevant codes of conduct), local (work with local leaders and community organizations to strengthen capacity) and individual (training teachers to train students on attitudes and knowledge on gender-related issues).	Policy makers, teachers, peer leaders, community leaders, and students (upper primary, lower secondary schools)	Among both teachers and students, there were shifts in knowledge of gender-based violence, increased awareness of rights, and reductions in acceptability towards violence.
Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS), 2008-2010	India	A select number of Grade 7 students participated in a one-year intervention (2008-2009) that either involved group educational activities (45 minutes each) + an awareness campaign (1-week long), the awareness campaign alone, or neither. In addition, a select number of Grade 6 students participated in a two-year intervention (2008-2010), divided into the same previously defined groups with enhanced activities. This program was implemented by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), the Committee of Resource Organizations for Literacy, and the Tata Institute for Social Sciences.	Boys and girls in Grades 6 and 7	At follow-up, boys and girls in the intervention groups had higher gender equality scores. In addition, girls in the GEA + campaign intervention group self-reported positive changes in behavior. Boys and girls in the GEA + campaign intervention group were more likely to report a positive reaction by peers in response to gender-based violence.

^{##} If program year unknown, year of published evaluation is provided.

Table 1 continued... – Effective interventions that reduce VAWG or improve behaviors, knowledge, and attitudes

PROGRAM NAME,^{\$§} YEAR	LOCATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION & DURATION OF INTERVENTION	POPULATION OF INTEREST	MAIN RESULTS
Fourth R: Skills for Youth Relationships, 2004-2007	Canada	Trained teachers implemented a provincially-mandated 21-lesson (3 units of 7 75-minute sessions) curriculum in a Grade 9 health class that focused on fostering knowledge and skills regarding safety and injury prevention and health-related issues.	Students enrolled in Grade 9 (14-15 years of age)	After 2.5 years of follow-up, those in the control group had close to 3-times higher odds of perpetrating violence than those in the intervention group.
Youth Relationships Project, 2003	Canada	Participating Child Protection Service agencies implemented an 18-session intervention that aimed to strengthen participants' problem-solving and communications skills, improve attitudes on gender norms and healthy relationships, and mobilize social action through a series of participatory and educational activities.	Adolescents (14-16 years of age) with history of child maltreatment	There were greater rates of reductions in perpetration of dating violence by boys in the intervention group as compared to those in the control.
Acquaintance Rape Prevention Program, 1996	United States	Participants were exposed to a series of videos and group discussions on rape myths, rape scenarios, and protective behaviors in a session at the beginning of an academic quarter.	Female students enrolled in university	Among women who had never experienced sexual assault, the intervention was successful in reducing levels of sexual violence.
Revictimization Prevention Program, 2001	United States	During two two-hour sessions, participating students were exposed to information on sexual assault, a group discussion on risk factors and warning signs, a video, an interactive group activities, and capacity building on problem-solving skills.	Female students enrolled in university with history of sexual assault victimization	There were significant differences in the rates of rape revictimization among those in the intervention group compared to those in the control.
Coaching Boys into Men, 2009-2010	United States	Trained coaches held brief group discussions (15 min) with athletes on a weekly basis over the course of a sports season (approximately 12 weeks) on knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to violence against women	High school male athletes	Athletes in the intervention group experienced positive changes in intentions to intervene when witnessing dating violence and improved bystander behaviors as compared to the control group.
PARIVARTAN, 2008-2012	India	By collaborating with the Mumbai Schools Sports Association, ICRW implemented an adaptation of the Coaching Boys into Men approach with high school cricket athletes in India. Coaches participated in a 3-day workshop and then facilitated discussions on gender equitable attitudes, bystander behaviors, and violence with their athletes on a weekly basis for four months.	High school male athletes	Greater positive changes in gender attitudes and greater reductions in negative bystander behaviors were demonstrated among those in the intervention than in the control.

^{\$§} If program year unknown, year of published evaluation is provided.

Table 2 – Promising interventions

PROGRAM NAME, YEAR***	LOCATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION & DURATION OF INTERVENTION	POPULATION OF INTEREST	MAIN RESULTS
Combating School-Related Gender-Based Violence (C-Change), 2010-2012	Democratic Republic of Congo	A multi-level intervention was implemented over 1.5 years that provided students with training, engaged community members (including parents) through awareness-raising campaigns, and supported teachers and administrators in creating codes of conduct to prevent and respond to violence in and out of schools. This program was funded by USAID and implemented by the <i>Initiatives pour le Developpement Integral</i> .	Teachers, students, and parents	Both students' and teachers' knowledge of ways to prevent violence improved dramatically over the course of the project.
WOMANKIND UK Education Program, 2008-2010	United Kingdom	During the second phase of a project (2008-2010), WOMANKIND implemented an intervention in 5 schools using a whole-school approach to address issues related to gender equality and VAWG. Students were taught "citizenship lessons" on a variety of topics, including women's rights, harmful masculinities, and different types of violence against women.	Secondary school students	Qualitative interviews showed that students appreciated learning more about gender issues and violence against women. Schools developed curricula and initiatives to raise awareness on gender equality.
Young Men Initiative, 2007-2013	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia	Trained facilitators led participatory group activities during class time over the course of an academic year. These activities focused on health, violence, risky behaviors, and attitudes on gender.	Male students at vocational high schools (14-18 years of age)	Improvements were seen in gender-equitable attitudes, rejection of gender stereotypes, and knowledge on sexual and reproductive health in some sites.
Shifting Boundaries, 2009-2010	United States	Over 2 years, the <i>Shifting Boundaries</i> intervention was implemented in 30 schools and involved a classroom component (6 sessions/school on healthy relationships) and a series of "building" components, which included school-based restraining orders, increased security presence in student-identified unsafe areas, and awareness raising activities.	Students in Grades 6-7	Reductions were seen in perpetration and victimization of physical/sexual dating violence and sexual harassment over 6 months among students in the combination intervention groups. Results were not disaggregated by sex.
Safe Dates, 1994-1995	United States	<i>Safe Dates</i> is a multi-component intervention implemented in 14 schools and included both school-wide violence prevention activities (10 45-minute lessons, poster contest, and a theater production) and community-wide violence response activities (provider training and support services).	Students in Grades 8-9	Four years after the program, students in the intervention reported lower levels of physical and sexual dating violence than those in the control. Results were not disaggregated by sex.

*** If program year unknown, year of published evaluation is provided.

Table 2 continued... – Promising interventions

PROGRAM NAME, YEAR ⁺⁺⁺	LOCATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION & DURATION OF INTERVENTION	POPULATION OF INTEREST	MAIN RESULTS
Bystander Approach, 2007	United States	This intervention consisted of a control and two intervention groups (one 90-minute session vs. three 90-minute sessions). Topics ranged from basic information and statistics around sexual violence to how to detect and intervene in risky situations, while prioritizing your own safety. Sessions were provided by trained facilitators.	University student who had never received training on sexual violence (18-23 years of age)	In the 3-session group, respondents showed the greatest improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors compared to those in the one-session and the control.
Connections: Relationships and Marriage Curriculum, 2003-2004	United States	Over the course of 15 sessions (1-hr each), trained teachers and/or counsellors discuss a range of topics, including healthy relationships, positive self-esteem, and communication and life-planning skills, with their students.	Students in Grades 11-12	Reductions in reports of dating violence perpetration decreased in the intervention group (and increased in the control). Improvements in relationship knowledge were significantly better for those in the intervention group.

⁺⁺⁺ If program year unknown, year of published evaluation is provided.

EDUCATION FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION: PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN THE AMERICAS

Carmen Moreno, with Hilary Anderson and Renske Hoekstra
Inter-American Commission of Women, Organization of American States



1. INTRODUCTION

Violence happens across cultures, borders, races, and socio-economic status. According to global figures, gender-based violence is an epidemic that will affect 1 in 3 women at some point during their lives, usually at the hands of an intimate partner or family member.¹ While the countries of the Americas have made significant strides in responding to gender-based violence, including the ratification of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Belém do Pará Convention), the formulation of national-level laws and policies, training of justice and health sector officials to appropriately attend victims of gender-based violence and a host of other initiatives, less emphasis has been placed on the prevention of gender-based violence before it occurs.

An appropriate and effective response to gender-based violence is an essential component of safeguarding women's right to be free from violence, so the aim of this paper is not to argue that efforts and resources should be re-directed from response to prevention. Rather, a long-term and holistic focus on the prevention of violence against women would, ideally, eventually reduce the demand for these types of services by reducing the incidence of violence. Accordingly, the objective of this analysis is to review available experience and evidence of violence prevention in the Americas, with a particular focus on the priority area of education, with the aim of arguing that a greater emphasis and additional resources dedicated to prevention will ultimately result in less gender-based violence, and consequently less expenditure on the legal and social services necessary to adequately respond to it, as well as the loss of economic productivity, and social and political participation experienced by the victims, their families and society as a whole.

In addition to a review of available literature, this analysis also presents the results of a questionnaire that was circulated to the Ministries/Departments of Education and the National Machineries for the Advancement of Women of the 34 Members of the Organization of American States (OAS). The questionnaire was circulated in February 2012 and responses were received from 14 Ministries/Departments of Education² and 13 National Machineries for the Advancement of Women.³ These responses supported the existence of a significant gap in terms of policy-making and programming on the issue of preventing violence against women.

The Committee of Experts of the Follow-Up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) in its Second Hemispheric Report on the Implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention observed that the resources allocated by States Party to gender issues, particularly the prevention and punishment of violence against women, only constitute between 0.1 and 1.0 percent of their national budgets.⁴ Within that figure, it is not known what proportion, if any, is dedicated specifically to education for the promotion of gender equality and the prevention of violence.

¹ World Health Organization (2012). Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence, available online at <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564625/en/index.html>

² Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Jamaica, Mexico, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the United States

³ Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay and Peru

⁴ MESECVI (2012). Second Hemispheric Report on the Implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention, available online at <http://www.oas.org/en/mesecvi/docs/MESECVI-SegundoInformeHemisferico-EN.pdf>

2. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THE ARGUMENT FOR PREVENTION

Violence against women and girls has a significant impact on human, social and economic development and imposes different costs on society, including monetary, non-monetary, economic and social costs. The direct costs of violence against women include the costs to the health system (from the physical and psychological injuries associated with violence), the criminal justice system (from provision of legal services to women, prosecution and detention of specific cases, and rehabilitation programs for offenders) and social services (operation of shelters and other temporary housing, rehabilitation services for victims). The indirect, or non-monetary, costs of violence against women are much harder to quantify, but include the significant psychological, physical and emotional trauma inflicted on victims, their families and communities.

In the majority of countries of the region, the rate of school enrollment and completion for girls has now surpassed the rate for boys. These general figures however mask the ways in which the interaction of gender equality with social class, ethnicity, geographic location and other factors continues to act as a barrier to the participation of girls and adolescents – poor, indigenous, afrodescendant and rural – in formal education.⁵ Other realities – in particular those of adolescent pregnancy and violence against women in educational institutions – are a challenge to girls' ability to stay in school as well as to their levels of achievement.⁶

Beyond this reality, and as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) has pointed out, "...of all the barriers that still persist in the region, the education that is imparted may itself be the main obstacle to achieving an education under conditions of equality."⁷ Both through curricula and teaching practices – what the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) refers to as the "hidden curriculum,"⁸ – education systems in the region continue to reproduce gender inequality and discrimination by transmitting, or not challenging, discriminatory norms and stereotypes about women and men and their social behaviour. Moreover, although we are seeing gradual changes, segregation in higher education persists, with a preponderance of men in subjects such as sciences, mathematics, engineering and computing.

By ratifying multiple treaties and other international and inter-American agreements,⁹ the States of the region have committed themselves to adopting specific measures to transform traditional gender norms and socio-cultural patterns of behaviour through the design of appropriate programs at all levels of education, with a view to eliminating prejudices, discriminatory practices and stereotyped roles.

⁵. IACHR (2011). The work, education and resources of women: The road to equality in guaranteeing economic, social and cultural rights, p.62, available online at: <http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/women/docs/pdf/WomenDESC2011.pdf>

⁶. CLADEM (2011). Garantía y realización del derecho a la educación en América Latina: Los avances en la igualdad en el goce y el ejercicio del derecho de las mujeres a la educación, p. 17, available online at: <http://www.cladem.org/images/archivos/publicaciones/regionales/desc/LibroBalanceRegional.pdf>

⁷. IACHR, 2011, op.cit., p.62.

