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for Education



# SCHOOL-RELATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION



# **SCHOOL-RELATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION**

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## Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AIHRC	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
CAPPI	Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists of the Philippines
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CFS	Child Friendly Schools
CFSS	Child Friendly Services Survey
CHHQ	Child Household Questionnaire
CORO	Committee of Resource Organizations for Literacy
CRC	The Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSW	Commission on Status of Women
China	People's Republic of China
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EVAW	Elimination of Violence Against Women
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEMS	Gender Equality Movement in Schools
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IMAGES	International Men and Gender Equality Survey
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PDR	People's Democratic Republic (e.g. Lao PDR)
SAIEVAC	South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children
SACG	South Asia Coordination Group on Action Against Violence Against Children
SRGBV	School-related Gender-based Violence
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Services
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TISS	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
UNGEI	UN Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO Bangkok	UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok
UNiTE	United Nations Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence Against Women Campaign
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAC	Violence Against Children
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

## Terminology

**Adolescent:** Aged from 10 to 19 years.

**Bisexual:** Someone who is attracted to and/or has sex with both men and women.

**Bullying:** Repeated aggressive behaviour that intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort through physical contact, verbal attacks, fighting or psychological manipulation. Bullying involves an imbalance of power and can include teasing, taunting, use of hurtful nicknames, physical violence or social exclusion. A bully can operate alone or within a group of peers. Bullying may be direct, such as one child demanding money or possessions from another, or indirect, such as a group of students spreading rumours about another.

**Child:** Under the age of 18 years.

**Corporal punishment:** Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light.

**Cyber-bullying:** Harassment through e-mail, cell phones, text messages, social media or websites

**Gay:** Same-sex sexual attraction, same-sex sexual behaviour, and same-sex cultural identity in general.

**Gender and sex:** The term 'sex' refers to biologically determined differences, whereas 'gender' refers to differences in social roles and relations. Gender roles are learned through socialisation and vary widely within and between cultures. Gender roles are also affected by age, class, race, ethnicity, and religion, as well as by geographical, economic, and political environments.

**Gender-based violence:** Violence that occurs as a result of normative role expectations associated with one's gender, and unequal power relationships between genders.

**Gender equality:** The equal valuing by society of men and women, and equal conditions for realizing full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development.

**Gender equity:** The process of being fair to men and women. To ensure fairness, measures must often be put in place to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. Equity is a means. Equality is the result.

**Gender expression:** How an individual expresses their own gender to the world, i.e. through names, clothes, how they walk, speak, communicate, societal roles and general behaviour.

**Gender identity:** An individual's self-conception as being man or woman (or both or neither), as distinguished from their biological sex during and after birth.

**Homophobia:** Fear, rejection, or aversion, often in the form of stigmatising attitudes or discriminatory behaviour, towards people who have sex with and/or sexual attraction to or desires for people of the same sex.

**Homophobic bullying:** is a gender-specific type of bullying that is based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Can also be called bullying on the basis of perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

**Lesbian:** A female who experiences sexual attraction to and the capacity for an intimate relationship with other women.

**Men who have sex with men:** Males who have sex with males, regardless of whether or not they have sex with women or have a personal or social gay or bisexual identity.

**School-related gender-based violence:** All forms of violence (explicit and symbolic forms of violence), including fear of violence, that occurs in education contexts (including non-formal and formal contexts such as school premises, on the journey to and from school, and in emergency and conflict settings) which result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm of children (female, male, intersex and transgender children and youth of all sexual orientations). SRGBV is based on stereotypes, roles or norms, attributed to or expected of children because of their sex or gender identities. It can be compounded by marginalisation and other vulnerabilities”.

**Sexual identity:** How individuals identify their own sexuality (usually based on sexual orientation).

**Sexual orientation:** Whether an individual is attracted to the same sex, another sex, or both the same and other sexes. The term “gender identity” is used to describe whether an individual defines themselves as being a man, woman, or some other gender.

**Sexuality:** The sexual knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviours of individuals. Its dimensions include the anatomy, physiology and biochemistry of the sexual response system; sexual identity, orientation, roles and personality; and thoughts, feelings and relationships. Its expression is influenced by ethical, spiritual, cultural and moral concerns.

**Stigma and discrimination:** Stigma is an opinion or judgement held by individuals or society that negatively reflects a person or group. When stigma is acted upon, the result is discrimination that may take the form of actions or omissions. Discrimination refers to any form of arbitrary distinction, exclusion, or restriction affecting a person, usually but not only by virtue of an inherent personal characteristic or perceived belonging to a particular group.

**Transgender:** A transgender person has a gender identity that is different from his or her sex at birth. Transgender people may be male to female (female appearance) or female to male (male appearance). Transgender is not a sexual orientation; transgender people may have any sexual orientation.

**Violence against women and girls:** is, any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

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## Executive Summary

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a fundamental violation of human rights. It is one of the worst manifestations of gender-based discrimination, disproportionately affecting girls and women. GBV is a global phenomenon that knows no geographical, cultural, social, economic, ethnic, or other boundaries. It occurs across all societies, and is a major obstacle to the achievement of gender equality.

Governments have signed onto international frameworks<sup>1</sup> to protect children from all forms of violence. Despite these frameworks, recent reviews<sup>2</sup> and initiatives<sup>3</sup> have highlighted the extent to which children are exposed to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) and the significance of education to prevent and eliminate this form of violence.

In the region, GBV is often tolerated and sustained by social institutions, including the school – the very place where children are expected to be safe, protected and empowered. SRGBV remains not fully examined in the region, and is perhaps even overlooked in many educational environments.

SRGBV continues to affect children in the Asia-Pacific region each year, and boys, girls, transgender and intersex children can be targets. In Asia and the Pacific – as elsewhere – SRGBV is a critical barrier to the right to education, not only because of its serious physical and psychological health implications, but also because it may lead to the deterioration of the learning environment as a whole. The experience or even the threat of SRGBV often results in irregular attendance, dropout, truancy, poor school performance, and low self-esteem, which may follow into their adult lives. Importantly, SRGBV is often aggravated in conflict-affected countries and during emergencies. Witnessing or experiencing violence in schools may have irreversible consequences for students in perpetrating or further experiencing violence in adult lives.

Teachers, schools and education systems are fundamental in transforming practices, attitudes and values, including instilling in learners the understanding and practice of gender equality, non-violent behaviour and acceptance of difference. To do so, though, and to fulfil children's right to education, learners need safe and supportive environments.

SRGBV is a serious obstacle to reaching the Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to achieving gender equality. As we accelerate our efforts towards meeting the EFA goals and elevating our educational ambitions for girls and boys in the post-2015 development agenda, it is critical that we maintain our commitment to gender equality in and through quality education.

By specifically looking at SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific region, this review hopes to close the analytical gap in what we know about the causes, nature, manifestation, scale and the consequences of SRGBV in the region. This analytical gap results from many causes, including that: a) gender-based violence literature often overlooks children, b) violence against children research often does not focus adequately on gender, and c) SRGBV research generally has not been widespread in the Asia-Pacific region, but more in sub-Saharan Africa.

This desk review of SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific region is organised as follows:

- The ***What is SRGBV*** section provides a definition of what school-based violence is and outlines the six most common forms of SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific region, as affirmed by the research evidence presented in this review.
- The ***What are the causes of SRGBV*** section examines the nature and manifestations of SRGBV in educational institutions, and offers a closer look at five complex, multifaceted societal issues considered as root causes of violence at schools in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The ***What do we know about the scale of SRGBV*** section provides research-based evidence on the magnitude of SRGBV in the region. Findings from studies on SRGBV

from across the region are presented by different forms of SRGBV.

- The ***What do we know about the consequences of SRGBV*** section focuses on the consequences of violence, with a focus on students which briefly discussing other areas.
- The ***Policy response*** section examines legal responses to the phenomenon of school-based violence in the Asia-Pacific region, while the ***Programme response*** section explores how specific SRGBV programmes address SRGBV in the region. In both cases specific policy and programme examples are provided and analysed.
- Finally, the ***Conclusion and recommendations*** section presents a summary of the nature, scale, causes and consequences of SRGBV in countries in the Asia-Pacific region as well existing principles of sound and effective policy and programme responses.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Objectives

The purpose of this review is to examine existing approaches in policy, programming and implementation responses to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in the Asia-Pacific region. It seeks to advance our knowledge and learning in this field, both in terms of what we know about the phenomenon and its impact on individuals, as well as how best to address it, including through education.

With the aim to provide a better understanding of SRGBV in the region, this review additionally seeks to identify region-specific causes, nature and manifestations, scale and consequences of SRGBV. By providing examples of programmes and policies on SRGBV from a diverse range of settings in the region, as well as examples of region-specific research endeavours, this review intends to enable the incorporation, replication or adaptation of some of these practices in other countries in the region.

## 1.2 Methodology

The research drew primarily on a desk-based review of published and unpublished literature and programme documentation on the causes, nature and manifestation, scale and consequences of SRGBV<sup>4</sup> in the Asia-Pacific region<sup>5</sup> available on the Internet<sup>6</sup>. This included a search for peer-reviewed articles published between 2003–2013 in electronic databases including PubMed, Google Scholars/Scholar Articles and The Open University Library<sup>7</sup>, as well as the identification of relevant publications, reports, project documents (including project evaluations), and country-level policies and planning documents. Websites of organisations known to work in this field were also reviewed for relevant information and in few cases research organisations or implementing partners were contacted to obtain additional data.<sup>8</sup>

This review was also informed by a global review of current issues and approaches in policy, programming and implementation responses to SRGBV conducted in 2013 by Fiona Leach, Máiréad Dunne and Francesca Salvi.<sup>9</sup>

Additional inputs were also elicited from key informants, including those that participated in a regional Asia-Pacific Roundtable on School-Related Gender-Based Violence. This meeting, held 11-13 November 2013 in Bangkok, was organised by UNESCO Bangkok in collaboration with the East Asia and the Pacific Regional UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), UNICEF's East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, and Plan International.<sup>10</sup>

## 1.3 Limitations

This review focuses on the Asia-Pacific region only. Where appropriate, it refers to and builds on a global review<sup>11</sup> that has recently been completed for UNESCO Education Sector and is a source of information globally.

Although the aim of the review was to uncover information on SRGBV in all countries of the region, limited data or its accessibility allowed us to focus only on a smaller sub-set of countries, namely: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkey and Viet Nam.

Although an effort was made to unearth as many approaches in policy, programme and implementation responses, and region-specific data on SRGBV, only documentation that was produced in English, widely disseminated and accessible via the internet was reviewed.

In many cases the available data came from countries where some programmes addressing SRGBV already exist, or where English-language publications are common, and the language widely used. Thus, this review may not present sufficient research from countries such as Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Islamic Republic of Iran or the Central Asian Republics of the former Soviet Union and several countries of the Pacific. At the same time, a wealth of information was able to be uncovered from Australia, India, Indonesia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, among others.

The development of this review was also limited by time constraints, therefore it was only possible to research, analyse and highlight a small number of approaches in policy, programme and implementation responses. Additionally, although a good number of informants were contacted, a number of them could not be reached and a lack of time prevented further contact. For these and other reasons, it is possible that the review may not give a fully comprehensive picture of the on-the-ground reality of SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific region. It is, however, an important first step in understanding and addressing the issue.



## 2. Research-Based Evidence on SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific Region

### 2.1 What is SRGBV?

What is SRGBV? What are some common forms of SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific region? As more organisations, agencies and governments seek to address SRGBV – spurred in part by United Nations conventions and other international human rights and child protection agreements – these questions are, or should be, at the forefront of the discussion in this review.

#### Definition of School-Related Gender-Based Violence

In seeking to understand the phenomenon of GBV in schools, it is important to understand what *school-related gender-based violence* means, and perhaps even more, what the definition of SRGBV in the region is.

The November 2013 roundtable meeting on SRGBV concluded that SRGBV refers to:

*“all forms of violence (explicit and symbolic forms of violence), including fear of violence, that occurs in education contexts (including non-formal and formal contexts such as school premises, on the journey to and from school, and in emergency and conflict settings) which result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm of children (female, male, intersex and transgender children and youth of all sexual orientations). SRGBV is based on stereotypes, roles or norms attributed to or expected of children because of their sex or gender identities. It can be compounded by marginalisation and other vulnerabilities”.*

Source: Asia-Pacific Roundtable Meeting on School-Related Gender-based Violence; 11-13 November 2013, Bangkok, Thailand



Cultural, conceptual and contextual differences in the diverse settings of Asia and the Pacific make it difficult, or even impossible, to provide a clear picture of all forms of SRGBV. By looking at the *‘what we know about SRGBV’* however it is possible to name most common forms of SRGBV in the region. The scale and manifestations of these forms are further explored in Section 2.3.

#### Common Forms of SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific Region

- Corporal punishment
- Physical violence and abuse
- Psychosocial violence and abuse
- Bullying including cyber-bullying
- Sexual violence and sexual abuse

## 2.2 What are the *causes* of SRGBV?

SRGBV is not a problem confined to schools but a complex, multifaceted societal issue with root causes in all levels of society, including societal, institutional and domestic levels.<sup>12</sup>

In the Asia-Pacific region, governments have signed onto international human rights agreements and frameworks to protect children from violence. The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) includes specific provisions for the protection of children against all forms of violence. Article 19 of the CRC calls on State Parties to take all appropriate measures, including through education, to protect children from all forms of violence, including sexual abuse. Article 28 refers to States Parties taking all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity. Further, the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)'s Programme of Action, and the UN 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action denounce violence and call for measures to protect all human beings, especially women and girls, from all forms of violence. The 2007 UN Resolution 61/143 regarding the '*intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women*', calls upon the international community, including the United Nations system, to enhance national efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, including through '*the sharing of guidelines, methodologies and best practices*'.<sup>13</sup>

Despite the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by all countries in the region<sup>14</sup>, the prevention of, and response to, violence against children remains inadequate as children continue to experience violence in educational settings.<sup>15</sup>

### Common Causes of SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific Region

- Deeply ingrained gender inequalities and rigid gender expectations
- Broader societal norms, traditions and acceptance of violence
- Acceptance of disciplinary approaches within schools by parents, teachers and students themselves
- Insecure or unsafe home and family environments
- Weak prevention or security mechanisms in communities

### Deeply ingrained gender inequalities and rigid gender expectations

Rigid constructs of femininity and masculinity in the region and social expectations can often justify acts of violence in schools. These social expectations are typically gendered, with girls often being expected to be subordinate, obedient and quiet, and for boys to be tough and unemotional. The pressure to embody these characteristics can often justify acts of violence in schools. For example, children who do not conform to dominant social, cultural and religious norms including norms of masculinity or femininity can be vulnerable to sexual violence and bullying.<sup>16</sup>

Social norms and traditions impact school-going young men and young women in gender-differentiated ways. For instance, evidence suggests that conservative ideas of females' roles in the society negatively affect girls' school attendance<sup>17</sup> and cultural norms inhibiting the mobility of girls are a key barrier to their access to higher education in the Maldives and other locations.<sup>18</sup> Such limitations, potentially further exacerbated by the lack of measures that support and facilitate access to education for women, results in young women's limited and unequal access to education in comparison to their male peers in many parts of the region.<sup>19</sup>

Similarly, school-going young men and young women experience various types of violence in gender-differentiated ways, whether in schools, on the way to school or outside the school settings. Numerous national-level surveys in the region have found that young men experience sexual violence at lower rates than young women do, but at rates that nevertheless merit great attention.<sup>20</sup> It is less likely that young men will seek help when they experience sexual violence, especially from formal, school-based services, in settings where same-sex is criminalized by law or even punishable by imprisonment. Further, young men's experiences of sexual violence are tied to feelings of societal discrimination and shame and homophobic attitudes and even violence: for instance, teachers and other duty bearers may harbour overt or hidden prejudices related to sexual violence and young men.<sup>21</sup>

Further, certain forms of violence may even be tolerated by laws, institutions, and community norms and some researchers argue that GBV may be not just a manifestation of gender inequality, but also a way of enforcing it.<sup>22</sup>

### **Broader societal norms and acceptance of violence**

Further, the broader acceptance of disciplinary approaches at schools is often part of a wider tolerance towards violence at home or in the community.<sup>23</sup> Some cultures have societal norms that view violence as normal and appropriate under certain circumstances. For example, over half (52%) of women aged 15-49 in South Asia, and 30% of women of the same age in East Asia and the Pacific, believe that a husband/partner is justified in hitting or beating his wife/partner under certain situations.<sup>24</sup> In many countries in the region violence against children is justified and socially approved.<sup>25</sup>

Moreover, concepts of family honour, sexual purity and shame often justify even the most violent or discriminatory actions against children, and can be seen by parents, teachers and students themselves as acceptable, including in educational settings.<sup>26</sup>



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## Acceptance of disciplinary approaches within schools by parents, teachers and students themselves

Studies in multiple settings have found community acceptance of corporal punishment and harsh reprimands as part of maintaining obedience and discipline.<sup>27</sup> For example, in Nepal, corporal punishment is often considered necessary to children's upbringing, to facilitate learning and to instil discipline in children.<sup>28</sup> In Papua province, Indonesia, there is a local saying referring to the benefits of physical punishments of schoolchildren: *"In the tip of rattan there is gold"*.<sup>29</sup>

Physical and verbal forms of violence are often accepted by children as well when inflicted within certain parameters.<sup>30</sup> For example, many students in Nepal see corporal punishment as a normal feature of their education and have been 'habituated' with such 'traditional' practice as evidenced by this quote: *"it happens and we [students] accept it as normal because if we do something wrong then we must be punished."*<sup>31</sup> In a study in the Philippines, more female than male children justified their experience of corporal punishment by saying it *"changed them for the better"* or that *"they deserved it"*. Boys, on the other hand, appeared to be more likely to react to punishment with feelings of anger.<sup>32</sup>

*"In Asia, an authoritarian and hierarchical model of teaching and social relations predominates, and both social and educational realms are highly influenced by differences in caste, ethnicity and religion"*<sup>31</sup>

Source: UNGEI. 2012. Engendering, Empowerment, Education and Equality. A companion volume to E4 conference.

This 'normalisation' of violence means that *"many practices of gender violence become institutionalized and accepted as part of the landscape of schooling"*.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, a cultural value that respects elders in many settings in the region means that adults' behaviour, *"even when violent or discriminatory – can be seen by children as acceptable, perpetuating an intergenerational cycle of violence and supporting the child's own bullying or violent behaviour"*.<sup>34</sup> This may result in limited reporting of acts of violence by children, as this is not seen as being unusual or inappropriate and further perpetration of violence by children themselves.<sup>35</sup>

Teachers' attitudes and personal beliefs associated with acceptance of violence against children outside the school setting play a tremendous role in the 'normalisation' of violence within the schools. For instance, China School Health published an article in their December 2013 issue which showed that only 40% of 244 primary school teachers believed that parents' beating their child for reasons such as smoking or use of foul language is considered to be maltreatment.<sup>36</sup> Further, just slightly above 50% of the teachers recognised that taunting the child with words such as 'dumb,' 'ugly' or 'foolish' is abusive. On the other side of the region, a study conducted in the Maldives in 2012 revealed that bullying in schools is prevalent and that, *'often teachers are not aware of what is happening in class,...[and even if they know]...they do not do much about it'*.<sup>37</sup>

## Insecure or unsafe home and family environments

Home and family environments are extremely important factor for SRGBV, and several theories support a link between the family environment and bullying behaviour. For instance, attachment theory argues that children with insecure and negative attachment with their caregiver at home may develop interpersonal problems outside the home.<sup>38</sup> Further, social learning theory contends that children who observe and experience violence within the family are likely to accept aggression as a legitimate way to interact with others.<sup>39</sup>

When aggressive behaviour is demonstrated at home, it may be more likely that bullying will be played out in other interactions and settings, such as among peers and in schools<sup>40</sup>. In the Philippines, a study with 2,442 children from 58 public schools concluded that family background (*"family culture, status and upbringing of the parents"*) and personal circumstances are factors that can contribute to violence in schools.<sup>41</sup> In a study with 1,500 students from 15 Islamic private schools in Pattani Province, Southern Thailand, violence between parents was found to be related to

negative behaviours of students. The students who reported having most frequently witnessed parental physical abuse were more likely to bully others than those who had less frequently witnessed parental physical abuse.<sup>42</sup>