⁸. ECLAC (1998). "La educación de las mujeres: de la marginalidad a la coeducación. Propuestas para una metodología de cambio educativo." Serie Mujer y Desarrollo (No. 22), p. 15, available online at: <http://www.eclac.org/publicaciones/xml/0/4340/lcl1120e.pdf>

⁹. See for example: CEDAW (Article 5, paragraphs a and b) or the Belém do Pará Convention (Article 8, paragraph b)



In this region, despite pretensions to the secular nature of education, the hegemony of churches in terms of “moral” education and the persistent exclusion or inadequacy of sexual education as part of standard curricula continues to be an obstacle to the full exercise of women and men’s human rights, as well as the achievement of gender equality. As a recent report from the Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women’s Rights (CLADEM) points out, “...if things continue as they are, it is entirely plausible to assume that the transformative potential of education, particularly in relation to the achievement of gender equality, will never be realized until public education is effectively secular.”¹⁰

The growing understanding of the detrimental impact of violence on women and society as a whole needs to be translated into investment in the implementation of strategies for the promotion of gender equality and the prevention of violence. The focus of this review is on primary prevention strategies, on the basis that investing in violence prevention strategies that target the root causes of violence against women – gender inequality and discrimination – is not only a moral imperative but also makes economic, political and social sense.

3. PROTECTION: LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS RELATED TO VIOLENCE PREVENTION

3.1 Levels of violence prevention

There are three levels of violence prevention:

- **Primary** prevention aims to lower the rate of violence and stop violence before it occurs;
- **Secondary** prevention focuses on reducing the rate of repeat violence among women already abused – for example through appropriate and effective interventions from the health and/or justice sectors;
- The final category, **tertiary** prevention, refers to efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of violence that has already occurred.¹¹

While the focus of this analysis is on primary prevention strategies that are targeted towards reducing the occurrence of violence before it happens – including interventions designed to address and eliminate gender-based inequalities, prejudices and stereotypes as the primary cause of gender-based violence – the importance of secondary and tertiary prevention should not be overlooked, and in no way does this analysis argue for diverting resources from one to the other. Rather, the focus is on dedicating additional resources to primary prevention activities as a way of eventually reducing the incidence of – as well as the economic and social costs associated with - violence against women and girls, including the costs of secondary and tertiary prevention programs.

3.2 Legal and policy frameworks

States and other stakeholders, including international agencies, donors and national education and protection institutions and professionals are primarily responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling women’s human rights. Legislation and inter-sectoral national policy frameworks can mitigate the prevalence and effects of violence against women and promote its prevention.

¹⁰ CLADEM, 2011, op.cit., p.60

¹¹ Heise, L. (2011) What works to prevent partner violence: An evidence overview, available online at <http://www.oecd.org/derec/49872444.pdf>

In addition to the provisions of various international and regional human rights instruments and other agreements (discussed in more detail in Appendix A), the prevention of violence against women and girls is amply addressed in the legal and policy frameworks of the majority of countries in the region.

Effective prevention of violence against women requires first and foremost that it be explicitly prohibited in national statutory law. National legal provisions on violence against women are often fragmented into general provisions against violence in constitutions, acts, laws and penal codes. Examples include:

- Integrated laws on violence against women/gender-based violence
- Domestic and family violence and/or sexual violence acts
- Child care and child protection acts
- Dangerous drugs acts
- Anti-discrimination and sexual harassment legislation
- Laws on trafficking in persons
- Employment acts
- Laws regulating firearm ownership and carriage
- Alcohol licensing and sales legislation and policies

One of the aims of the questionnaire was to map the link between existing legislative instruments and violence prevention programs, projects and initiatives. All respondents (with the exception of Canada)¹² confirmed having adopted laws or decrees to incorporate education for non-violence. However, the majority listed general legal instruments designed to promote gender equality or eliminate violence against women without specifying how (or if) these laws are designed to promote and implement primary violence prevention programs, projects or initiatives.

Education policies and other national policies such as gender equality, child protection or youth policies can provide an institutional framework to work with and indirectly bear upon the primary prevention of violence. Similarly, national plans on gender equality and/or violence against women play an important role in the creation of an enabling environment to combat violence against women. The majority of respondents listed gender equality and violence against women policies without specifying how (or if) these policies or laws are designed to promote and implement primary violence prevention programs, projects or initiatives. A review of the Member States' National Plans and policies promoting gender equality shows that few address primary violence prevention.

3.3 Strategies

All respondents reported on strategies adopted to integrate education for non-violence in their policies, programs and initiatives. The key strategies that were put forward by respondents involve establishing school policies for prevention and integrating violence prevention in education curricula:

- The implementation of safe school policies.¹³ For example, Jamaica has introduced the Safe Schools Program which provides schools with policy guidelines directed at securing children at school and addressing issues of security in schools.

¹² Canada has no federal department of education and therefore no integrated national system of education. Canadian provinces and territories differ in their approaches to violence prevention. However, Canada confirmed the overall principles are relatively consistent.

¹³ Canada, Ministries of Education of Jamaica and USA



- The revision of schoolbooks, school curricula and materials to exclude gender stereotypes, e.g. textbooks that do not include women or include them only in stereotyped roles (mothers, care-givers, nurses, etc.). Many school textbooks also continue to perpetuate the exclusion of specific ethnic groups, including women who are members of these groups.¹⁴
- The revision of teacher and students codes of conduct to include procedures and mechanisms for the investigation of (sexual) harassment and abuse.¹⁵
- The introduction of established guidelines detailing what types of activities constitute (sexual) harassment and abuse and/or bullying and how institutions are expected to respond.¹⁶
- The strengthening of attitudes, knowledge, skills, and resources of children, teachers, adolescents and families through training and (awareness) campaigns on gender equality, women's empowerment, conflict resolution and violence prevention.¹⁷

An important complement to the above is to review teacher attitudes and behaviours to ensure they are not perpetuating gender stereotypes through their own attitudes and behaviours in the classroom, e.g. by describing males as providers and women as homemakers, by calling on boys more often than girls or otherwise favouring male participation, etc.¹⁸ The “hidden curriculum” also refers to the different ways in which girls and boys are taught both in terms of student attention, comments and grading.¹⁹

3.4 Inter-American Meetings of Ministers of Education

At the Third Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education, which was held in Washington D.C. in 2003, the main topic of discussion was the promotion of gender equality in education through training of teachers and revision of educational curricula in order to eliminate gender stereotypes and discrimination.²⁰ The meeting did not touch on the specific subject of violence prevention although the proposals made on integrating a gender perspective in education will impact indirectly on the prevention of violence against women. The Meeting established the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE), composed of one representative of each Ministry of Education of the 34 Member States of the OAS. Its main mandate is to follow-up on decisions in the area of education arising from the biennial Inter-American Meetings of Ministers of Education and the Summits of the Americas process. Another purpose of the CIE is to identify multi-lateral initiatives and contribute to the execution of OAS programs and policies in the area of education. At the Seventh Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education, held in March 2012 in the Framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), the Ministers reviewed the work carried out by CIE between 2009 and 2012.²¹ Projects and activities directly related

¹⁴ Ministries of Education of Chile, Peru, Costa Rica, USA, Panama, Paraguay, Guatemala, Mexico, Dominican Republic and the National Machineries of El Salvador and Panama

¹⁵ Canada, the Ministry of Education of the Bahamas and the National Machineries of El Salvador and Guatemala, Dominican Republic

¹⁶ Canada, Ministries of Education of Mexico, Bahamas and USA

¹⁷ Ministry of Education of Brazil, USA, Panama, Paraguay, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Bahamas, Peru and the National Machineries of Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico, Honduras, Canada (Status of Women Canada), Panama, Paraguay, Peru and the Dominican Republic

¹⁸ IACHR (2011), *op.cit.*, p.63 (par. 176)

¹⁹ ECLAC (1998), *op.cit.*, p. 15

²⁰ OAS (2003) Proposals for Integrating a Gender Perspective in Education presented to the Third Meeting of Ministers, available online at [http://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/SEPIA\[Education\]Proposals\[EN\].pdf](http://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/SEPIA[Education]Proposals[EN].pdf)

²¹ OAS (2012). Report of the Chair and Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee on Education (ICE), available online at: <http://portal.oas.org/Portal/Topic/SEDI/Educaci%C3%B3nyCultural/Educaci%C3%B3n/ReunionedeMinistrosdeEducaci%C3%B3n/VIIReuni%C3%B3nMinisterialdeEducaci%C3%B3n/tabid/1941/Default.aspx>

to violence prevention included:

- The Inter-American Teacher Training Network (ITEN) developed a website on initial teacher training in the region and conducted a series of webinars on teacher education-related matters, including integration of conflict resolution skills and social and emotional learning in educational curricula and bullying (prevention and intervention)
- The Inter-American Program on Education of Democratic Values and Practices (first established at the Fourth Meeting of Ministers in 2005), whose aim is to develop and strengthen a democratic culture in the Americas through formal and non-formal education, published the following documents: i) A policy brief on the subject of Violence prevention through early childhood interventions; and ii) A Field Kit: Toward a Culture of Non-Violence.²²
- The *Armando Paz* Project: Building a culture of peace with youth in Central America through the arts, media, and social dialogue. This initiative is executed jointly by three areas of the OAS: the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security, the Office of Education and Culture (OEC), and the Trust for the Americas, in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and Nicaragua. It is funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of the Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). The project aims to raise awareness by and for youth about the prevention of crime, drug abuse and gang violence in the region. It also aims to strengthen networks of youth leaders in the community to promote activities and exchange best practices.
- The OAS Orchestras of the Americas for Social Inclusion (OASIS) in the Caribbean, which has centers in Haiti, Jamaica and Saint Lucia, aims to reduce risk factors that result in youth violence by engaging youth in a systematic daily activity of orchestral and choral training.

4. CURRENT PREVENTION EFFORTS: VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS, PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Historically, most of the work on violence prevention has been carried out by national and international NGOs. This section focuses only on programs, projects and initiatives currently being carried out by the governments of those OAS Member States that responded to the questionnaire (see footnotes 1 and 2). The aim of this section is to provide a source of evidence and experiences from Member States for use in advocating for the increase in violence prevention programs and formulation of policy recommendations explicitly aimed at the primary prevention of violence.

- **9 out of 14** Ministries of Education reported having policies, programs and projects aiming to prevent violence against women.²³
- **13 out of 13** National Machineries reported having policies, programs and projects aiming to prevent violence against women.²⁴

The next sections will briefly provide a context for school-based (gender-based) violence and look at the role of schools in the prevention of violence before listing some of the programs and initiatives reported on by Member States.

²² OAS (2011). Field Kit: Toward a Culture of Non-Violence – the Role of Art and Culture, available online at <http://www.oas.org/en/yearofculture/DOCs/manual%20campo%20ingles.pdf>

²³ The Ministries of Education of Chile, Jamaica, Paraguay, Peru and St Vincent and the Grenadines reported that they do not have such programs, projects or initiatives.

²⁴ See Footnote 2.



4.1 A note about monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention efforts

The small number of respondents that reported on specific primary prevention programs, initiatives and projects failed to provide sufficient, if any details about whether the programs, projects and initiatives have been or are being monitored and evaluated. Primary prevention efforts need to be adequately monitored and evaluated in order to assess their effectiveness, with a view to adjustment and possible scaling-up or replication. That said, a number of methodological concerns are raised in the evaluation of primary prevention efforts, and there are few scientifically sound assessments on violence prevention in the Americas. In August 2013, the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF) undertook a review of published and unpublished articles and reviews on violence prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean and found only eighteen.²⁵ In addition, even fewer evaluations of the impact of gender-based violence prevention programs exist. NOREF found that of the 65 evaluated interventions, only one was from the Western Hemisphere.²⁶

Monitoring and evaluation of existing primary violence prevention programs are challenging for a number of reasons:

- It is extremely difficult to quantify something that doesn't happen, i.e. when violence is prevented, much less attribute something not happening to a specific intervention;
- The impact of programs and initiatives in terms of changing attitudes and behaviours, social norms and the reduction in the perpetration of violence against women and girls may only emerge long after the violence prevention intervention, and may be attributable to a number of other factors that occurred at the same time;
- Most evaluations of violence prevention initiatives are limited to measuring changes in attitudes and beliefs related to gender equality or tolerance of violence. More research is required in order to understand how changes in attitudes and beliefs relate to changes in actual violent behaviour;
- In the case of secondary and tertiary prevention programs – including violence prevention efforts from the justice and health sectors – successful initiatives, programs and projects may actually appear to increase the level of violence against women and girls if the only measure used is the number of reported cases. While increased reporting is certainly a positive development, it does not allow us to measure change in the incidence of violence against women and girls overall or the prevention of future violence;²⁷
- Changes brought about by violence prevention efforts rely heavily on political goodwill, allies, the strength of opposition, and other constraints to change that may be difficult to measure;²⁸
- Violence prevention efforts often require multiple organizations, sectors and strategies –making it increasingly difficult to determine which specific strategy, if any, can be successfully credited with the change.²⁹

²⁵ Moestue, H. et al (2013) Youth Violence prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean: a scoping review of the evidence Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF), p.1., available online http://pt.igarape.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Muggah-Moestue-Igarape_NOREF_Youth-violence-prevention-in-LA-and-Caribbean_Aug-2013_FINAL.pdf

²⁶ Ibid., p.6

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ AWID (2010). Batliwala, S. and A. Pittman. Capturing Change in Women's Realities A Critical Overview of Current Monitoring & Evaluation Frameworks and Approaches, available online at <http://awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-News/Capturing-Change-in-Women-s-Realities>

²⁹ World Bank (2004). Morrison, Andrew et al. Addressing Gender-Based Violence in the Latin American and Caribbean Region: A Critical Review of Interventions, available online at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLACREGTOPPOVANA/Resources/Morrison_Ellsbergh_Bott.pdf

The United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) has provided an overview of the different methods and approaches to monitoring and evaluating, and assessed their strengths and weaknesses in relation to violence against women programs.³⁰ Similarly, the Association for Women in Development (AWID) has provided a critical analysis of the monitoring and evaluation frameworks that can be used and adapted to capture the complexity of change in women's rights and gender equality work, including violence prevention programs.³¹

4.2 The context of school-based violence

Studies conducted in Latin America and Caribbean region show that children are frequently exposed to violence at schools and on the way to and from schools:³²

- In Barbados, 95 percent of interviewed boys and 92 percent of girls said they had experienced caning or flogging in schools.³³
- In Brazil, 84 percent of 12,000 students surveyed in 143 schools from 6 state capitals consider their school violent.³⁴
- In Kingston, Jamaica, 90 percent of school children are concerned about school violence. 21 percent of school children had attacked either teachers or staff and 22 percent had suffered violence from fellow students.³⁵

The 2006 United Nations Study on Violence against Children identifies four main forms of violence in schools, including bullying, sexual and gender-based violence, physical and psychological violence.³⁶ Gender-based violence in schools is widespread and a complex societal issue that is linked to cultural tradition, community practices and weak education systems. For example, in Chile, Costa Rica, Panama and Peru, school-based surveys have found that between 5 and 40 percent of adolescent girls report experience of sexual abuse.³⁷

4.3 The role of schools in violence prevention

Addressing gender-based violence in schools should be a key component of any strategy to end violence against women in particular, and social violence in general. Incorporating school-based anti-violence goals into national action plans for eliminating violence against women contributes to a more holistic response to gender-based violence in its various forms, and acknowledges gender-based violence as one of the more common manifestations of social violence.

Violence prevention programs targeted at children and adolescents have shown greater promise than those targeting adults as they focus on shaping attitudes and behaviours from an early age rather than trying to reverse entrenched attitudes and learned patterns of behaviour.³⁸ The primary focus should be to work with teachers and schools to counteract the gender inequalities, discrimination and stereotypes that are at the root of all violence against women, including gender-based bullying in schools, as well as providing support and services to girls and young women that may already be experiencing violence (in their homes, communities and/or schools). School curricula should thus address issues of (gender) equality, non-discrimination and human rights.

³⁰ DFID (2012). Guidance on Monitoring and Evaluation for Programming on Violence against Women Guidance Note 3, available online at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67334/How-to-note-VAWG-3-monitoring-eval.pdf

³¹ AWID, 2010, op. cit.

³² World Bank (2011) School-based Violence Prevention in Urban Communities of Latin America and the Caribbean: A Practical Guide, available online at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLACREGTOPURBDEV/Resources/Practical_Guide_part2.pdf



³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ UNICEF (2006). World Report on Violence against Children available online at <http://www.unicef.org/violencestudy/reports.html>

³⁷ ECLAC (2007). ¡Ni una más! El derecho a vivir una vida libre de violencia en América Latina y el Caribe, as quoted in Greene, M., Robles, O., Stout, K. and Suvilaakso, T. (2013) A girl's right to learn without fear: Working to end gender-based violence at school. Woking. Plan International, available online at http://www.planusa.org/stuff/contentmgr/files/5848557366630283d063c7ccf8212683/misc/a_girl__s_right_to_learn_without_fear.pdf

³⁸ WHO (2004) Preventing Violence: A Guide to Implementing the Recommendations of the World Health Report on Violence and Health, available online at: <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2004/9241592079>.

4.4 Mechanisms to prevent gender-based violence

4.4.1 School-based skills development: changing behaviour, practices and attitudes

School-based social development programs that teach children and adolescents social and problem-solving skills have been found to be effective in reducing youth violence and risk factors for youth violence (such as drug and alcohol abuse) in both the short- and long-term.³⁹ A number of questionnaire respondents indicated running school-based programs to prevent violence by teaching children about conflict resolution, anger management, building and sustaining peaceful and healthy relationships, positive decision-making and gender equality. There is strong evidence that such programs can be effective in reducing violence and advancing social skills in the short-term,⁴⁰ although their long-term impact is not well understood,⁴¹ and methodological considerations make it extremely difficult to attribute a specific school-based program or initiative with preventing violence over the long-term.

A number of respondents identified changing the attitudes, behaviours and practices which contribute to bullying, sexual harassment, sexual violence and discrimination (on the basis of race, sexual orientation and/or gender) as a strategy to promote non-violence and gender equality.⁴² Involving parents in children's education and equipping them with skills and knowledge may also help to promote gender equality and non-violence. Inadequate parental supervision of children and adolescents are well-established risk factors for youth violence.⁴³ There is little evidence available on the positive impact of increasing adult involvement in lives of children and adolescents but it appears to be an important element in the primary prevention of violence.⁴⁴

- The **Ministries of Education of the Bahamas, Jamaica and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** reported on the Health and Family Life Education Program (HFLE) which addresses issues of non-violence by teaching life skills, such as effective communication, positive decision-making, managing anger and conflict resolution. Neither country provided specific information about how the program operates or whether it has been evaluated in terms of impact and effectiveness.
- The **Ministry of Education of the Bahamas** reported on the I'm Special Program, designed for use within the primary school sector. The main goal of the program is to improve young children's self-esteem. The program also aims to teach children appropriate ways of dealing with feelings, steps for making decisions; and skills for healthy living, effective group interactions, and resisting drug use. The program is administered by trained facilitators through eight fifty- to sixty-minute group sessions that are designed to be enjoyable for children and include a variety of hands-on activities. Facilitators undergo two days of training. The I'm Special Program has been implemented

with both universal and at-risk populations in school classrooms and in after-school settings, as well as with youth groups (e.g. scouts). The Bahamas did not provide details about how (or if) the program is being monitored and evaluated or what the impact has been on levels of school violence.

- The **Ministry of Education of the Bahamas** is also collaborating with other government and non-government agencies in planning a peace campaign to mobilize public and private schools to participate in activities, including morning assemblies and competitions. The competitions include essay writing, art, rap, cheerleading and step competition and entries are judged on the most dynamic presentations on ways to create a peaceful environment for young people. In addition, the Green Ribbon Campaign, which has been ongoing since 2001, is a school based program to teach students in both primary and senior schools how to resolve conflicts peacefully. The Bahamas did not provide details about how (or if) the program is being monitored and evaluated or what the impact has been on levels of school violence.
- The **Ministry of Education of Panama** reported on the School for Fathers and Mothers [Escuela para Padres y Madres de Familia en el Ministerio de Educación] which seeks to involve parents and guardians in their children's education to promote closer family relationships. It also reported on the Prevention of School and Intra-Family Violence Program [Prevención de la Violencia Escolar e Intrafamiliar] (in collaboration with other governmental departments), which seeks to educate students and parents about non-violence, both in the classroom and at home. Since 1997, 134,561 parents have benefitted from this program nationwide. Panama did not provide details about how it monitors or evaluates the program or what the impact has been on levels of school violence.

4.4.2 Training of teachers

The education and training of teachers was identified by a large number of questionnaire respondents as a key strategy for (primary) violence prevention.

i. Violence prevention training programs for pre-school teachers:

- **9 out of 14** Ministries of Education offer training programs for pre-school teachers that focus on violence prevention.⁴⁵
- **6 out of 14** Ministries of Education offer training programs for pre-school teachers that particularly focus on the prevention of gender-based violence.⁴⁶
- **2 out of 13** National Machineries offer training programs for pre-school teachers that particularly focus on violence prevention.⁴⁷
- **4 out of 13** National Machineries offer training programs for pre-school teachers that particularly focus on the prevention of gender-based violence.⁴⁸

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ WHO and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2003). Lösel and Beelmann. Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence: taking action and generating evidence, p.43, available online at: <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564007/en/>

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Canada and the Ministries of Education of Brazil, Panama and the United States

⁴³ WHO, 2004, op.cit.

⁴⁴ Heise, L., 2011, op.cit.

⁴⁵ Ministries of Education of Mexico, Bahamas, Panama, Guatemala, Canada, Costa Rica, Brazil, Jamaica, Paraguay

⁴⁶ Ministries of Education of Mexico, Bahamas, Panama, Canada, Brazil, Paraguay

⁴⁷ National Machineries of Mexico and the Bahamas,

⁴⁸ National Machinery of Bahamas, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Paraguay



- ii. Violence prevention training programs for primary school teachers:
 - **12 out of 14** Ministries of Education offer training programs for primary school teachers that focus on violence prevention⁴⁹
 - **9 out of 14** Ministries of Education offer training programs for primary school teachers that particularly focus on the prevention of gender-based violence⁵⁰
 - **2 out of 13** National Machineries offer training programs for primary school teachers that focus on violence prevention⁵¹
 - **6 out of 13** National Machineries offer training programs for primary school teachers that particularly focus on the prevention of gender-based violence⁵²
- iii. Violence prevention for secondary school teachers:
 - **12 out of 14** Ministries of Education offer training programs for secondary school teachers that focus on violence prevention⁵³
 - **3 out of 13** National Machineries offer training programs for secondary school teachers that focus on violence prevention⁵⁴
 - **9 out of 14** Ministries of Education offer training programs for secondary school teachers that particularly focus on the prevention of gender-based violence⁵⁵
 - **6 out of 13** National Machineries offer training programs for secondary teachers that particularly focus on the prevention of gender-based violence⁵⁶

Only the **Ministry of Education of Mexico** gave a specific example of violence prevention programs for pre-school teachers. Examples of teacher training courses, tools and methods are detailed below.

- The **Ministry of Education of the Bahamas** provides professional development workshops to administrators and teachers during mid-term and summer breaks on violence prevention, sexuality and student behaviour. The aim of the workshops is to provide staff with better tools to help students make choices and enter healthy relationships. In addition, teachers are offered workshops on how to provide students with the necessary skills to manage conflicts and violence. The Bahamas did not provide information about how (or if) the workshops were monitored and evaluated.
- The **Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic** (in collaboration with a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations) reported on providing teachers with training on issues of gender and masculinities and violence prevention in education. The training course provides teachers (at all levels) with peaceful conflict resolution skills. The Dominican Republic did not provide details about whether its teacher training initiatives have been evaluated.
- The **Ministry of Education of Mexico** reported on a project (Proyecto Equidad) offered to secondary schools on Saturdays which provide activities promoting non-violence, gender equality and non-discrimination. Its main objectives are to eradicate gender-based violence in education and reduce school drop-outs. The project was introduced in 2008 and between 2008-2011, 910 schools (11,246 students) in seven Mexican States participated. Mexico did not provide details about whether the project

⁴⁹ Ministry of Education of Mexico, Bahamas, Panama, United States, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Canada, Costa Rica, Brazil, Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines

⁵⁰ Ministry of Education of Mexico, Bahamas, Panama, United States, Dominican Republic, Canada, Costa Rica, Brazil

⁵¹ National Machineries of Mexico and Bahamas

⁵² National Machineries of Bahamas, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Peru, Paraguay

⁵³ Ministries of Education of Mexico, Bahamas, Panama, United States, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Canada, Costa Rica, Brazil, Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Paraguay

⁵⁴ National Machineries of Mexico, Bahamas, Paraguay

has been evaluated. It has also implemented workshops on gender equality and violence prevention for pre-school, primary and secondary teachers. The workshops aim to equip teachers with knowledge of the role of gender in education and seek to develop and build skills to resolve conflicts, build students' self-awareness and increase knowledge of gender equality and violence prevention in general. The workshops are monitored by the Education department and results are shared in each Mexican State in order to develop new actions and strategies to mainstream gender in educational activities, design strategies to promote gender equity and prevent violence. In 2010 and 2011, 919 trainers attended 993 pre- and primary schools to give the workshops. The workshop has been available for secondary schools since 2012. Mexico did not provide details about whether the workshops have been evaluated.