Moreover, children who experience violence in their home environments may be less likely to report violence in other settings. For example, research in Pakistan found that *“girls seemed to accept violence inflicted on them through schools and on the way to schools as an extension of what they face with their families, therefore nothing to complain about.”*<sup>43</sup> Family violence can also be linked to school participation. In Papua New Guinea, there is some evidence that young girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence within the home environment, perpetrated by male caregivers who take advantage of a reliance on basic necessities including school fees.<sup>44</sup>

The International Labour Organization has also identified a number of family-related factors that increase children’s vulnerability to sexual exploitation and abuse. These include: the absence of parental figures; history of sexual abuse within families; witnessing or being victims of domestic violence; HIV infection in the family; and the selling of sex (sex work) by family members.<sup>45</sup>

### **Risks associated with travel to and from school including long distances, limited accessibility and proximity of schools, and on-going conflicts**

In the region, poverty, long journeys to school, and armed conflicts put students at risk while travelling to and from educational institutions.<sup>46</sup> An inability to pay school fees has been identified as a major cause of low enrolment and completion rates, and the most common cause of lower attendance among girls in Papua New Guinea.<sup>47</sup> The high levels of sexual violence in this country have also been found to be a key factor affecting enrolment because girls are at risk of such violence while travelling and at school.<sup>48</sup> Studies from Bangladesh and the Pacific Islands, for instance, suggest that fewer schools and long journeys to/from school were factors in girls experiencing sexual abuse on the way to school.<sup>49</sup> In Pakistan, girls in secondary school become more vulnerable because secondary schools are few and situated far from villages.<sup>50</sup> In rural areas of India, girls who have to walk long distances to school have been reported to be at risk of kidnapping and trafficking.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, the school structure and facilities can also affect girls’ participation. Adolescent girls are also less likely to attend school if there is no drinking water or no toilets reserved for girls.<sup>52</sup>



### Short Case Study: Fiji

Together the Fiji Islands are scattered over 1,290,000 square kilometres of the South Pacific Ocean. Fiji's educational facilities are not easily accessible or available in the more isolated islands. As result, school-children are often sent to relatives in town to continue their secondary education. For the most part, however, those relatives have children of their own and are struggling to make ends meet. This in turn, may result in possible neglect, and increases their vulnerability to fall into activities such as commercial sexual exploitation.

Source: Save the Children Fiji. 2006. Stop CSEC: Commercial Sexual Exploitation & Sexual Abuse of Children in Fiji; A Situational Analysis, Save the Children Fiji, Suva. Citing UNICEF. 2005. Violence Against Children. East Asia and the Pacific. Newsletter - Issue 2: Violence against children in the streets and communities. UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific; June 2005.

Global research suggests that SRGBV is particularly prevalent in schools in conflict-affected and fragile contexts.<sup>53</sup> This appears to also be the case in Asia and the Pacific, which has been called the “ring of fire” due to significant and long-standing human and environmental security issues.<sup>54</sup> For example, in Afghanistan and Pakistan, there are a number of reports of schools being damaged or girls having been killed, violently attacked and intimidated by armed groups who ideologically oppose the education of girls, the education of girls of a certain age, or the education of girls alongside boys.<sup>55</sup> The recent attack on Malala Yousafzai, a 15-year-old girl who publicly championed children's education, received global attention though reports suggest that this is part of a larger, longstanding campaign against the country's education system.<sup>56</sup>

When institutions, accountability structures and social networks are weakened, for instance during military conflict, girls and boys are at greater risk of being sexually violated.<sup>57</sup> School children may be particularly exposed to sexual violence and sexual harassment when parts of their schools are used as fighters as barracks or military facility.<sup>58</sup> In settings where sexual violence is used as a weapon of war, the outcome is severe as in addition to physical trauma, psychological trauma and stigmatisation can affect children for the rest of their lives.

Schools can also be affected by broader situations of conflict, leading to the destruction of schools or the closure of schools due to fears of violence. For example, in Afghanistan, 359 schools were closed between 2005 and 2006, in the provinces of Kandahar, Paktika, Zabul, Ghazni, Khost, Helmund, Uruzgan and Daikandi because of security concerns for children and teachers, denying access to education for around 132,000 children.<sup>59</sup> In 2012 a total of 118 schools, the majority of which were primary schools, were reportedly damaged or destroyed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (77), the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (40) and Balochistan (1) in armed attacks in Pakistan.<sup>60</sup> In the southern border provinces of Thailand in 2012 which are experiencing internal conflict, at least 11 schools were partially damaged or destroyed in arson attacks or attacks with improvised explosive devices; 5 children were reportedly killed and at least 16 injured, and 8 teachers were killed and 8 others injured.<sup>61</sup> In Afghanistan, the vulnerability of girls to abduction and sexual attacks is believed to have contributed to the lower educational attainment of girls observed during the conflict.<sup>62</sup>

### 2.3 What do we know about the *scale* of SRGBV?

The evidence on SRGBV is difficult to obtain in the Asia-Pacific region, and there are several reasons for limited research on this topic.

First, there are particular challenges for investigating sexual violence in and around schools. There are widespread cultural taboos about discussing sexuality and the extreme reluctance to recognise that young, school-age people may actually be sexually active, which may hinder investigations when it is indeed involuntary. There is significant stigma associated with sexual activity among unmarried young people in many settings, as well as limited awareness of communities regarding sexual violence. In the Maldives, for instance, widespread cultural taboos around sexuality, legal and social consequences of premarital sex, and the criminalization of pregnancy outside of marriage, makes it almost impossible to research the subject of sexual violence among school-going unmarried boys and girls.<sup>63</sup> Further, high levels of child marriage in the region reflect the acceptance of children's sexuality, officially in the context of marriage and reproduction. These opposing cultural forces may create a certain dissonance in the way that adolescent girls in particular are viewed simultaneously as virgins and as potential wives and mothers. Additionally, there are limited child protection standards and services. Sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual violence in schools are therefore under-studied and under-reported in the region.

Second, there is limited case reporting on different forms of GBV and those that take place in school settings are not necessarily reported as SRGBV. For example, in Viet Nam, *“violence against girls in general and schoolgirls in particular are not recorded in detail...the statistics of the courts are provided in accordance with the ‘crime’ regardless of the sex of the victim”*.<sup>64</sup> Young people, and adolescent girls in particular, may have difficulty recognizing physical and sexual abuse as such and may perceive controlling and jealous behaviours as signs of love.<sup>65</sup> Perhaps due to their desire for autonomy and greater reliance on peers, adolescents involved in dating violence seldom report the violence to a parent or adult; if it is reported, most tell a friend and the incident never reaches an adult who could help.<sup>66</sup> The nature of power relations between males and females as well as children and the perpetrators of violence, including teachers, and the fear of reprisals makes reporting of SRGBV a risky undertaking for children.<sup>67</sup>

Third, deeply ingrained social and cultural norms that may condone or justify violence, bullying and discrimination against students on the basis of perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, and stereotyping and stigma around same-sex experiences make any attempt to provide a comprehensive picture of the on-the-ground reality of SRGBV difficult.

While we have gaps in evidence, data from several countries in Asia-Pacific provide invaluable information on the scale and manifestations of SRGBV in the region. The next section will explore the evidence on different types of school-related gender-based violence including:

- physical violence and abuse
- psychosocial violence and abuse
- bullying
- sexual violence and abuse
- corporal punishment.

## What do we know about school-related *physical violence and abuse* in the region?

*“Youths spend most of their time at school, where they can be exposed to violence perpetrated by their peers [or by school employees].”<sup>68</sup>*

### Physical Violence and Abuse

Gender-based violence may take a psychological, physical and/or sexual form. Common forms describing physical violence and abuse in schools include, but are not limited to: physical bullying, physical threats and intimidation, physical assault, beatings, attacks with weapons, arson and theft, corporal and other physical punishments.

Source: Asia-Pacific Roundtable Meeting on School-Related Gender-based Violence; 11-13 November 2013, Bangkok, Thailand; and UNESCO. 2009. Stop Violence in Schools. A Guide for Teachers. UNESCO. Section for the Promotion of Rights and Values in Education Division for the Promotion of Basic Education.

Physical violence and abuse against students in schools can be perpetrated by adults including teachers and other school staff, as well as by students, against other students. The evidence on physical violence in and around schools settings includes the following studies:

- In the Pacific, UNICEF asked 16–17 year olds participating in a Child Household Questionnaire (CHHQ) if a teacher had physically hurt them in the last month. The answers ‘Yes’ to this question ranged from 7% of respondents in the Solomon Islands to 29% in both Fiji and Kiribati.<sup>69</sup>
- In Timor-Leste, a school-based survey with 164 secondary school students found that 81% of students reported having experienced violence (from either teachers or other students) and less than half of the students (48%) said they knew where they could get help.<sup>70</sup>
- In the Philippines, a study with 2,442 school children below 18 years old in 58 schools found that at least 5 out of 10 children in Grades 1-3, 7 out of 10 in Grades 4-6, and 6 out of 10 in high school reported having experienced some kind of violence in school, including from other students.<sup>71</sup>
- In a study with 8,777 students aged 11–17 in three Pacific Island States, “intentional injuries” were reported by: 62% of boys and 56% of girls in Pohnpei; 58% of boys and 41% of girls in Tonga; and 33% of boys and 24% of girls in Vanuatu. Physical bullying was reported as being most common.<sup>72</sup>
- In the city of Cantho, Viet Nam, there were 252 fights among school pupils in 2011, where violence, especially fighting and bullying among girl students outside of school, was reported to be increasing.<sup>73</sup>
- In India, a study of 1,040 boys aged 10–16 living in Mumbai found that more than eight out of 10 boys had been the victims of violence; two-thirds of boys ages 12-14 in a cluster of low-income schools in India said they experienced at least one form of violence in the last three months at school, including violence perpetrated by other students. Physical violence reported including being beaten, slapped, kicked, pushed, hit with an object, or threatened with a weapon, while “emotional violence” included being insulted, shouted at, derided via abusive language, and locked in a room or toilet.<sup>74</sup>
- According to the Indian Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2007, two-thirds of school children were victims of student-on-student physical abuse at and near the school.<sup>75</sup>
- An unpublished UNICEF study conducted in 2009 in the Maldives found that 47% of children had experienced physical or emotional punishment at home, at school or in the community. The study, which involved almost 17,035 people in 2,500 households and 2,000 children in schools, found that 30% of children at secondary school had been hit by at least one of their caregivers, including 21% with an object, and 8% of school students had been physically punished by their teachers.<sup>76</sup>

There are also reports of acid attacks on teachers and school girls in Asia. In India, teachers and students returning home after an examination in school have suffered severe burn injuries after being attacked with acid.<sup>77</sup> The Acid Survivors Foundation in Bangladesh estimates that 27% of acid attacks in Bangladesh are against children and states that some attacks take place in schools.<sup>78</sup> These attacks have been associated with a number of factors, including family or land disputes, dowry demands and rejection of a man's advances,<sup>79</sup> for daring to snub a boy, turn down an offer of marriage or even for going to school.<sup>80</sup> While there are several news reports of acid attacks on school girls in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India and Pakistan, the literature is largely silent on the topic in relation to school environment.