- The **Ministry of Education of Panama** through workshops and seminars seeks to educate teachers (and parents), themes include family communication, sex and sexuality, gender roles, teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted disease prevention and gender equality. Panama did not specify how it monitors and evaluates its workshops and seminars.
- The **National Machinery of Paraguay** in collaboration with Paraguay's Women's Secretariat and the Ministry of Education and Culture initiated a gender-based violence program directed at children of 0-8 years old between June 2012 and May 2013. Pre- and primary school teachers were trained on the issue of gender-based violence. Paraguay did not provide specific information about how the program operates or whether it has been evaluated in terms of impact and effectiveness.
- The **Department of Education of the United States of America (DOE)** reported on the Dear Colleague Letter on Sexual Violence (issued by the DOE, Office for Civil Rights in April 2011) which advises secondary schools and post-secondary institutions on how to prevent sexual violence and how to respond to incidents of sexual violence promptly and effectively.⁵⁷ The DOE also provides training to elementary, secondary and post-secondary institutions, teachers, parents and students on issues of gender-based violence. The United States did not provide specific details about how its violence prevention initiatives are being monitored and evaluated.

4.4.3 Non-formal education: media, awareness and political advocacy campaigns

A small number of respondents indicated having organized media and political advocacy campaigns to prevent violence against women. The media and political advocacy campaigns are aimed at changing laws and policies or raising awareness about violence against women. Evidence is emerging that media and political advocacy campaigns combined with other educational opportunities can increase knowledge, awareness and influence perceptions and attitudes towards intimate partner violence and sexual violence.⁵⁸ However, evidence of their effectiveness in actually preventing the occurrence of violence is still scarce.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Ministries of Education of Mexico, Bahamas, Panama, United States, Dominican Republic, Canada, Costa Rica, Brazil, Paraguay

⁵⁶ National Machineries of Bahamas, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Peru, Paraguay

⁵⁷ The Dear Colleague Letter is available on the United States Office for Civil Rights website <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.html>

⁵⁸ WHO and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 2007, op. cit. (Whitaker, Baker and Arias, p55-57)

⁵⁹ Ibid.



- The Ministry of Education of the Bahamas initiated a Healthy Teen Relationship Campaign to educate youth on relationship abuse. The campaign was expected to reach 90% of senior high schools by June 2013. At the time the Bahamas submitted the CIM questionnaire on violence prevention plans were also being put in place to implement the campaign within primary schools. The Bahamas did not say whether it has carried out an evaluation of the campaign in question.
- The Ministry of Education of Mexico (in collaboration with the National Women's Institute, Mexican Youth Institute and UNICEF) has implemented the Equality and Respect is the Work of Everyone...Everyday [La Igualdad y el Respeto es tarea de todos... los días] is a media campaign aimed at the general public to promote awareness about gender stereotypes through the use of print and audiovisual materials:
 - 184,000 posters and 2.5 million leaflets were distributed in 90,000 schools across the country.
 - 2 million leaflets were distributed across the country, targeting approximately 8 million people. Distribution took place in the 18 states of the country that have a highest ratio of violence, particularly the rural states.
 - Radio and television advertisement by the Ministry of Education

No details were given about whether an evaluation has been carried out in terms of the campaign's impact and effectiveness.

The Ministry (in collaboration with UNICEF) also initiated a television campaign in 2009 rejecting social attitudes that normalize violence. Themes addressed included dating violence, domestic violence, violence as entertainment, sexual violence, gender violence and discrimination. No details about evaluation of the campaign in terms of its impact and results were given.

4.5 Challenges to primary violence prevention in national efforts

In addition to lack of monitoring and evaluation efforts related to existing violence prevention programs, as well as the obvious methodological challenges to effective monitoring and evaluation of violence prevention that were discussed above, the results of the questionnaire point to a number a number of other challenges to the primary prevention of violence:

There is a general disconnect between internationally-agreed commitments and national laws and policies

When asked to list specific programs, projects and initiatives on violence prevention, the vast majority of respondents listed general policies that promote gender equality or aim to eradicate violence against women. It was unclear from the majority of responses whether Member States have introduced specific violence prevention programs or projects as a result of existing policies. Only a small number of respondents reported on specific primary prevention programs, initiatives and projects. A number of these are discussed above – all mainly focus on developing respectful relationships, building non-violent communication skills, and addressing gender inequalities and stereotypes.

Overall, there is a dearth of good examples and practices of how to implement primary violence prevention programs. Over the past couple of decades, Member States have made increasing efforts to pass laws to criminalize various manifestations of gender-based violence and provide legal and health support to women and girls. Yet there have been far fewer efforts aimed at preventing this violence, with the exception of the possible (though poorly understood) secondary preventive impact that interventions from the justice and/or health sectors may have. This might be attributed to an inadequate understanding of how

primary prevention works, including a lack of attention and methodological challenges to monitoring and evaluating the results of existing primary prevention programs (see below).

Lack of early intervention

Existing studies demonstrate that the minds and learning habits of children are most malleable in pre- and primary school, or between the ages of 0 and 5 years old, when their brains are still developing.⁶⁰ Most public spending is not focused on these formative years, which means that young children may have already internalized gender roles, norms and stereotypes and/or learned to use violence to resolve conflicts, particularly if that is the example set by families and peers, the media and society in general.

Lack of teacher training

The questionnaire included a question on whether respondents States have allocated a share of the national budget or their respective Ministry's budget to the issue of education for the prevention of (gender-based) violence.⁶¹

- **9 out of 14** Ministries of Education have a share of the budget allocated to the training of teachers and students on the matter of education for the prevention of (gender-based) violence.⁶² None of the Ministries specified what this share was (see below).
- **7 out of 13** National Machineries have a share of their budgets allocated to the training of teachers and students on the matter of education for the prevention of (gender-based) violence.⁶³ None of the National Machineries specified what this share was (see below).

Roughly fifty percent of ministries and national machineries indicated having allocated a budget to student and teacher training. However, CIM recognizes that the questionnaire was inadequate in that a positive answer to the above question does not indicate whether the budget allocated is for training on violence in general, or gender-based violence specifically, nor does it specify if the budget is allocated to student training or teacher training (or both). Secondly, the questionnaire omitted to ask respondents whether a budget is allocated to primary violence prevention. Thirdly, the questionnaire failed to ask respondents to confirm what percentage of the budget is allocated to any of the above activities. It is thus impossible to draw firm conclusions from the positive answers provided by just over fifty percent of the ministries and national machineries, and further research, including detailed budget analysis, would be needed.

The questionnaire results show that the majority of training on the issue of violence prevention is offered to secondary school teachers, rather than pre-school and primary school teachers. The vast majority of respondents failed to indicate which school level their prevention efforts targeted. The Ministry of Education of Panama reported that it does not have the budget or technical capacity to run teacher training at all levels and the Ministry of Education of Guatemala indicated not having a specific strategy to train teachers. In ad-

⁶⁰ Children Now (2013). Early Learning and Development: The First Five Years Determine a Lifetime, available on line at http://www.childrennow.org/index.php/learn/early_learning_and_development/

⁶¹ Questionnaire question: Does your ministry/institution have a share of the national budget or the Ministry's budget allocated to training teachers/youth/students on the matter of education for the prevention of (gender-based) violence?

⁶² The Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica United States, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Dominican Republic (but not Chile, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and St Vincent and the Grenadines)

⁶³ The Bahamas, Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay (but not Argentina, Canada, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and the Dominican Republic)



dition, the Ministry of Education of Peru recognized the absence of a policy mandate. The lack of training of pre-school teachers ties in with the lack of early intervention mentioned earlier, in that existing prevention programs focus mainly on children at the secondary school level despite the demonstrated benefits of working with younger children.

5. POLICY AND STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADVANCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

On the basis of the responses received to the CIM questionnaire, an extensive literature review and the results of the Pachuca Hemispheric Forum, a series of specific public policy and other recommendations is identified below in order to strengthen the focus on prevention of violence against women and girls in international, regional and national-level efforts.

Overall, the promotion of primary prevention of violence involves encouraging and supporting the development, implementation and evaluation of programs explicitly designed to stop its perpetration. Feeding the results of these efforts into the policy process will ensure that lessons learned from experience, and rooted in local realities, will bring maximum benefit. The following recommendations draw on the policy recommendations included in both the Second Hemispheric Report on the Implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention (2012) and the Pachuca Declaration (2014).

1. Amend and/or harmonize the legal framework concerning the prevention and punishment of violence against women to bring it into line with the definition of violence against women established in articles 1 and 2 of the Belém do Pará Convention;
2. Promote that policies adopted on the prevention of violence are State, rather than government policies, in order to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the response to violence against women and girls. Similarly, ensure that the policies adopted at the level of the State are valid in all the states of federal systems.
3. Adopt national inter-sectoral plans to prevent violence against women, together with mechanisms for their monitoring, evaluation and dissemination, ensuring the participation of civil society, organized communities and social movements in the different stages of said plans;
4. Include a participatory impact evaluation component in public policies on violence against women, with a view to identifying good practices and lessons learned, scaling up and replicating successful experiences;
5. Coordinate with the relevant government bodies to integrate a gender and human rights perspective in educational curricula and in non-formal educational environments, and design, implement and evaluate comprehensive strategies and programs, including public education programs and training for teachers and professionals aimed at preventing violence against women and girls and at bringing about a profound change in social and cultural attitudes;
6. Include the issue of masculinities in all educational curricula in order to guide the socialization of boys and girls, with an emphasis on health and respectful gender and power relations, peaceful conflict resolution and the exercise of sexuality in conditions of equality and free from discrimination;

7. Develop ongoing training plans on the prevention of violence against women and on women's rights under the Belém do Pará Convention for decision-makers and authorities, especially for government officials and agencies responsible for enforcing legislation or policies to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women, including educators;
8. Incentivize educators to demonstrate the benefits for all of education on human rights and gender equality, and offer them certified professional development tools that are consistent with agreed commitments on human rights;
9. Broaden the work of education for human rights and gender equality beyond the education sector to include other key spaces and actors such as mothers and father, teachers unions and organizations of educators, and religious groups, among others;
10. Articulate the work of the education sector with other relevant sectors, including health, justice and security and ensure that educational policies include a participatory evaluation component;
11. Include in national plans on violence against women strategies for cooperation with the media and advertising agencies in order to publicize women's rights, in particular the Belém do Pará Convention. Ensure that they have sufficient budgetary funding for continuity as well as an impact evaluation mechanism;
12. Mainstream a diversity approach in violence prevention policies in order to respond to the needs of specific groups and broaden the process of formulating public policies in order to include full citizen representation, with particular emphasis on marginalized groups;
13. Approve sufficient budget appropriations for the execution of public policies and plans on the prevention of violence against women in the public and private spheres;

CONCLUSION

Over the last two decades since the adoption of the Belem do Para Convention, violence against women and girls has been recognized as a major violation of human rights affecting approximately 1 in 3 women at all levels of society. The continued prevalence of violence against women is evidence of the fact that Member States have yet to tackle it with political will and commitment, scientific and methodological rigour and sufficient human and financial resources. This analysis shows that the direct and indirect financial costs of violence against women and girls are substantial, as are the social and human costs.

There is increasing evidence that primary violence prevention efforts that target the root causes of violence against women and girls – gender inequality and discrimination – are effective both in terms of decreasing violence and of reducing its human and socio-economic costs. This analysis therefore calls for strengthened efforts to prevent violence against women and girls, though not at the expense of existing efforts to punish violence or care for its victims, and advances the concept of violence prevention as a means to reduce or eliminate violence against women and girls. The analysis shows that investing in multi-sectoral strategies for the prevention of (gender-based) violence is not only a moral imperative but also makes sound scientific, economic, political and social sense. A strong coordinated institutional response at all levels is required to close the gap between



Member States' obligations under the Belém do Pará Convention (and other international legislation and commitments) and their inadequate and inconsistent implementation at the domestic level. With the necessary political will and resources dedicated to preventing violence against women and girls, it can be reduced and eventually eradicated.