### What do we know about school-related *psychosocial violence and abuse* in the region?

#### Psychosocial Violence and Abuse

There are also psychosocial forms of violence, which are also cruel and invariably degrading and therefore violate children's rights. These include abuse and punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child. Verbal abuse, name calling, taunting, 'eve teasing', gossiping and spreading rumours, being shouted at, cursed or spoken to with harsh words and social exclusion, among others, are common forms of psychosocial violence and abuse.

Source: UNCRC Committee, General Comment n°8 on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment, CRC/C/GC/8, 2 June 2006, as well as Asia-Pacific Roundtable Meeting on School-Related Gender-based Violence; 11-13 November 2013, Bangkok, Thailand.

Verbal and emotional abuse and social exclusion or discrimination appears to also be common and often characterized by verbal humiliation based on caste, status in society, gender or perceived sexual orientation, and disability. For example:

- In the Philippines, a study with 2,442 school children under 18 years of age from 58 schools found that verbal abuse is the most prevalent form of violence experienced by children in all school levels. This includes being ridiculed and teased, being shouted at and being cursed or spoken to with harsh words<sup>81</sup>.
- In Thailand, a survey with students, teachers and administrators involving 30 secondary schools in 5 provinces revealed that the most common phrase used by teachers' when referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) students is *bukbon biang ben thang phet* or 'sexual deviants'.<sup>82</sup>
- In China, research with 419 students from two middle schools in Shanghai found that 38.1% of the students were targets of gossiping and rumours; 49.8% were teased or taunted; 16.4% were excluded from social groups; and 11.2% had their property confiscated<sup>83</sup>. In the same study, 11.9% reported spreading negative rumours about a classmate; 34.3% teased or taunted a classmate; 12.9% reported intentionally excluding a classmate from a social group; and 3.7% had confiscated a classmate's property.<sup>84</sup>
- Peer violence is believed to account for up to 87% of SRGBV in Central Asia, and young adolescents (aged 12–16) are believed to be responsible for 80% of reported incidents of violence on school grounds.<sup>85</sup>
- In the Maldives, findings from a field-based research conducted with 402 young men and women show that 1 in 4 young people surveyed reported being sent home from school for a few days. The main causes cited that led to suspension were: carrying a mobile phone to school premises, boys not maintaining the rule on short hair, using disrespectful language with teachers and school fights.<sup>86</sup>

Globally, but also in the region, boys are more likely to experience physical violence and bullying, while girls are more likely to face psychological and sexual violence, various forms of discrimination and social exclusion.<sup>87</sup>

There is also a growing body of evidence that suggests that LGBT students or those who are believed to be same-sex attracted or gender non-conforming are also subjected in many settings to psychosocial violence and abuse in multiple forms. This is explored more in the next section on bullying.



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## What do we know about school-related *bullying* in the region?

### Bullying

A learner is bullied when s/he is exposed repeatedly over time to aggressive behaviour that intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort through physical contact, verbal attacks, fighting or psychological manipulation. Bullying involves an imbalance of power and can include teasing, taunting, use of hurtful nicknames, physical violence or social exclusion. A bully can operate alone or within a group of peers. Bullying may be direct, such as one child demanding money or possessions from another, or indirect, such as a group of students spreading rumours about another. Cyber-bullying is harassment through e-mail, cell phones, text messages, social media or websites. Children may be more vulnerable to bullying if they live with a disability, express a sexual preference different from the mainstream, or come from a minority ethnic or cultural group or a certain socio-economic background.

Source: UNESCO Health Education Online Resources. Website: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/health-education/homophobic-bullying/bullying/>

Bullying is another form of SRGBV that has received significant attention in recent years, although the definition can be varied and therefore results can be difficult to compare. Further, as the data on bullying is typically not sex-disaggregated, it becomes hard to unpack the gender dimensions of this type of violence. For example:

- Compared to other regions, peer bullying appears to be less pervasive in East Asia and the Pacific, but it is believed to be on the rise.<sup>88</sup>
- In Australia, a study with a total of 20,832 Australian students (from grades 4 to 9) from over 200 schools was conducted to investigate school-age children's experiences with covert<sup>89</sup> bullying.<sup>90</sup> The study revealed that one in four students in grades 4 to 9 reported being affected by bullying. Bullying was highest among grade 5 (32%) and grade 8 (29%) students. Further, 10% of all students reported being bullied by means of technology (i.e. cyber-bullying) with higher rates reported by secondary students and students from non-government schools.<sup>91</sup>
- In Myanmar, a Global School-based Student Health Survey with a total of 2,806 students in grades 8-11 conducted in 2007 found that 19.4% of students reported having been bullied within the last 30 days.<sup>92</sup>
- In Indonesia, 47.9% of respondents participating in the Global School-based Student Health Survey (3,116 students in 49 schools) reported having been bullied within the last 30 days.<sup>93</sup>
- In Viet Nam, data from the Global School-based Student Health Survey with students in grades 8–12 (typically attended by students aged 13-17 years) indicate that 23.4% have been bullied within the last 30 days.<sup>94</sup>
- In Mongolia, a mixed methods study in schools with over 800 students found that 80% of older kindergarten kids, 77.5% of primary class pupils and 98.6% of grade 6–11 secondary school students reported being subjected to violence, the majority of which was from other children in the form of bullying.<sup>95</sup>

*“In Asia and the Pacific region, bullying and fighting in school is often considered part of growing up.”*

Source: Information obtained in a discussion with a participant of the Asia-Pacific Roundtable Meeting on School-Related Gender-based Violence; 11-13 November 2013, in Bangkok, Thailand.

- In China, a survey with 3,332 students ranging from elementary school to high school students in the city of Tianjin found that the prevalence of bullying was lower for older students (e.g. high school students) compared to younger students (e.g. elementary school students). Five percent (5%) of elementary school students, compared to 4.3% of middle school and 2.7% of high school students, reported bullying their classmates and peers in school.<sup>96</sup> Chinese researchers report that male students in middle and high schools were more likely to be engaged in overtly physical forms of aggression, whereas females were more likely to be involved in non-physical bullying (e.g. spreading rumours, relational aggression).<sup>97</sup>
- In another survey with 4,726 elementary school and middle school students in rural and urban areas in Shandong Province, China, male students were significantly more likely to engage in bullying perpetration than females. Additionally, males displayed physically aggressive behaviours, while females were more prone to engage in verbal bullying.<sup>98</sup>
- In India and other parts of South Asia, caste systems and discrimination against ethnic minorities are believed to make some students more vulnerable to bullying.<sup>99</sup> Indigenous, ethnic or even religious status of students also continues to be basis for discrimination and violence against and between students.<sup>100</sup> For example, in India, research assessing the impact of the entry of *dalit* and *adivasi* students (traditionally excluded social groups) into educational institutions found that these children suffer widespread verbal abuse at the hands of their upper-caste teachers in primary schools. This was found to have a critical impact on the way in which these first generation *dalit* and *adivasi* school attendees viewed themselves as learners.<sup>101</sup>
- In another regional review, students with low academic achievement scores and those identified as having learning difficulties reported more incidences of being bullied in all countries apart from Indonesia and the Republic of Korea.<sup>102</sup>
- In the Maldives, a UNFPA survey with over 4,000 youths aged 15–24 found that 64% of surveyed youth consider discrimination among students based on gender, disability or material status, among others, as one of the major problems in schools (placing it just after two main concerns: lack of qualified teachers and low standard of education).<sup>103</sup> Qualitative interviews with youth also revealed a phenomenon referred to as “revenge porn” where explicit photos or videos are threatened to be shared online by former boyfriends to humiliate/shame young women. Young people indicated that sexual favours could be requested by boys to avoid sharing this information.<sup>104</sup>
- In countries such as Japan and New Zealand, the expanding access to online technologies is also believed to be driving new forms of SRGBV, such as cyber-bullying based on perceived or real sexual orientation.<sup>105</sup>

*“[In Thailand] LGBT youth and those that are believed to be LGBT are suffering from bullying at schools, just like everywhere else in the world.”*

**- Maja Cubarrubia, Country Director for Plan International Thailand**

Source: Media Statement on the release of the report (Plan Thailand, UNESCO, the Center for Health Policy Studies (CHPS), Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University) Bullying targeting high school students who are or are perceived to be transgender or same-sex attracted: Types, prevalence, impact, motivation and preventive measures in 5 provinces of Thailand. UNESCO Bangkok Office, Bangkok, 26 November 2013.

Although data on bullying based on real or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity/expression in educational institutions across the Asia-Pacific region are limited, what we know so far raises serious concerns.