APPENDIX A

Review of the international agreements that apply

Over the past two decades, violence against women has been recognized as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination. Article 3 of the Belém do Pará Convention states that “Every woman has the right to be free from violence in both the public and private spheres.”⁶⁴

The importance of violence prevention has been addressed in various legal and policy documents developed at international and regional levels, including:

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) Although CEDAW itself does not mention the issue of violence against women, General Recommendation 19 of the CEDAW Committee, which was adopted in 1992 specifically addresses the issue of gender-based violence as a form of discrimination and stresses the importance of prevention in order to address its root causes, in accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention.⁶⁵ Paragraph 11 of the General Recommendation includes an analysis of the importance of changing gender norms and roles to prevent violence against women.⁶⁶

The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Belém do Pará Convention, 1994) approaches violence against women as a policy, legal and social, economic and cultural issue. Article 7 of the Convention places Member States under an obligation to pursue, by all appropriate means and without delay, policies to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women. Under Article 8(a), States Party are responsible for undertaking progressively specific measures, including programs to promote awareness and observance of the right of women to be free from violence and the right of women to have their human rights respected and protected, among others.

The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, committed governments to developing strategies and national plans of action to address the issue of violence against women, including measures to prevent such violence.⁶⁷

The Pachuca Declaration (2014) adopted during the Belem do Para +20 Hemispheric Forum “Prevention of violence against women: Good practices and proposals for the future” (May 14th to 16th 2014, Pachuca, Mexico) reaffirms the commitment of both the States Party to the Belém do Pará Convention, and the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanisms to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) to preventing violence against women and recommends specific areas for action in law and public policy, education and communication.⁶⁸

OVERCOMING SCHOOL-RELATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: CREATING AN EVIDENCE BASE TO INFLUENCE POLICY AND PROGRAMMING



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Violence in and around educational settings is a global phenomenon. Worldwide, 246 million young boys and girls experience violence at or on their way to school every year. This paper highlights some of the lessons learned through the USAID Safe Schools Program and also provides empirical data generated by USAID-supported analytical work that demonstrate a direct causal effect of SRGBV on academic performance. Steps to strengthen the evidence base that will compel policymakers and donors to increase their investments to eliminate gender-based violence in educational settings are also discussed.

WHAT IS SCHOOL-RELATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE?

While sexual harassment and abuse may be the most well-known form of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), it can take many other forms (**see Box 1**). For example, according to the global Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Trends in Mathematics and Sciences Study (TIMSS), about 20 percent of students worldwide have weekly experiences of bullying and about 30 percent monthly^{31,32}. Corporal punishment affects more than 80 percent of students in some countries¹⁹. All of these forms of violence should be conceptualized as gendered as gender-related stereotypes that persist in society affect the frequency with which boys or girls become targets or engage in different types of violence.

Box 1: Definition of School-related Gender-based Violence

School-related Gender-based Violence includes physical, sexual and psychological violence or abuse that is based on gendered stereotypes or that targets students on the basis of their sex, sexuality or gender identities. The underlying intent of this violence is to reinforce gender roles and perpetuate gender inequalities. It includes rape, unwanted sexual touching, unwanted sexual comments, corporal punishment, bullying, and verbal harassment. Unequal power relations between adults and children and males and females contribute to this violence, which can take place in the school, on school grounds, going to and from school, or in school dormitories and may be perpetrated by teachers, students, or community members. Both girls and boys can be victims, as well as perpetrators. SRGBV results in sexual, physical, or psychological harm to girls and boys.

Boys and girls are bullied at similar rates^{8,12,24}, but boys are more often perpetrators than girls²⁴, and the type of bullying that girls and boys experience is different: girls more often experience psychological bullying⁸ and boys more often experience physical bullying³⁸. Conformity with heterosexual gender norms also affects who gets bullied^{16, 20,33,40} and especially homophobic bullying (i.e., bullying related to perceived or real non-heterosexual gender identities) often crosses the line into sexual harassment^{4,17}. Corporal punishment is gendered in the sense that it is linked to concepts of masculinity and is practiced more often and more harshly on boys than on girls and more often by male teachers than by female teachers^{11,13,28,36}. For example, a study in Zimbabwe revealed that male teachers used physical corporal punishment more often, while female teachers tended to use verbal humiliation as punishment²⁹. Though girls experience sexual violence more often than boys, the World Health Organization (WHO) highlights the seriousness of this problem for both girls and boys with estimates of 150 million girls and 73 million boys who were under 18 years old having experienced forced sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual violence by people known to them, including teachers²⁶.

It is clear that SRGBV is a serious and widespread human rights challenge. In addition to the many health-related, emotional and psychological problems including physical injuries, unwanted pregnancies, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and impaired social skills, it is also a significant barrier for children to accessing a quality education, which is the focus of this article.

For example, one study in Ethiopia found that 60 percent of female students cited school violence as the main cause of absenteeism ⁵. In the same study, around 40 percent rated the effects of violence as an important factor in discouraging them from sending their daughters to school. Several other studies cite corporal punishment as a major factor in truancy and dropout for both boys and girls ². One report suggests that 14 percent of students who drop out in Nepal say they did so because they feared a teacher ⁴¹. Bullying is another common reason for absenteeism ¹⁵. For example, as many as 20 percent of students in a South African study reported skipping class because of fear of bullying ³⁴.

In addition, studies suggests that SRGBV affects learning for those who do stay in school, although a direct link between SRGBV and academic performance has been researched less often. Most studies investigating effects on performance focus on bullying rather than other forms of SRGBV, for example the PIRLS and TIMSS, two of very few large-scale studies providing internationally comparable data on bullying as well as more general measures of perceived safety and discipline. The PIRLS, TIMSS and prePIRLS, which is a sister study to the PIRLS designed for countries where reading achievement is too low to be measured by the PIRLS tests show that all of these measures correlate with lower test scores ^{31,32}.

For example, students from non-English/Afrikaans South Africa and Botswana schools ³² whose principals reported moderate problems of discipline and safety in their schools had substantially lower reading achievement than students whose principals reported “hardly any problems” (**Figure 1**). Similarly, students in schools that were perceived by teachers as less “safe and orderly” tended to score lower in reading tests in these two countries (**Figure 2**), and students who reported being bullied more often scored lower than those who were not victims of bullying (**Figure 3**). The main PIRLS and TIMSS showed consistent findings from developed countries ^{31,32}. One caveat with these correlational stud-

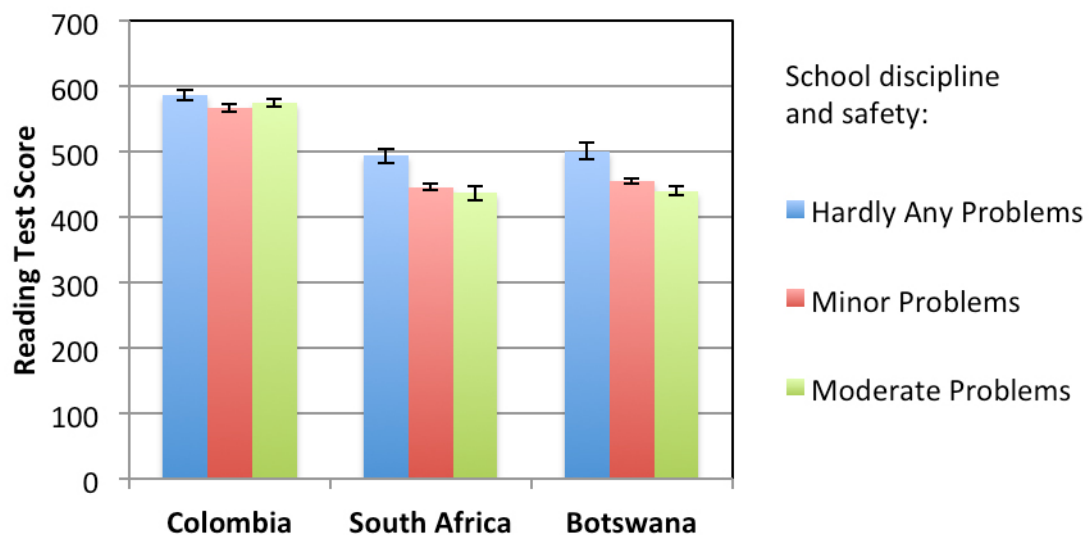


Figure 1: Association between school discipline and safety and 4th Grade reading scores for the three developing countries participating in prePIRLS. Error bars are standard errors of the mean.



ies is that it is difficult to separate effects of school safety, discipline, and bullying from other characteristics of these schools, such as lack of resources, lack of trained teachers, among others, and the data do not imply a causal effect.

Nevertheless, several smaller-scale studies seem to align with such an interpretation^{18,34,38,39}. Poor performance in school is also reported as a consequence of corporal punishment and the associated humiliation and harassment, suggesting students often become distracted and lose their concentration when there is a threat of corporal punishment²⁹. Note that this finding argues against the widespread belief in some cultures that corporal punishment is an effective way to improve performance by keeping discipline in the classroom. Although there is less research on the relationship between sexual violence and harassment specifically and learning, intimidation and sexual harassment has been linked

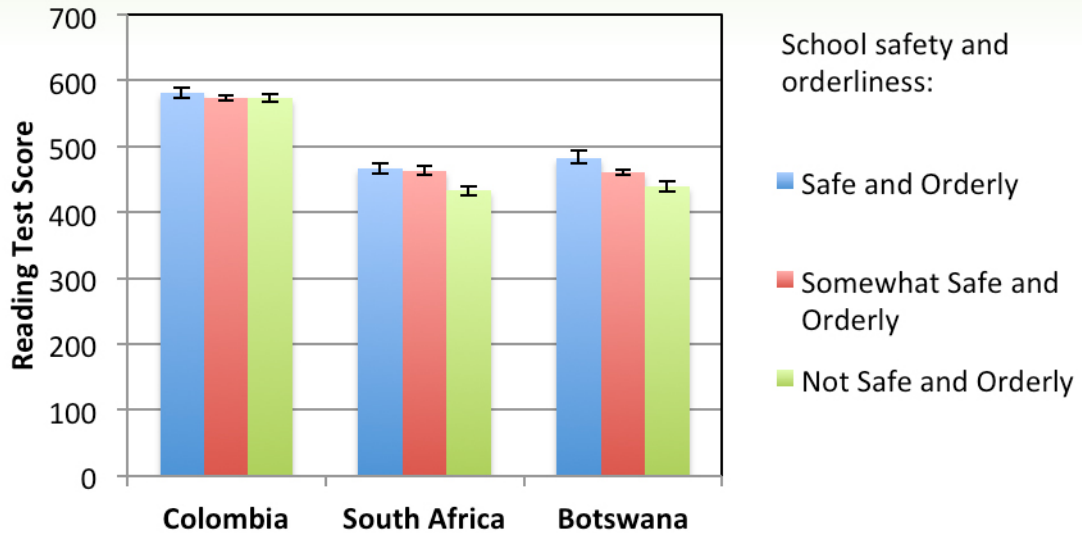


Figure 2: Association between school safety and orderliness and 4th Grade reading scores for the three developing countries participating in prePIRLS. Error bars are standard errors of the mean.

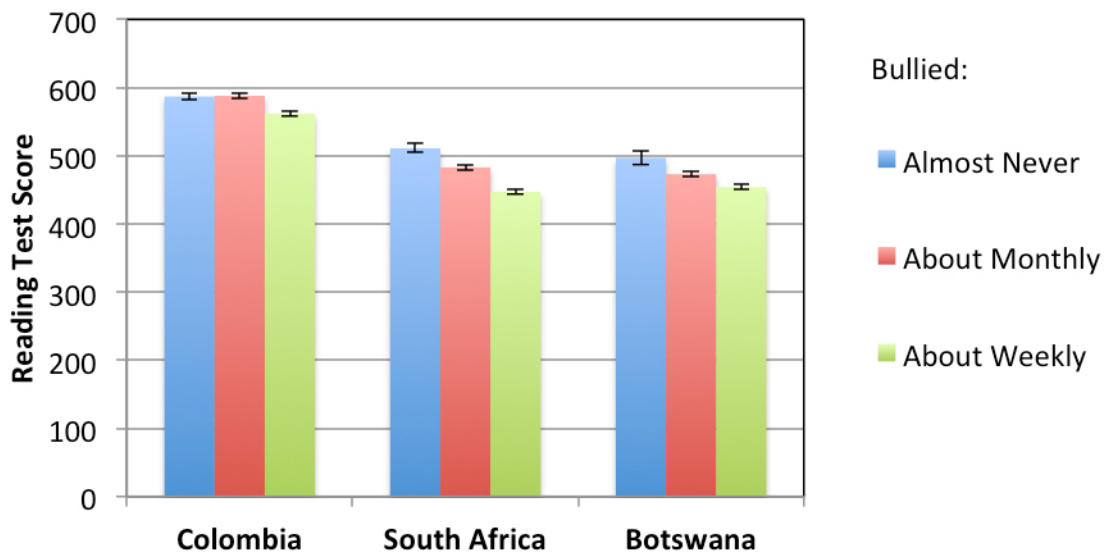


Figure 3: Association between bullying and 4th Grade reading scores for the three developing countries participating in prePIRLS. Error bars are standard errors of the mean.

to poor academic performance for girls for example in a study by Dunne et al. (2005) in Ghana and Botswana ¹⁴.

Generally, SRGBV could lead to lower performance through a number of mechanisms in addition to drop-out or poor attendance ^{3,9,27}: SRGBV can lead to depression and reduced self-esteem ^{6,18,22,27}, inability to concentrate ^{1,5,21}, lack of engagement with school ^{37,43}, and lower participation in class ²³. Sometimes even the fear of violence, not just actual experiences of violence themselves, can affect academic performance ³⁰. These effects can be long-lasting ^{7,44} and have economic costs for individuals far beyond the grade level at which the violence occurs ⁴².

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SAFE SCHOOLS PROGRAM

One of the earliest education programs at USAID that aimed to reduce SRGBV was the Safe Schools program, which was implemented in 60 schools in Ghana and Malawi between 2003 and 2008, targeting upper primary and lower secondary students. When the program was designed in 2003, gender-based violence in schools was considered a significant obstacle both to achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals, and to reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS. At the time, however, the major focus of donors and non-governmental organizations was on sexual and physical abuse committed against female students. In the Safe Schools design, the concept of gender-based violence was broadened to include violence against boys, violence such as corporal punishment and bullying, as well as the more invisible forms of psychological abuse. This new approach to identify the relationship between traditional gender roles and the types of abuse and violence that girls and boys suffer from and perpetrate in schools shaped the definition of SRGBV in Box 1, in use at USAID today.

The Safe Schools interventions were designed and implemented to address the root causes of SRGBV at all levels of the education system, including the national, institutional, local (community) and individual level. The centerpiece of the Safe Schools model was the Doorways training programs that were designed to sensitize teachers and supervisors to recognize, prevent, and respond to SRGBV and develop students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities (**Figure 4**).

After implementation of the program, teachers and students showed more equitable attitudes and improved knowledge of SRGBV. Based on participant surveys, students became more confident that they had the right not to be hurt or mistreated. In Ghana, the percentage of students agreeing with the statement "You have the right not to be hurt or mistreated" increased from 57 percent to 70 percent. In Malawi, 70 percent of girls initially disagreed with the statement that it is okay for a teacher to get a girl pregnant as long as he marries her. After the program, nearly 90 percent of girls disagreed. After implementation of the program, students were also more likely to view hard physical work (such as digging pit latrines) as inappropriate punishment. Teachers' awareness of sexual harassment of girls at school increased. In Ghana, prior to the Safe Schools Program, roughly 30 percent of teachers agreed that sexual harassment of girls occurred in schools, after the program that number increased to nearly 80 percent. Teachers' belief that boys could experience sexual harassment increased by 38 percent—from 26 to 64 percent. Teachers became more aware of how to report a violation related to gender violence. Prior to the program, 45 percent knew how to report, after the intervention more than 75 percent knew how to report a violation.

The Safe Schools pilot was later expanded to additional countries – the Dominican Republic, Senegal, Yemen, and Tajikistan. The Doorways manuals are still being used and adapted in other programs that address SRGBV, for example the Empowering Adoles-



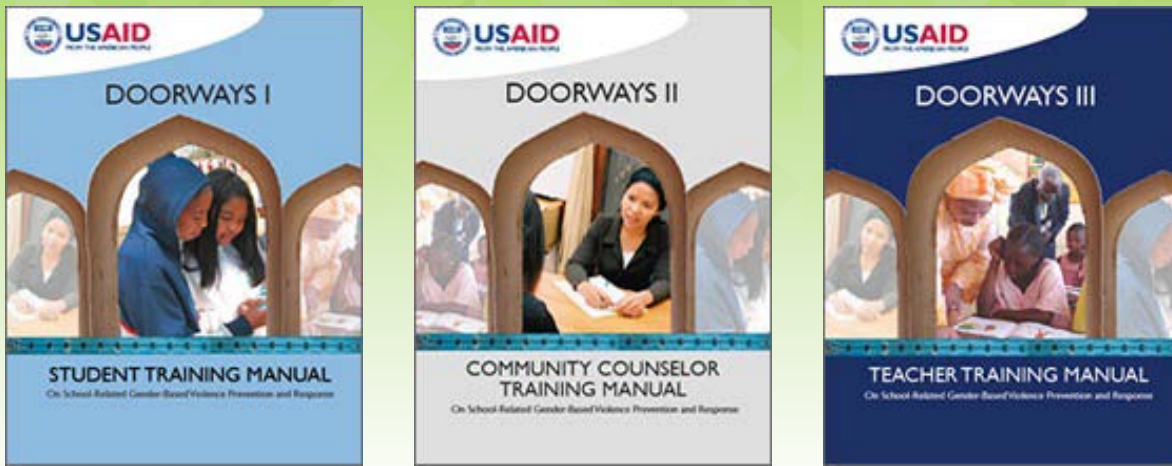


Figure 4: The three Doorways manuals developed by the Safe Schools program.

cent Girls to Lead through Education (EAGLE) program in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Girls' Opportunities to Access Learning (GOAL) + in Liberia. Since 2013, 465 Peace Corps staff, volunteers and counterparts have been trained on the Student Friendly Schools curriculum that was adopted and adapted from USAID's Doorways Program.

The lessons gleaned from the first generation of Safe Schools program implementation are still applicable today:

- A gender approach expands understanding of violence in schools. The focus on both boys and girls was a strategy for long-term transformation of gender relations.
- A Whole-School training approach is more effective for changing the school environment. Interventions were most effective when a “whole-school” approach, namely one that includes all members of the school community and anyone who comes in contact with students, was utilized. As teachers moved between schools and/or grade levels, it was critical to involve circuit supervisors, district training officers, head teachers and community members in program efforts.
- Redefining classroom discipline requires sensitizing both teachers and parents. Recognizing that corporal punishment is normative behavior, and has both value and meaning to teachers and parents in many communities across the globe is the first step in abandoning this harmful practice. Safe Schools reinforced the importance of transitioning from corporal punishment to positive, non-violent discipline by first engaging the community in critically examining corporal punishment, identifying the negative impact it has on children, and recognizing that alternative non-violent approaches to classroom management exist. Reducing corporal punishment also required changing the teacher-student power dynamic, as well as parents' beliefs that such practices build character.
- Training materials that stress both children's rights and responsibilities build stronger support among teachers and parents. This emphasis on both rights and responsibilities helped students appreciate and value the distinction, and also redefined the traditional teacher-student relationship to be based on mutual respect.
- Use of role models is an effective tool to overcome fear of reporting SRGBV. Discussion of gender issues was often controversial and grounded in a power dynamic that was predicated on male dominance and female subservience. These traditional values

often made it extremely difficult for victims of SRGBV to feel comfortable reporting their experience. The use of role models was one such powerful strategy for sensitizing and mobilizing people to reduce GBV and SRGBV.

- Communication materials should balance negative images with positive and constructive ones. The emphasis placed on the beneficial aspects of behavioral change, and avoiding depicting only teachers and boys as perpetrators of violence was essential to the success of the program.
- Student-led groups are effective at changing behavior and attitudes. The components of the program that utilized young people were effective in developing leadership capabilities and generating valuable discussion about the status of SRGBV in communities. School-based clubs were popular and helped expose students to topics of the Doorways curriculum.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SRGBV AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Despite considerable progress in documenting and conceptualizing school violence, surprisingly few studies in any part of the world have examined its impact on educational achievement. In view of this, RTI International was commissioned by USAID to conduct a literature review of the available evidence, with particular, but not sole, reference to developing countries. This literature review was performed through a systematic online search of academic journals. Relevant research reports from aid agencies and international non-governmental organizations were also considered.

The Literature Review on the Intersection of Safe Learning Environments and Educational Achievement found support for a relationship between school violence and learning, based on many of the studies cited above.^{32,31} However, the review concluded, in line with Cornell and Mayer (2010) 10, that “the complex interplay of school violence and disruption, academic achievement, and prevention approaches is not well understood.” This is even truer of developing countries because to date, relevant research in developed countries has far outweighed that in developing countries. Regions other than sub-Saharan Africa are especially under-represented. In short, research on the linkages between school safety and violence and educational achievement in developing countries is sparse and patchy, making reliable comparisons among locations or analyses of trends difficult. If more developing countries participated in the prePIRLS, then this might pave the way for better understandings of the linkages between school-wide violence and achievement in the developing world. However, it is important to note that PIRLS and TIMSS do not distinguish cause and effect: while bullying and unsafe schools may cause lower academic performance, the data reported so far are open to alternative interpretations, for example that students who perform below average are more likely to become targets of bullying, or that there are other factors that influence both. One could hypothesize that students from households of lower socio-economic status are both more prone to being bullied and at the same time are more likely to perform lower. Additionally, in their current form, PIRLS and TIMSS cannot provide insights about the diverse experiences of individual students arising from their social identities. In the existing surveys, the factors investigated are often rather coarse, focusing on broad perceptions of safety, and are limited to certain types of violence, such as bullying in case of the PIRLS and TIMSS. While much of the research on bullying has been conducted in developed countries, other types of violence have often been studied in Africa, resulting in a large gap of knowledge about SRGBV in other regions.



Despite this knowledge gap, there is enough evidence to support the hypothesis that school violence has a negative impact on educational achievement in developing countries. The negative effects are likely to apply both to the victims of school violence and to other students in the same school 39. School violence not only affects educational achievement, but it also impacts physical and psychological health, emotional well-being, social capital, and the wider economies of developing countries 35. Whether from a human rights or a human capital standpoint, it is clear that the significance of school violence for developing countries is not reflected by its low policy profile at the international and especially the national levels.

As a follow-on to the literature review, USAID commissioned a study, *The Relationship Between School-Related Gender-Based Violence and Student Performance in Botswana, Ghana, and South Africa*, with the Center on Conflict and Development at Texas A&M University. The goal of the study was to identify and quantify a causal effect of bullying on academic performance and identify other demographic and economic covariates that influence academic performance. This was, in effect, a “deeper dive” into existing 2011 PIRLS and TIMSS data. The study revealed that bullying is extremely pervasive in Botswana, Ghana, and South Africa, with approximately 80 percent of the surveyed students bullied monthly and almost 50 percent bullied weekly, exceeding the prevalence of bullying in the worldwide average. Controlling for other variables that could influence academic performance, such as parents’ education or teachers’ experience, effects of bullying up to around 25 points in math, science, and reading tests were found, which qualifies as a meaningful effect size in these studies that set the international average at a test score of 500. It is important to note that in contrast to numbers cited above from the original PIRLS and TIMSS report, these losses can clearly be attributed to bullying as opposed to other factors studied. By using different statistical techniques the study was able to move beyond merely showing a correlation between bullying and achievement, which had been reported previously 31,32, but supports an interpretation in which bullying has a causal effect on achievement – as opposed to, for example, an interpretation in which low achieving students tend to get bullied more. Some of the other factors studied also had an effect on students’ performance, such as parents’ education or teachers’ experience, which are often thought of as strong determinants of students’ ability to succeed in school. However, bullying seems to outweigh all of these factors. The implication for policymakers and donors is that if forms of SRGBV such as bullying are allowed to continue unchecked in schools, this will reduce test scores and the potential of education investments cannot be fully achieved.

Evidence supports a direct causal effect of bullying on academic performance of up to around 25 points in test scores.