- In recent online survey study in China, more than 75% of the 421 school and university students who responded said they had been victims of bullying based on sexual orientation or gender identity, 44% said they have experienced verbal abuse from either classmates or teachers, 5% said they had been victims of blackmail and 7% said that they were victims

of sexual harassment including being forced to remove all clothes, touched in private areas, and being forced to take nude photographs.<sup>106</sup>

- In an online survey conducted in 2009 with 492 self-identified gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning students in Hong Kong, out of these whose sexual orientation was known by other students (79.9%), 53.1% had suffered some form of discrimination including bullying and more than 42.3% had encountered verbal violence, teasing or being the subject of rumours.<sup>107</sup>
- A qualitative and quantitative study with 240 young men who have sex with men in six cities in India and one in Bangladesh found that 50% of respondents stated that fellow students or teachers harassed them in school or college because they were effeminate.<sup>108</sup>
- In Australia, in a national study conducted in 2010 with a total of 3,134 same sex attracted and gender questioning young people, 61% of respondents reported verbal abuse because of homophobia, 18% physical abuse and 26% 'other' forms of homophobia. Young men and gender questioning young people reported more abuse than young women; 80% of those who were abused named school as the most common locus of violence.<sup>109</sup>
- In New Zealand, a survey of 2,269 young gay, lesbian and bisexual students in schools found that 76% (male) and 64% (female) respectively reported verbal bullying.<sup>110</sup>
- In Thailand, findings from a survey with 2070 high school students in 5 Thai provinces (out of which 246, or 11.9% stated a "gender" other than "man" or "woman" for example, gay, *tom*<sup>111</sup>, *kathoey*<sup>112</sup>) show that feminine male students (or transgender women) had experienced name-calling, sexual harassment,<sup>113</sup> and masculine female students (or transgender men) reportedly having been threatened and some had experienced physical violence. *Toms* and *kathoeyes* were said to be openly hated by some students.<sup>114</sup> In the same survey, 48.9% of female students who considered themselves less feminine than girls in general, as opposed to 30% of those who considered themselves as feminine as girls in general, were bullied on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression; correspondingly, 69% of male students who considered themselves less masculine than boys in general, as opposed to 17% of the male students who considered themselves as masculine as boys in general, were bullied on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression. These differences were statistically significant.<sup>115</sup>
- In Viet Nam, a recent survey conducted by the Centre for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population among 520 homosexual, bisexual and transsexual people with an average age of 21 revealed that nearly 41% had suffered from discrimination and violence at school or university. Of the respondents, 70% said they had been called offensive names, 38% said they were treated unfairly, 19% claimed to have been beaten and 18% reported being sexually harassed.<sup>116</sup> In another study in Viet Nam with LGBT youth aged 14-18 who had left school and home were living on the street, violence from relatives and neighbours had reportedly led many to choose the path of street life.<sup>117</sup>

## What do we know about school-related *sexual violence and abuse* in the region?

### Sexual Violence and Sexual Abuse

Sexual violence takes the form of sexual abuse, harassment, rape or sexual exploitation in prostitution or pornography. It can happen in homes, institutions, schools, workplaces, in travel and tourism facilities, within communities - both in development and emergency contexts.

Child sexual abuse is defined as the involvement of a child in a sexual activity to which he or she is unable to give informed consent (and may not fully comprehend), or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or which violates the laws or social taboos of society.

Source: UNICEF Child Protection Programme. December 2013. Online website resource available at: [www.unicef.org/programme/cprotection](http://www.unicef.org/programme/cprotection)

There is a lack of data on the sexual abuse and violence in schools in the Asia-Pacific region, but there is a concerning amount of evidence highlighting sexual violence and abuse on the way to and from schools.

In particular, a student's journey to and from school may not always be the safest one. In Papua New Guinea, female students were found to be fearful of sexual assault and violence both in and on their way to school.<sup>118</sup> The violence that girls encounter in and around schools and on the way to school goes unreported and the scale of the problem has been underestimated.<sup>119</sup> In Fiji, girls reportedly may be sexually blackmailed in return for transport to school, school fees and other costs associated with their education.<sup>120</sup> Violence that girls encounter in and around schools and on the way to school is believed to largely go unreported, and the scale of the problem has been underestimated.<sup>121</sup>

Similarly, while at school, students are also at risk of sexual violence and abuse:

- Qualitative data from Indonesia, Mongolia and the Philippines indicate that schools are not always places of safety and that government officials may view this as less important than dropout rates or drug addiction.<sup>122</sup>
- Several small studies in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan provide examples of inappropriate sexualized behaviour by teachers towards girls, with several reports of teachers raping schoolgirls in India and serious sexual abuse by teachers in Nepal.<sup>123</sup>
- In Turkey, a study with 5,032 students in grade 6–8 found that sexual violence was mostly perpetrated by other students; among those that reported experiencing sexual violence 77.5% said they were touched on their body in a sexual way or in a way that made them uncomfortable by other students, 47.6% said that another student made them take clothes off when it was not for a medical reason; and 87% responded they were forced to have sex with another student in school.
- Lack of school safety and security, including in boarding schools, remains a serious problem in the region affecting psychological and emotional well-being of students. In 2004, the Human Rights Commission of Nepal raised the case of two blind girls who were continuously raped by a hostel warden for several years.<sup>124</sup>

Harmful cultural norms and expectations may create settings in which children may experience sexual abuse with impunity, including by adult trusted authority figures, such as clerics in religious schools. For example:

- In 2004, Pakistan's Minister of State for Religious Affairs recorded more than 2,500 complaints of sexual abuse by clerics in religious schools, none of which led to successful prosecutions.<sup>125</sup>

- In Afghanistan, there have been several reported instances of boys who were raped by male teachers and subjected to sexual harassment by older boys. According to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), boys may be at a higher risk of sexual abuse than girls.<sup>126</sup>
- A study in the Philippines found also that in religious schools the victims of sexual abuse are mostly boys.<sup>127</sup>

Teachers and education sector staff can also experience psychosocial, sexual or physical violence. In Australia, there have been cases of sexual assaults on female teachers by male students reported in the media and widespread evidence that teachers are exposed to a torrent of abusive sexist language from children as young as five.<sup>128</sup> Teachers, especially young female teachers, are also exposed to sexual violence, either by other staff or by older (usually male) students. The issue of violence experienced by teachers has been largely ignored in the region. Despite the broad impact teacher victimization can have on schooling, recruitment, and on student academic and behavioural outcomes, our understanding of this is still very much limited.

### What do we know about school-related *corporal punishment* in the region?

#### Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Most involves hitting (“smacking”, “slapping” or “spanking”) children, with the hand or with something such as a whip, stick, belt, shoe, or wooden spoon. But it can also involve, for example, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling hair or boxing ears, forcing children to stay in uncomfortable positions, burning, scalding or forced ingestion (for example, washing children’s mouths out with soap or forcing them to swallow hot spices).

Source: UNCRC Committee, General Comment n°8 on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment, CRC/C/GC/8, 2 June 2006. [www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC.C.GC.8.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC.C.GC.8.pdf)

Corporal punishment is often seen as being a gender-neutral phenomenon, although the evidence suggests it is highly gendered, particularly in the types of punishments inflicted upon students. Leach et al (2013) discuss that male teachers are more likely to use physical punishment as a means of asserting male authority and toughening the student up. Females in contrast, are more likely to use verbal discipline as physical punishment can be seen as ‘unladylike’. Evidence from Central Asia and in New Zealand with school-aged children suggests that boys are more likely to receive severe corporal punishment, while girls are given lighter physical punishment such as smacking, pinching or increased household chores.<sup>129</sup> In Mongolia, teachers, for instance, appear to be more inclined to punish teenage boys than teenage girls because the culture tends to protect girls.<sup>130</sup> A 2006 report on practices and attitudes about disciplining of children found that making children sit out in the hot sun is a common method of punishment in Timor-Leste. A quarter of student respondents in this survey indicated finding this type of punishment from teachers to be acceptable.<sup>131</sup>

It is also gendered in terms of how male and female teachers use corporal punishment. It appears that male teachers are more likely to make use of physical punishment in disciplining boys, as a means of asserting male authority and toughening them up in a rite of passage into male adulthood. In contrast, female teachers’ preference for verbal chastisement may stem from the fear that male students, particularly older ones, will contest female authority and refuse punishment.<sup>132</sup>

Corporal punishment is the most widely reported form of SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific region, and is believed to be a common phenomenon in the daily life of South Asian children in care settings

and in schools<sup>133</sup>. This is highlighted in a report by the South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children<sup>134</sup> which highlights the proportion of children globally and in South Asia that can be subjected to corporal punishment in different settings:

Percentage of Children Worldwide:	Percentage of Children in South Asia:
95% live in countries where they are not legally protected from all forms of corporal punishment by parents	29.3% of these live in South Asia
54.7% live in countries where they are not legally protected from corporal punishment in schools	44.7% of these live in South Asia
55.7% live in countries where they are not protected by law from corporal punishment in penal institutions	50% of these are in South Asia
93.4% live in countries where corporal punishment in all forms of alternative care is not prohibited	29.8% of which are in South Asia
39.7% of children across the world live in countries where for committing an offence under criminal, traditional and/or religious law they can lawfully be ordered to receive corporal punishment	68% of these are in South Asia

Data from other countries also suggest that corporal punishment in schools is widespread:

- In India, a study conducted by the National Commission for Protection of Children’s Rights of India between 2009 and 2010 revealed that school corporal punishment was a near-universal experience. Out of the total of 6,632 children across seven states, only nine children reported not having had received any kind of punishment (defined as getting beaten by a cane, being slapped on the cheeks, being hit on the back or being boxed on the ears).<sup>135</sup>
- In the Republic of Korea, a survey of 1,430 student-teachers conducted in 2011 concluded that nearly half of primary student-teachers and 58% of secondary student-teachers agreed it was acceptable to inflict corporal punishment using a paddle.<sup>136</sup> In the same year (2011), a study by the Korea Institute of Criminology with 481 high school students found that 94.6% of the students had experienced corporal punishment, including being “spanked”, struck on the cheek and punched.<sup>137</sup>
- In a survey of 1,200 first and second year undergraduate students Xi’an, Shaanxi province of China, 32.1% of respondents reported experiencing corporal punishment by teachers.<sup>138</sup>
- In Papua, Indonesia, recent research in 3 regencies [districts] shows that corporal punishment was the most common form of discipline in over half (56%) of all schools interviewed, and the methods of discipline commonly reported include slapping, hitting, denying food, and hitting children with brooms.<sup>139</sup> In the same study, boys were reportedly more likely to receive corporal punishment at school than girls.
- In another study in the Philippines with 2,442 school-children below 18 years old from 58 public schools from diverse geographical settings such as Masbate, Northern Samar and the Camotes Islands in Cebu, corporal punishment was found to be widely used in schools and at homes, while increasing chores is another common punishment for girls.<sup>140</sup>