NEXT STEPS TO BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE

The findings from the literature review and study cited above are important steps, but there are several gaps that need to be overcome to provide policymakers with the information and data needed to invest in making schools free of school-related gender-based violence. School-related gender-based violence is still relatively new as a development field and, does not yet enjoy a globally recognized framework that would include standardized definitions, indicators, and evaluation methodologies. The lack of such a framework is a major obstacle in obtaining comprehensive, internationally comparable data, which could make an important contribution to raising awareness and influencing policy. With the exception of a few large scale surveys including the PIRLS and TIMSS and the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) survey, which

Box 2: The OASIS Program

The Opportunities for Achievement and Safety in Schools (OASIS) Program aims to contribute to the reduction of SRGBV through research and advocacy.

Generating Data: Work with existing national surveys to include more refined questions on school violence, and conduct rigorous evaluations of programs in a few select USAID countries to test their impact on educational achievement.

Measuring Impact: Support the development of a standardized measurement framework in partnership with other USG and non-USG stakeholders.

Raising Awareness among national and international education stakeholders: Coordinate efforts across USAID to develop outreach materials and partner with national and international education stakeholders on including this issue in the agenda of key meetings and conferences.

provide some limited information on SRGBV, there are no quantitative, large-scale surveys specifically aiming to address the issue of SRGBV. In the existing surveys, the factors investigated are often rather coarse, focusing on broad perceptions of safety, and are limited to certain types of violence, such as bullying in case of the PIRLS and TIMSS. While much of the research on bullying has been conducted in developed countries, other types of violence have often been studied in Africa, resulting in a large gap of knowledge about SRGBV in other regions.

Similarly, data obtained from program evaluations are difficult to compare as a wide variety of indicators are used. While evaluations often focus on prevalence of SRGBV or attitudes and knowledge as drivers of SRGBV, not many have investigated effects of SRGBV on education indicators specifically. This is another major gap, which is of particular relevance in the context of raising the profile of SRGBV within the education sector. Furthermore, there is a lack of data on the differential experiences of different groups of children, for example marginalized populations or children living with disabilities, who may be particularly vulnerable. The US-

AID Opportunities for Achievement and Safety in Schools (OASIS) program aims to close some of these gaps (**see Box 2**).

USAID has begun to develop a conceptual framework and measurement instrument that will capture all forms of SRGBV and provide guidance on conducting rigorous research and monitoring and evaluation on SRGBV. This tool will be developed in partnership with the Global Partners' Working Group on SRGBV, which was launched in April 2014, which is co-hosted by the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Support for the Global Partners' Working Group on SRGBV is also one of the avenues through which the OASIS program seeks to help raise awareness among national and international education stakeholders. Together, these activities will inform and promote programs for safe learning environments free of SRGBV and thereby help enable children everywhere to maximize their potential through education.

CONCLUSION

The results of the The Relationship Between School-Related Gender-Based Violence and Student Performance in Botswana, Ghana, and South Africa study are significant in demonstrating that one form of SRGBV, bullying, has a direct and significant causal effect on student performance on global achievement tests. This is promising and further research needs to be conducted to show the impact of all forms of SRGBV on learning.



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LEARNING FOR ALL REQUIRES SAFETY AND WELLBEING FOR ALL

Jennifer McCleary-Sills, PhD MPH
Senior Gender Based Violence & Development Specialist
Gender Group, World Bank Group

Luis Benveniste, PhD MA
Practice Manager
Education Global Practice, World Bank Group



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SUMMARY:

Education is not only a human right, but also a powerful tool for women's empowerment, and a strategic development investment. There is a multiplier effect to educating girls, leading to improved health, higher labor market participation, greater income, more autonomy over childbearing decisions, and more positive health outcomes. Yet, every day girls face violence in, around, and on the way to and from school. We see that achieving secondary education can be an important protective factor for girls, but that seeking an education could also entail some risks. Improving girls' education requires more than simply closing the education enrollment gap. It also requires addressing the persistent gendered barriers that prevent many girls around the world from attending and completing school, including the threat of violence. The World Bank Group is committed to eliminating gendered education disparities by addressing these barriers. This means that the education environment has to make schools safer for girls to encourage higher female enrollment and retention. This article discusses global data on the link between girls' education and their risk of gender-based violence, including the important social and structural barriers that prevent girls' school completion and the protective role of education on girls' voice and agency. It also provides examples of strategic solutions from across the world, and recommendations emerging from recent World Bank research.

“I know education is what separates a girl who is trapped in a cycle of poverty, fear, and violence from one with a chance at a better future. “

—Malala Yousafzai (July 13, 2014, The New York Times)

In 2015 we can celebrate the great strides that have been made toward achieving gender equality since the landmark Beijing Conference in 1995. While no country has achieved gender equality for girls and women across all the domains of development targeted by the Millennium Development Goals, there is notable progress. Nowhere is this progress more evident than in education. In many countries, primary and secondary school enrollment rates are the same for boys and girls. Two-thirds of all countries have reached gender parity in primary enrollment and almost half have done so at the secondary level. Globally, however, 62 million girls between the age of six and 15 are not in school, and girls continue to lag substantially behind boys in secondary completion rates. In Africa and South Asia for example, boys remain 1.55 times more likely to complete secondary education than girls.

Across the globe, many social and structural barriers converge to keep girls from enrolling in and completing school, and receiving quality education. These include gender norms that deprioritize girls' education and advancement, sexism in the curricula, and violence. Schools are one of the most important environments for children's socialization, and can contribute to building respectful relationships between boys and girls.¹ Yet every day girls face violence in, around, and on the way to and from school. This violence includes sexual harassment/assault and bullying, and it is perpetrated by other students, out of school youth, teachers, school administrators, and others.² As long as this violence continues unchecked, we will not reach our global development goals of universal education and gender equality in education.

The World Bank Group (WBG) is committed to eliminating gendered education disparities by addressing these barriers because we know that education is not only a human right, but also a powerful tool for women's empowerment, and a strategic development invest-

ment. Quite simply, there is a multiplier effect to educating girls. More educated women tend to be healthier, participate more in the formal labor market, earn more income, have fewer children, and provide better health care and education to their children, all of which eventually improve the well-being of all individuals and can lift households out of poverty.³ These benefits also transmit across generations, as well as to communities at large.

Our 2014 *Voice and Agency: Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity* provided powerful evidence of this. We found that education, especially at the secondary level and beyond, reduces women's and girls' risk of experiencing deprivations of their voice and agency across a number of domains.

- For example, education levels are highly correlated with a woman's degree of sexual autonomy—including whether she is able to refuse sex, to ask her partner to use a condom, or both.
 - The strongest correlate of women's sexual autonomy in a relationship is her level of education. Overall, 90 percent of women with a higher education say they can refuse sex, compared with 71 percent of women with a primary education and 51 percent of women with no education. Each additional year of education is associated with a 1 percent increase in the ability to refuse sex.
- Education is also an effective avenue for preventing early marriage. Across 18 of the 20 countries with the highest prevalence of child marriage, girls with no education are up to six times more likely to marry than girls with a secondary education.⁴ The longer a girl stays in school, the less likely she is to be married before the age of 18 and have children during her teenage years. Our estimates suggest that every year of early marriage significantly reduces the probability of girls completing secondary school.
- The girls most likely to marry early are those with the least education and lowest economic status.⁵ Given the connection between poverty and access to education, girls in poor households face overlapping disadvantages and greater risk of being married before age 18.⁶

We also know that girls' education is directly linked to their risk of experiencing violence—both in school, and later in life.

- Women with some or completed secondary education have an 11 and 36 percent lower risk of violence, respectively, compared with women with no education. All else being equal, having a husband or partner with some education reduces the likelihood that a woman will experience violence, though the effect is less than that of her own education.
- Experiencing violence in schools can negatively impact girls' enrollment as well as the quality of the education they receive. While data are not routinely collected on sexual harassment, evidence suggests that it happens in educational settings in many parts of the world.⁷
 - For example, one study in Brazil found that 8% of students from 5th to 8th grade had witnessed sexual violence within the school environment.⁸
 - A participatory engagement study with communities in rural Tanzania found that many girls see school as the single most dangerous place in their communities because of the risk of being harassed or seduced by peers and/or teachers. One girl in the 12-14 year old focus group said "You go to school to learn from your teachers but it turns out that they don't want to teach you. Some of them just want to have sex with you."⁹
- Parental concerns about girls' safety in school and while traveling to and from school are also significant, and can act as a barrier to enrollment and completion.¹⁰ In the same study in Tanzania, parents expressed their concerns, "The worst moment for a parent is when their daughters are selected to join secondary school. Most of the girls get pregnant before completing secondary school."¹¹



We see that achieving secondary education can be an important protective factor for girls, but that seeking an education could also entail some risks. This means that the education environment has to respond to make schools safer for girls in order to encourage higher female enrollment and promote all the benefits girls receive from this education. Thus, the challenge for schools is two-fold: to reduce all forms of discrimination that contribute to violence against girls within the school setting, and to strengthen the capacity of schools to promote non-violence in families and communities. As such, the formal education system can be a key site for eliminating gender-based stereotypes in educational curricula by: providing gender-sensitivity training for teachers; creating a school environment that rejects and prevents violence, including violence against girls; offering specialized courses on human rights, including women's rights; and fostering non-violent social relationships and mutual tolerance among students.¹² Over the years, many countries have experimented with multi-sectoral approaches to overcome these infrastructure and cultural barriers. For example:

- Providing scholarships or cash transfers to girls. Bangladesh pioneered this solution decades ago to make schooling more affordable for girls and indirectly reduce child marriage. Today, as many or more girls than boys attend primary and secondary school and female literacy soared from 65 percent in 1999 to 83 percent in 2012.
- Hiring more female teachers. Yemen has made important investments in this area, especially by training and hiring hundreds of female teachers to work in rural areas who can be positive role models for girls.
- Reducing distance to schools, especially in areas where safety is an issue for girls, by building more schools or improving public transportation. Building separate toilet blocks for adolescent boys and girls in schools. By building school latrines, India significantly increased girls' enrollment by reducing security risks, particularly for puberty-age girls.
- Carrying out gender-sensitivity training for teachers. In Africa, the Forum for African Women Educationalists has trained over 6,600 teachers since 2005.

Other important protective strategies being implemented range from ensuring adequate and safely located latrines and sanitation facilities for girls, well-lit and visible access routes to and from school, pairing female and male teachers and teaching assistants in the classroom, and practicing restorative discipline that avoids physical, psychological, and verbal violence. Many girls' schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan, for example, have made it a priority to protect students from physical harm, even from extreme threats of being attacked with acid.¹³ By erecting school boundary walls, providing community supervision, and rallying the support of religious community leaders, schools and communities working together have been able to make protecting students from gender-related violence a priority.¹⁴

While these investments show a commitment to eliminating gender-based violence in schools, few ministries of education around the world have explicit policies on sexual violence and harassment as unacceptable, and few have developed guidelines on the definition of harassment and how educational institutions should respond.¹⁵ Often, only the most egregious cases of school-based sexual violence are even reported, and some may result in criminal prosecution. This failure of the education system to prevent and respond to violence against girls in many ways reflect the low value communities typically place on girls and the frequently high level of acceptance of violence against them.

In light of these many social and structural barriers to keeping girls safe and securing their education, what can be done at the policy level? Ministries of education and other policy makers can engage in the prevention of violence against girls by reforming education sec-

for laws and policies, improving the institutional response to violence against girls at the school level, and promoting community mobilization in support of girls' safety and rights.¹⁶ This should be done in close collaboration with communities and schools to ensure that reforms are practical and sustainable. The education sector can also collaborate with other sectors to ensure that girls' and young women's well-being is safeguarded. It can also provide vital support to community-level social norm/behavior change interventions to reduce the acceptability of violence against girls, including through the purposeful engagement of male educators, community leaders, and fathers.