The UN's Global Report on Violence Against Children<sup>141</sup> noted that there are implicit and explicit policies in many schools on corporal punishment; however, the use of violence is a common tool to educate and punish children, and corporal punishment is often regarded as a necessary for discipline. For example, in Turkey, although explicitly prohibited by law, corporal punishment (physical violence) does occur in schools and is regarded as a kind of discipline if it is performed by teachers.<sup>142</sup> In Afghanistan, laws now prohibit corporal punishment in school; however, a vast majority of teachers reportedly continue to beat children and believe that physical punishment is an essential and unavoidable practice to maintain discipline in the school.<sup>143</sup>

Finally, while there appears to be a relatively large body of research on corporal punishment in the region, there are critical gaps in the evidence base. The Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment indicates that little or no research on the corporal punishment of children has been carried out in the past 10 years in Bhutan, the Cook Islands, the Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Russian Federation, Samoa, Turkmenistan, and Tuvalu.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, our understanding of the gendered nature of corporal punishment, and corporal punishment as a form of SRGBV remains limited.<sup>145</sup>

## 2.4 What do we know about the *consequences* of SRGBV?

In the region, and elsewhere, SRGBV can have significant short- and long-term consequences for the individual and has broader impacts on communities and societies, including intergenerational effects. This section examines specifically consequences of SRGBV on the individual and broader socio-economic consequences for all.

### Most Common Consequences of SRGBV in Asia-Pacific

- Lower educational participation, achievement and continuation
- Impact on health and psychosocial well-being of students
- Intergenerational transmission of violence
- Broader socio-economic consequences

### Lower Educational Participation, Achievement and Continuation

School-related violence, or the fear of violence, can have profound consequences on students' participation, achievement, and continuation, particularly for girls.

Sexual harassment and violence also form a major barrier to access to education and the ability to benefit from education, and may influence parents' decision to keep their children out of school. For example, in Papua New Guinea, concerns for girls' safety are reportedly a significant barrier to their school attendance.<sup>146</sup> This includes, in particular, the risk of sexual violence while travelling to and from school.<sup>147</sup> Students, especially girls, may be deterred from participating actively in class and seeking academic excellence for fear of attracting unwanted attention from teachers.<sup>148</sup> Children also may avoid school or underperform in the classroom due to psychological and/or physical trauma due to sexual assault.<sup>149</sup>

Similarly, physical and verbal abuse by teachers has profound impacts on educational outcomes. Studies in South Asia show that corporal punishment of children is a direct and significant reason for children dropping out of school.<sup>150</sup> A study in Nepal found that 14% of dropouts could be attributed to fear of the teacher.<sup>151</sup> In Afghanistan, the Child Friendly Services Survey (CFSS) conducted in 2007 identified corporal punishment as one of the main reasons why children did not go to school.<sup>152</sup> A discouraging or disrupted classroom has been found to affect boys' educational achievement, in particular, by creating a stressful and intimidating learning environment, lowering

concentration and motivation and contributing to poor performance, in turn increasing the risk of dropouts.<sup>153</sup>

Research also suggests that bullying, social exclusion and emotional stress imposed on students can lead to a wide range of problems. Students may come to dislike school and play truant to avoid victimization, have concentration problems or learning difficulties, face increased stress and serious, psychological problems and be more likely to attempt suicide.<sup>154</sup> Qualitative interviews with youth in the Maldives revealed that strict and conservative school managements as well as conservative teachers who do not encourage student's progressive ideas and independent thinking but utilize the "suspension order" – a policy of exclusion towards students with 'too liberal' views – results in students not actively participating in class or seeking academic excellence.<sup>155</sup> This in turn, creates a stressful and intimidating learning environment, lowers concentration and motivation and contributes to lower academic achievement, overall poor performance, or drop out. Findings from a study conducted with 54,383 middle school students in ten countries in Asia-Pacific revealed an association between students' academic achievement and bullying.<sup>156</sup> In recent online survey study in China, 23% of respondents reported declining academic performance and a loss of interest in learning in response to bullying.<sup>157</sup>

Children's enrolment and participation in schools can be particularly affected in conflict situations. For example, qualitative research with parents and school-going children in three conflict-affected areas in the Philippines found that enrolment deadlines were frequently missed.<sup>158</sup> Studies in India and Thailand found that attacks and militarised occupation of schools can cause student to drop out, be pulled out, or not enrol in higher years of studies.<sup>159</sup> In Iraq, parents who worry about the safety of their school-going children stop them from attending classes during periods of instability.<sup>160</sup>

These educational impacts have longstanding impacts on children's futures. The aforementioned study in the Philippines concluded that dropping out or being delayed in school had both short and long term effects on the children. Missing school affected the development of skills such as reading and writing, which in turn affected the progress and rate of cognitive development.<sup>161</sup> Lower educational attainment has also been found to decrease work opportunities and future earnings.<sup>162</sup>

### Consequences on Health and Psychosocial Well-being of Students

*"When a girl is disciplined by being beaten with a stick, is sexually assaulted by one of her peers, or is targeted with an acid attack, the pain she endures is undeniable and unacceptable. But whatever the abuse, whether it is committed by fellow students or by adults, its severity cannot be measured solely by the physical pain inflicted. The size of the physical scar on the child's body is easier to measure than other consequences of violence, but the damage to the child's sense of integrity and well-being can be far more lasting."<sup>1</sup>*

Source: Amnesty International 2006. Safe Schools. Every girl's right. Stop Violence Against Women. London, UK: Amnesty International.

The consequences of childhood violence on health and psychosocial well-being can be severe, and include: low self-esteem, depression, increased risk of suicide, high-risk sexual and drug-using behaviour, poor physical health, and post-traumatic stress disorder.<sup>163</sup> Additional consequences can include obesity, while high-risk sexual and drug-using behaviour can result in the acquisition of sexually transmitted infections or other communicable diseases including Hepatitis.<sup>164</sup> Further, adolescent pregnancy can lead to the abandonment of education and complications during birth.

A more detailed look at the physical and psychosocial consequences of SRGBV shows that experiencing violence or abuse can have a strong impact on an individual. For example, recent studies that have looked at bullying on the basis of perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression can lead to social exclusion, depression, self-harm and attempted suicide:

- In Thailand, a study involving 30 secondary schools in five Thai provinces and over 2,000 students found many feminine male students were afraid of going to school toilets or school camps and reported being ridiculed and not welcomed to either male or female toilets, and some LGBT students were excluded from becoming a student council president.<sup>165</sup> In an online survey conducted in 2009 with 492 self-identified gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning students in Hong Kong, 39.8% had experienced isolation and a decrease in contact with other students, and felt socially isolated.<sup>166</sup>
- In the aforementioned study in Thailand, around 23% of those bullied because of their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression were depressed (as compared to only 6% of those that had not been bullied at all). This depression can lead to self-harm. Seven percent (7%) of those bullied because of their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression reported having attempted suicide.<sup>167</sup>
- In Australia a national study conducted in 2010 with a total of 3,134 students found clear associations between homophobic bullying at school and depression, anxiety, loss of esteem and confidence, withdrawal, social isolation, guilt and sleep disturbance.<sup>168</sup>
- In Japan, a study with 5,731 gay and bisexual men (including men currently in school) between the ages of 12 and 82 found that 83% of interviewed men experienced school bullying and 60% were verbally harassed because of their real or perceived sexual orientation: out of this number 64% had considered committing suicide and 15% have attempted suicide.<sup>169</sup>
- Being shunned and discriminated against can also encourage destructive self-coping behaviour, such as compulsive, reckless sex as a result of social anxiety, isolation, stress and feelings of helplessness or depression, as well as substance abuse.<sup>170</sup> This is confirmed by several studies with students in Australia as increasing risk for HIV acquisition, self-harm and suicide.<sup>171</sup>
- In the Maldives, a study with individuals belonging to gangs or groups labelled as gangs indicates that discrimination between poor and rich children in schools often isolates and increases resentment among children whose parents are not wealthy. When these children grow up they often join gangs to overcome feelings of powerlessness and inferiority that began at school.<sup>172</sup>

There is a broader set of literature that examines the impact of GBV on sexual and reproductive health (SRH), largely in the context of intimate partner violence.<sup>173</sup> This research has not focused, however, on the impact of school-related gender based violence on SRH outcomes. Clearly the health sector plays an important role in multisectoral approaches to preventing and responding to GBV. It is an important entry point to initiate care for survivors, to provide counselling and links to legal and child protection services, to access commodities and medicines including emergency contraception and post-exposure prophylaxis to sexual abuse survivors, and importantly to promote GBV prevention by raising awareness.

Some have argued for a life cycle approach to gender-based violence which includes attention to experiences of violence before birth, in infancy, during childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.<sup>174</sup> This enables one to understand the cumulative impact of violence, especially in terms of its physical and mental health consequences.

## **Intergenerational Transmission of Violence**

Childhood experiences of violence are associated with gender inequitable attitudes in adulthood, acceptance of violence either as a victim or perpetrator in future relationships, and negative parenting outcomes.

Studies from a wide range of developing countries in Asia-Pacific have found that boys who witness violence or who are physically abused are more likely to use violence in their relationships as adults.<sup>175</sup> For example, data in a recent seven-country study in the Asia-Pacific region found that the rape of women by men was strongly associated with the perpetrator's own victimization, particularly abuse in childhood, and participation in violence outside the home<sup>176</sup>. In the national study in four districts in Sri Lanka, men who experienced emotional, sexual or physical abuse during the childhood were 1.7 to 2 times more likely to use violence against a female partner than men did not experience abuse.<sup>177</sup> This confirms earlier research in the region, including the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) in India, which found that men who witnessed violence during childhood were more prone to use sexual violence later in their lives.<sup>178</sup>

Other research suggests that victimisation in childhood is associated with later perpetration of violence in school settings. Data obtained from a nationally representative sample of 14,022 students from elementary to high school (grades 4 to 12) across Taiwan suggests the students' prior victimisation has direct links to both violence against other students and violence against teachers.<sup>179</sup> In the Republic of Korea, a study with 1,238 middle school students found that prior experience of bullying is the single most important factor that increases bullying behaviours at all levels.<sup>180</sup>

Evidence also suggests that women's exposure to violence in childhood raises their risk to other forms of violence later in life and has important negative intergenerational effects.<sup>181</sup> Although region-specific school-based sex-disaggregated data is limited, studies in other regions confirm an association between a woman's experience of childhood sexual and physical abuse and IPV as an adult.<sup>182</sup> Finally, a systematic review of the prevalence of IPV globally – including in low- and middle-income countries in the South-East Asia Region and the Western Pacific Region presents clear evidence that exposure to violence is an important determinant of poor health for women.<sup>183</sup> What is striking is that the prevalence of exposure to violence is already high among young women aged 15–19 years,<sup>184</sup> many of whom are school-goers.

## **Broader Socio-Economic Consequences**

At national and regional levels, SRGBV can become a barrier for the achievement of several of the Millennium Development Goals. SRGBV incurs costs through negative impacts on individuals, families, schools, communities and society as a whole. It has consequences for government expenditure and the economy (lower earnings and tax revenues, costs to health services etc.), as well as for human and social capital e.g. lost potential, lower levels of community trust.<sup>185</sup>

SRGBV has serious consequences for governments in terms of public spending to mitigate the consequences or through lost investments on basic education when children drop out of school or fail to learn as a result of violence.<sup>186</sup> Further, the lack of investments in child protection measures and systems result in the short-term loss of child development including their physical, emotional, cognitive and social growth<sup>187, 188</sup>. Investing in protecting children from violence in schools, developing new or strengthening existing programme and policy and implementation responses may reduce the burden of government spending on the long-term consequences of SRGBV, and may have a positive impact on a country's human capital and economic growth.

### 3. Policy, Programming and Implementation Response to SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific Region

#### 3.1 Policy Response

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) includes specific provisions for the protection of children against all forms of violence. According to Article 19 and Article 28 the States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity. To date, all countries in the Asia-Pacific region have ratified the CRC and all but Cambodia, India, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nauru, Singapore, Tajikistan, Thailand and Timor-Leste have signed it. The majority of countries have also ratified the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and several have ratified the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.<sup>189</sup> Most countries in the region have laws and policies on the protection of children from violence but only one country, the Philippines, has a Ministry of Education Policy on Child Protection.<sup>190</sup>

This review found that policies and laws to prevent and respond to SRGBV in the region are limited, with the greatest attention to the prohibition of corporal punishment, or broader frameworks to address violence against women or violence against children. Where policies do exist, the scope is typically limited and SRGBV is largely seen as a barrier to girls' access to and retention in education.<sup>191</sup> In many settings in Asia-Pacific (and in South Asian countries perhaps even more so) policies addressing school-related violence, and specifically violence against young girls, are generally centred around protectionism or paternalism, rather than shifting policy towards a more 'rights based approach'. Government institutions lack sufficient data on the magnitude of SRGBV and the related policy response appears to be based on assumptions such as boys are the perpetrators and not also the victims of sexual violence. Systems for response and referral are absent, there is a lack of coordination between sectors, background checks of teachers are not routinely conducted and curricula and other measures of prevention are weak.<sup>192</sup>

Moreover, some national policies result in children being more vulnerable to violence at schools. For example, some researchers have suggested that China's One-Child Policy has contributed to many children having limited socialisation opportunities in the home as they have no siblings, and being overly protected by their parents. As a result, these children may develop poor social skills, making them vulnerable to bullying victimisation in school.<sup>193</sup>

For example, the majority of countries in the Asia-Pacific region have made a commitment to the full abolishment or prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings including schools. Many policy or legal efforts to support this, however, are still on-going, await final government approval, are fragmented, contradictory, and gender-blind. For example:

- In the Maldives corporal punishment is lawful in the home, there is no explicit prohibition of all corporal punishment in schools, and corporal punishment is lawful as a sentence for crime.<sup>194</sup>
- In Nepal, corporal punishment is forbidden in schools by a decree<sup>195</sup> but there is no explicit prohibition in law.
- In Singapore, corporal punishment is legal in schools per the Schools Regulation Act (1957), but shall be administered to boys only.<sup>196</sup>
- In the Republic of Korea, for example, the law prohibits direct corporal punishment (involving physical contact) but indirect (no contact) corporal punishment such as painful positions and punitive physical exercise is permitted.<sup>197, 198</sup>
- In India, corporal punishment is explicitly prohibited in schools in article 17 of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009). However, this applies only to children aged 6–14 and does not cover Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>199</sup>
- In Pakistan, the onus of offences including corporal punishment related to children are

laid on those who have custody of the child – meaning a parent or a guardian but not school teacher – and therefore are not applicable to school settings and instances of corporal punishment of a child by teacher.<sup>200</sup>

- In Bhutan, the Child Care and Protection Act 2011 provides for a number of offences against children, including assault, cruelty, and battery. Article 214 prohibits “harsh or degrading correction or punishment” in schools but does not cover all corporal punishment and states that, “*any corrective measures shall be culturally appropriate and in accordance with rules framed for the discipline of children*”.<sup>201</sup>
- And although research in Indonesia, Mongolia, Lao PDR, Papua New Guinea, Philippines and Thailand found that 5 out of the 6 countries had explicit directives, codes of ethics or legislation on corporal punishment,<sup>202</sup> enforcement of bans was found to be uneven across these countries with general tendency to be very weak. In Indonesia, for instance, the Law on Child Protection protects children in school from “*violence and abuse from teachers, school managers, and school mates both in school and other educational institutions*”,<sup>203</sup> but it does not explicitly prohibit corporal punishment.<sup>204</sup>

Despite the overwhelming problem of bullying in Asian educational institutions, there is a lack of anti-bullying policies, and there are no legislative critiques of bullying based on perceived sexual orientation and gender expression/identity at any school level in the region. The responses appear to mostly consist in punishing perpetrators when brought to the attention of schools.<sup>205</sup> Anti-bullying in schools legislation exists in only in two countries in the Asia-Pacific region namely in Sri Lanka<sup>206</sup> and Thailand.<sup>207</sup> The quality of legislation and implementation vary between countries<sup>208</sup>. For example, there is no legislation prohibiting bullying in alternative care settings in several Pacific countries including Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu, but sexual violence is prohibited in all of them except Tonga.<sup>209</sup> Schools themselves generally do not have specific anti-bullying policies, let alone LGBT-specific anti-bullying policies. What is needed now are comprehensive policies on child protection in education.<sup>210</sup>

The response appears to be even more fragmental in terms of care centres and boarding schools. In Timor-Leste, policy, procedures and standards for child care centres and boarding houses exist but there is no enforcement as the Ministry of Social Solidarity lacks the legal authority to implement, and a decree law on the regulation of residential care is planned only for 2014.<sup>211</sup> Only Indonesia appears to have an explicit law that prohibits sexual violence against children in specific contexts including at schools and other alternative care settings.<sup>212</sup>

Legislation to address sexual violence against children appears to be widespread, but often gender-blind or exclusive. For instance, research by the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre into child trafficking in South Asia has found that boys often have less legal protection from sexual abuse than girls do.<sup>213</sup> The Indonesian NGO Coalition has noted inadequacies with rape laws in that country that do not seem to have been adequately dealt with in the Child Protection Law.<sup>214</sup> For example, girls aged 12 to 16 seem to be excluded from both statutory rape and rape laws; the penalties for both are limited; and the penal code does not recognise the vulnerability of boys to rape and sexual abuse.<sup>215</sup>

Teachers’ codes of conduct have been identified in other reviews as critical entry points for preventing and addressing SRGBV that is perpetrated by teachers.<sup>216</sup> In the Asia-Pacific region codes of conducts are widespread, and are generally centralised around upholding the respect and dignity of students. The Code of Ethics for Primary and Middle School Teachers in China (2008) states that teachers must “*Treat all students with care, respect the dignity of the students, and treat students equally and fairly. Protect the safety of the students, care for the well-being of the students, and uphold the rights of the students. Do not mock, disparage or discriminate against students, do not inflict corporal punishment on students. Use appropriate language*”.<sup>217</sup> This is similar to that of section 7.1 the Code of Professional Ethics of School Teachers in India, the Teachers code of Ethics from Malaysia and the Council of Pacific Education Code of Ethics for the South Pacific (2010) which all state teachers must be impartial to all students regardless of their demographic backgrounds.<sup>218, 219, 220</sup>

The National Code of Conducts of Teachers from the Philippines has guidelines that include the above regarding the fact that teachers must not discriminate against any learner, however it specifically states that teachers must not inflict corporal punishment on schoolchildren as punishment for acts which are not manifested from poor scholarship.<sup>221</sup> This is mirrored in the Provisional Implementations of Penalization by the Administrative Department of Education, which states that there will be a penalty to kindergartens where all forms of corporal punishment is inflicted.<sup>222</sup> The Philippines, overall, appears to have an enabling policy context for addressing SRGBV, as highlighted in the programme box below.

#### Policy Example: Philippines

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, Republic Act No 7610. Manila, Ninth Congress of the Philippines, specifically recognises children's right to be free from the threat of violence in school. Act 7610 (Act Providing for the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict and Providing Penalties for Violations Thereof, House Bill No. 4480) specifically prohibits the use of schools "for military purposes such as command posts, barracks, detachments and supply depots"<sup>1</sup>. The government has also explicitly banned sexual harassment and corporal punishment in schools (Act 7877; Act Declaring Sexual Harassment Unlawful in the Employment, Education or Training Environment and for Other Purposes). To complement this legislative approach, the Department of Education spearheaded efforts to develop implementation guidelines, teacher training, and a national child protection system. Evaluation of these efforts does not yet appear to have been undertaken to determine impact.