The World Bank Group is investing in making schools safer and promoting gender equality in education, including through reducing violence in schools and the opportunities for violence on the way to school. In 2011, WBG launched its Education Sector Strategy 2020: Learning for All. The strategy defines the Bank's collaborative agenda with developing countries to support learning and strengthen education systems.¹⁷ Aligned with these goals, the Education Resilience Approaches (ERA) program is developing frameworks and tools to understand the role and impact of education in conflict- and violence-affected contexts, where the breakdown of local infrastructure greatly impacts education opportunities for all children.¹⁸

Just a few months ago, WBG, in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank and the Global Women's Institute (GWI) at George Washington University, launched an online Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Resource Guide. This resource provides actionable guidance at the policy, institutional, and community levels for integrating VAWG prevention and response into programming across a range of sectors, including Education. We highlight some of the key recommendations at the policy level for education here:

- Develop a policy statement that unequivocally rejects sexual violence and harassment in educational institutions. Such a statement should be accompanied by clear definitions of the types of acts that constitute harassment and sexual violence.
- Support laws and policy design or reforms to establish a role for the education sector in preventing, identifying, and responding to violence against girls. Recommend specific budget allocations for their implementation and for the resulting response mechanisms.¹⁹ Monitor the impact of existing legislation on women.²⁰
- Develop institutional codes of conduct for teachers and administrative enforcement mechanisms that, among other elements, prohibit sexual harassment, sexual contact with students, or other abuses of students.
- Support the preparation of national action plans to address violence against girls in schools. These should include sexual harassment policies and enforcement mechanisms for educators, staff, and students. The plan should also include a clear dissemination strategy to ensure awareness of the policy by all duty bearers within the education system, and should include mechanisms for students, faculty, and staff to safely and confidentially report violence. The policy must also include referrals to appropriate services for survivors after violence is reported.²¹ Depending on the specific country context, national action plans can be stand-alone or form part of broader "safe schools" or "coexistence in schools" initiatives, which are emerging in a growing number of countries.²²

It is critical to underscore that if data are to be collected in schools (including referral services) on the experience of violence, this must be done in a safe and ethical way that does not put the child at risk for identification. No identifiable information should be included in records. Where available, it may be useful to analyze the reporting trends from service provision institutions and compare them to trends found in Violence Against Children Surveys.



These recommendations echo findings from recent studies conducted by the World Bank Group, which find that tackling a complex issue like girls' access to quality education and safety from violence require multi-faceted approaches. A recent analysis of 27 WBG-supported impact evaluations, indicates that strategies that combine structural interventions with individual and family-level financial incentives show the greatest promise for improving education outcomes and leveling the playing field for girls.²³ A systematic review of reviews conducted by the WBG and GWI similarly found that the interventions with the most positive impact on violence prevention used multiple, well-integrated approaches and engaged with multiple stakeholders over time.²⁴

To achieve gender equality and other key development objectives, we must do more than simply close the education enrollment gap. We must also address persistent issues with the quality of education, including by promoting more gender-responsive schools and curricula, and making schools safer for all children. This means lifting the persistent gendered structural and social barriers that prevent many girls around the world from attending and completing school, including the threat of violence.

(ENDNOTES)

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¹¹ McCleary-Sills et al., 2011.

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¹⁸ Note: ERA is a domain within the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER). Note: The assessment of both fragility and resilience was developed in the “New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States,” at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Busan, Korea, November 30, 2011.

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²⁰ Ellsberg, M. (2008). Violence Against Women in Melanesia and East Timor: Building Global and Regional Promising Approaches. AusAID.

²¹ Note: reporting of violence against children is mandated almost everywhere. See page 13: http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/sites/default/files/publications_final/web_safe_final.pdf

²² Note: For specific examples of such initiatives, please see the Resources section of the Education Brief.

²³ Parsons, Jennifer; McCleary-Sills, Jennifer. 2014. Leveling the playing field: lessons from World Bank Group gender impact evaluations on education. enGENDER IMPACT: the World Bank’s Gender Impact Evaluation Database. Washington, DC; World Bank Group.

²⁴ Arango, Diana J.; Morton, Matthew; Gennari, Floriza; Kiplesund, Sveinung; Ellsberg, Mary. 2014. Interventions to prevent or reduce violence against women and girls: a systematic review of reviews. Women’s voice, agency, and participation research series; no. 10. Washington, DC: World Bank Group.





COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: WHAT WE KNOW, WHAT MORE WE MUST DO

Donald Steinberg, President, World Learning
Jennifer Collins-Foley, Senior Adviser for Inclusive Development, World Learning



World Learning



On March 3, 2015, the White House hosted a gathering of hundreds of activists to highlight and intensify our collective work to provide adolescent girls around the world the opportunity to get quality educations. President Barack Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, and a host of other senior officials highlighted the importance of initiatives like “Let Girls Learn” to getting tens of millions of adolescent girls out of the shadows and into the classroom. Each speaker stressed that this effort is not only a question of ensuring the rights and well-being of the girls themselves, but a global priority from the standpoint of international security, economic prosperity, and social advancement.

Increasingly, the international community has come to understand that quality girls’ education is one of the best investments we can make to promote stable societies and growing economies, improve health standards, eliminate extreme poverty, reduce child marriage and unwanted pregnancies, and combat infant and maternal mortality. United Nations’ institutions, the World Bank, host and donor governments, international foundations, civil society organizations, academic experts, and educational institutions themselves have all sounded the clarion call.

Given this reality, the global community must confront openly and without artifice one of the fundamental barriers to getting adolescent girls into school and staying there: the prevalence of gender-based violence in school settings. Such violence has reached epidemic proportions in many communities. Well-documented studies have shown that up to half of the students in a variety of settings throughout the world have been subjected to this violence. Gender-based violence in the context of education is a global phenomenon: the epidemic occurs in all religious, ethnic, geographic or socio-economic settings. It is thus timely that Futures Without Violence is bringing together policymakers, funders, innovators, advocates, and other experts to discuss, advocate and mobilize in the context of the 2015 Open Square Summit.

Courageous advocates and dedicated researchers alike have produced a wealth of evidence to show us where, when and under what circumstances gender-based violence takes place. Violence occurs as girls -- and often boys -- travel many miles through secluded areas to get to school. It occurs when teachers and administrators use their authority to prey on their students. It occurs as girls require money to pay school fees, uniforms, books, computers, and tutoring. It occurs around badly-protected latrines, boreholes, dormitories, and firewood supplies. It occurs in the context of schools where the use of widespread corporal punishment create a tone of violence. It occurs in schools within refugee camps and urban slums, where adolescent girls and boys receive little or no protection from authorities. And it occurs disproportionately to adolescent girls who have physical or mental disabilities.

The good news is that the global community is responding to this challenge through a variety of well-considered initiatives. These efforts recognize the need to adopt holistic, evidence-based community and school policies and programs tied to time-bound, measurable goals. They are using clear monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, tied not just to inputs and outputs, but to outcomes. They adapt practices during the life of the programs by using feedback loops. And they identify specific institutions and individuals that were held accountable for results. These efforts also seek to create networks of trained and supported educational leaders and to amplify the voices of youths who are themselves demanding gender equality, girls’ empowerment, and safe spaces where alternatives to violence can be fostered.

At World Learning, we have been proud to help empower the capacity of institutions and individuals in affected schools and communities. We partner with local and donor governments, civil society institutions, schools and the public to carry out programs to prevent and respond more effectively to gender based violence. Local leadership and empowerment is essential, as it ensures that initiatives respond to local realities, respect local norms, address local challenges, and are sustainable by local resources. We operate under the maxim, “Nothing about them without them.”

One priority is to raise local awareness and create safe spaces to consider subjects otherwise considered taboo. For example, one of our graduate students worked with Ethiopia’s flagship radio drama, talk show and music platform – “Yegna” (Girls Hub) – to help address issues like violence against adolescent girls, forced marriage, and teen pregnancy in an open, entertaining, and culturally sensitive manner. Similarly, the Ugandan NGO, Raising Voices, works strategically to prevent gender-based violence by influencing the power dynamics that shape relationships between women and men, girls and boys. In Liberia, the “More than Me Academy” supports the most vulnerable girls from the West Point Slum of Liberia by providing education to girls at the first tuition-free all-girls academy in the country.

It is essential to share these good practices. World Learning organizes exchange visits to the United States for more than a hundred delegations each year of professionals, students and advocates from schools, government ministries, and NGOs. During these programs, visitors teach as well as learn from their U.S. counterparts. For example, our partnership with the U.S. Embassy in Mexico brings 100 Mexican high school students to the United States for educational exchange opportunities each year. Talking openly with U.S. high school students around the country, the visitors discuss issues like gender-based violence. They compare strategies and social innovations that can counter it, including the use of hack-a-thons, dataloozas and crowd sourcing. They then return to Mexico to develop and implement action plans for anti-violence awareness campaigns. Program alumni have engaged school administrators to provide outlets such as weekly theater workshops to discuss violence in “noviazgo” (couples relationships) that often play out in school environments.

From these and other initiatives, advocates of safe school environments have collectively identified an impressive menu of preventative actions and responses to school-related gender-based violence. We have seen in model programs – such as USAID’s “Safe Schools” initiative in Zambia and Liberia – that these steps are effective if adopted in a simultaneous and holistic fashion. Specific actions include: (a) building residences and dormitories so that girls do not have to travel long distances; (b) creating safe, well-lit and monitored bathrooms, boreholes, dormitories, playing fields; (c) providing alternative sources of income through livelihood projects and stipends; (d) distributing cell phones, hotlines, and call boxes to allow emergency and confidential reporting of incidents; (e) eliminating the practice of corporal punishment; (f) establishing anti-bullying and anti-trafficking programs; (g) changing attitudes among students, teachers, administrators and parents to stigmatize the practice of gender-based violence rather than its victims; and (h) creating well-stocked clinics ready to provide contraceptive supplies and attend to the victims of such violence.

As exciting and intriguing as these approaches are, we have yet to truly take them to scale in literally hundreds of thousands of schools and communities world-wide. To a great extent, we are still just touching isolated schools in target areas. What can we do take these initiatives to scale?



In many settings, there are not enough resources to build equipped classrooms, print and distribute textbooks, or train teachers – much less provide surveillance camera systems outside bathrooms or call-boxes in secluded campus sites. Broad partnerships can help, including contributions from host and donors authorities, the private sector, and civil society groups who have a vested interest in combatting this epidemic. Further, while we do need to devote more financial and personnel resources to this challenge, many of the interventions cited above – such as paying attention to the physical lay-out of schools before they are constructed – do not require more resources, just more foresight and awareness.

In some environments, social mores and vested interests keep the issue of gender-based violence shrouded in secrecy. But we must never accept the notion that such violence is an acceptable cultural practice or that respect for adolescent girls is an external value being imposed from abroad. We need to help local activists and advocates break through the veil of silence and identify school-related gender-based violence for what it is: a rampant crime wave against some of the most vulnerable members of our societies, and a clear and present danger to rule of law, public health, economic growth, and social stability. We need to ensure systems of accountability where not only the perpetrators but their supervisors and administrators – as well as law enforcement agents and courts -- are held personally responsible for reducing and responding to gender-based violence. Just because this violence occurs in a school setting does not make it anything less than a heinous crime.

This is indeed a broad and ambitious agenda. Some would ask, in the context of the huge requirements facing global policy makers: can we afford to implement these steps? Given what we know about the social, political, security and psychological costs of gender-based violence, the real question is: can we afford not to?

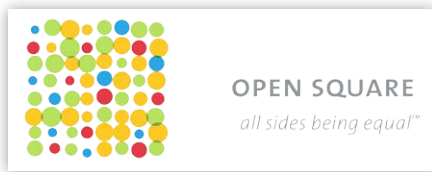
WHO WE ARE

Futures Without Violence is a national nonprofit organization leading groundbreaking educational programs, policies, leadership training, and campaigns that empower individuals and organizations working to end violence against women and children around the world. Providing leadership from offices in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Boston, the organization was a driving force behind the passage of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994—the nation’s first comprehensive federal response to the violence that afflicts families and communities. The organization currently spearheads the 200-member coalition of experts that continues to play a critical role in the development and introduction of the International Violence Against Women Act today.

Open Square envisions a world where women play a full and equal role in decision-making processes at every level, where challenges are pro-actively embraced with inclusivity, authenticity and respect; where beauty is defined by the achievement of human potential. Since 2009, Open Square, a grant-making organization, has been dedicated to ending violence against women with a particular focus on eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) where violence against women is epidemic. Open Square has a variety of grantees focused on increasing the status and participation of women in civil society in DRC, providing services to survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and advocating for the strengthening of the security sector in DRC. Open Square also provides funds for organizations advocating for U.S. involvement in ending gender-based violence in the developing world.







**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT:**

**100 MONTGOMERY STREET, THE PRESIDIO
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94129-1718
PH: 415.678.5500**

**50 MILK STREET, 16TH FLOOR
BOSTON, MA 02109**

**1320 19TH STREET NW, SUITE 401
WASHINGTON, DC 20036
PH: 202-595-7382**

WWW.FUTURESWITHOUTVIOLENCE.ORG