In the Philippines, as in other settings, more research is required to determine the impact of these codes of conduct on the prevention and response of SRGBV. Research suggests that while they are widespread, they are not always well-known or enforced at local levels.<sup>223</sup>

Efforts to address SRGBV are often inexplicitly tackled under national plans to address VAW and children, penal codes, child protection policies, and acts addressing free and compulsory education for children, and in some instances under other educational bills. Research suggests that a large number of national plans to address violence against women and children that have been developed may not be appropriately or at all implemented. For instance, in Myanmar there is no national plan on addressing VAW however a national plan addressing VAC exists. In India, although national action plans addressing VAW and VAWC are developed and implemented, they are reportedly weak and require strengthening.<sup>224</sup> And in Lao PDR, the key mechanism for advancing gender equality and inclusion is the National Inclusive Education Policy (2011–2015) through the Inclusive Education Centre (IEC) within the Ministry of Education and Sports; however, an independent National Action Plan is still under development.

The most comprehensive framework identified in this review was from Australia. The government of Australia has collaborated with state and territory governments on the National Safe Schools Framework<sup>225</sup> as part of a national approach to supporting schools to build safe school communities. This vision includes creating learning environments which are free from bullying, harassment, aggression and violence. The Framework was endorsed by all ministers for education through the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs in December 2010 and officially launched on 18 March 2011 to coincide with the inaugural National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence. To support schools to implement the Framework the Australian Government has worked with Education Service Australia to deliver the *Safe Schools Hub*.<sup>226</sup> The Hub is a "one-stop shop" that provides school communities, teachers, school leaders, students, parents and specialist professionals with a range of safe school strategies that are underpinned by the Framework including information on building safe and supportive learning environments.

In conclusion, there is more work to be done in the region to establish supportive and enabling policy and legislative environments to prevent and respond to SRGBV, and planning mechanisms is support their implementation. It appears that most countries in the region undertake legislative strategies and frameworks that address each form of violence in isolation (for example, corporal punishment but not student on student violence, bullying but not bullying based on perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, or sexual violence perpetrated by adults but not by other students) rather than in a holistic way.

Unless deeply entrenched cultures that tolerate and perpetuate all forms school violence are addressed holistically, policies (and programmes) will be ineffective.<sup>227</sup> Moreover, the lack of inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination by governments, ministries and governmental agencies in efforts to address SRGBV, as well as disjointed national actions on policy and programming need further attention in the region.

### 3.2 Programme Response

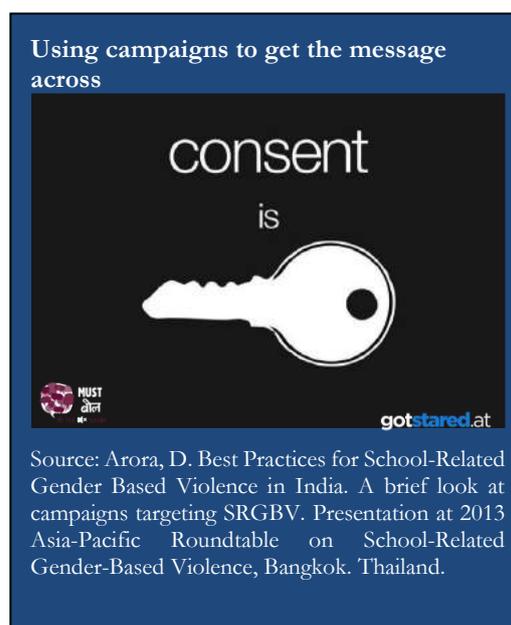
In the Asia-Pacific region, there are a number of promising practices addressing violence in schools in different areas including curriculum and educator training; interventions to improve safety in and on the way to school; community and caregiver awareness-raising about GBV; and other approaches.

At the global level, there is a general increase in number of empowerment programmes addressing girls' specific vulnerabilities such as limited access to education, violence including sexual violence, and how girls are treated at schools, at home and in the community. Some of these efforts include *Together for Girls Initiative*, the *Girl Effect*, *Because I Am a Girl*, and the *Adolescent Girls Coalition* – many of which have been adapted, replicated and/or scaled-up in the Asia-Pacific region.

There is also an increase in the number of campaigns addressing corporal punishment such as that launched by Plan International in 2008 *Learn Without Fear: The Global Campaign to End Violence in Schools* or *Campaign Against Corporal Punishment of Children* developed and implemented regionally in Asia-Pacific by the South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) and South Asia Coordination Group on Action against Violence against Children (SACG).

Importantly, many campaigns addressing SRGBV directly or indirectly in the region are designed and led with the participation of young people. The *UNiTE Global Youth Network* is a youth-led network of the United Nations Secretary-General's *UNiTE to End Violence against Women Campaign*. The network, established in 2012, brings together youth activists aged 18-30 to strengthen the movement to end persistent gender equality and violence against women and girls. Many of the regional representatives of this network attended the 2013 Asia-Pacific Roundtable on School-Related Gender-Based Violence to share their experience in different areas including peer education, advocacy and media including social media.

Several programmes and campaigns in the region include language and visual elements, cultural events and press and social media/TV that connect with students. For example, *GotStared.At* in India is a counter culture young people's movement that raises awareness on social issues of violence, gender and discrimination in schools. Also in India *Must Bol* is a campaign led by a core group of young people in New Delhi that includes series



Source: Arora, D. Best Practices for School-Related Gender Based Violence in India. A brief look at campaigns targeting SRGBV. Presentation at 2013 Asia-Pacific Roundtable on School-Related Gender-Based Violence, Bangkok, Thailand.

of violence awareness workshops with students and children from educational institutions.

The workshops offer a safe space, and an opportunity for male and female students to reflect on different types of violence and their own experiences. This dialogue has led to improved understanding between peers and has particularly enabled female students to raise awareness about regular experiences of violence, harassment or bullying. Other campaigns in India include *Bel foio* which is a cultural and media campaign that calls on men and boys (including at schools) to take a stand against domestic violence; while *ECHOS* is an online campaign which allows young people to voice (online and offline) their experiences or instance of violence, or their messages against harassment in schools. In Nepal, the UNiTE Orange Campaign of Y-PEER has focused on grassroots-level activities to end SRGBV in schools by partnering with all stakeholders such as teachers, students and parents to increase access to complaint mechanism and better understanding of the issues.

Other programmes implement school-based initiatives engaging students but also a broader range of stakeholders. For example:

- The *Cool Schools Peer Mediation programme* has been operating since 1991 in New Zealand and has been delivered to nearly two-thirds of schools nationwide. It teaches students skills from primary through secondary skills to resolve conflict peacefully. Students identified as “mediators” assist with conflict resolution, while school staff are trained to reducing bullying and other levels of violence.
- In Australia, *Enough is Enough* has also been implementing programmes in primary and secondary schools for over ten years, supporting learners to deal with stress, anger, bullying and harassment. The programme targets students, teachers, youth at risk, and those who work with them. The programme aligns with the national curriculum, is available for different age ranges, and can be adapted to suit different schools’ needs.
- In Indonesia, *PULIH Centre for Trauma Recovery and Psychosocial Empowerment* developed<sup>228</sup> and is implementing *Five Fingers Campaign*. The campaign engages with youth, but also with school-teachers and principals at the same time to prevent GBV, especially in school settings. The campaign elements include press conferences with youth ambassadors, students ‘postering’, ‘happening’ art contests, print and radio promos and school roadshows.
- In Bangladesh, the *Acid Survivors Foundation* has been implementing nationwide school and college campaigns through a network of students to promote zero tolerance to violence against women and protect the rights of acid survivors.

Through ASF’s Survivors Network Program campaigns have been implemented in 46 schools in Bogura, Comilla, Gazipur, Narsingdi and Sirajgonj, with the participation of 8,559 students and more than 100 teachers. The campaigns have raised awareness on why attacks take place, the consequences of such attack, what to do immediately after an attack, and the services that victims are entitled to from the Government and other NGOs.<sup>229</sup>



Gender-based violence prevention and response efforts have also been integrated into broader sexual and reproductive health initiatives in schools. For example, in Papua New Guinea, the *Peer Education Program* empowers young people at schools and universities (as well as in their local communities, settlements, churches and villages) to make informed decisions regarding their reproductive and social well-being through education and awareness, training and support,

counselling and advocacy.<sup>230</sup> *Yaari Dosti* and *Sakhi Sakel*<sup>231</sup> in India are other examples of efforts to promote gender equity and to address harmful masculinities as broader health promotion strategies. In Bangladesh, *Madrasah Students Initiative for Adolescents Health*<sup>232</sup> aimed to increase youth participation and access in the sexual and reproductive services, improve knowledge and understanding of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and to promote gender equality. A programme evaluation showed that it has reached over 25,000 people including students, teachers, religious leaders and community members. More than 65% of male and female students had changed perspective towards gender, rights and sexuality and 80% of participating male and female students were equipped with full knowledge of contraceptive methods including emergency contraception.<sup>233</sup> The intervention was scaled-up to 52 madrasahs [schools for Islamic instruction] during its implementation period.

There is also encouraging evidence of effective programmatic collaboration between local organisations, multilateral agencies and governments to address SRGBV with teachers and other education staff. For example:

- In the Indonesian province of Papua, UNICEF and the University of Melbourne's Youth Research developed and implemented the *Safe and Strong School Initiative* to help teachers understand the negative effects of corporal punishment and learn alternative methods of positive discipline. Early findings from the initiative show that when teachers and students develop positive class rules together, fewer children break the rules and behave more orderly even when there is no teacher inside the class.<sup>234</sup>
- In Bhutan, *Transformative Education for Gross National Happiness* (GNH) is a teacher action research project to implement initiatives to promote GNH in schools. The project is undertaken in collaboration and partnership between *Oulum Lyseon lukio* secondary school in Finland, the Royal Education Council, which initiates and implements educational reforms across schools in Bhutan and 7 GNH Seed schools run by the government of Bhutan.
- In the Philippines, the National Steering Committee formed by the Family Planning Organisations of the Philippines and Department of Health (and which includes civil society organisations and government agencies with mandate on policy and education) has been invited by the Department of Education to provide inputs on curriculum development (K +12 Curriculum) to integrate child sexual exploitation with GBV and link children to SRH and GBV services).
- In Nepal, Save the Children worked with community-based clubs to implement the 'Choices' curriculum which aimed to empower boys and girls aged 10-14 to challenge gender norms. The intervention, which included an experimental control group, had positive outcomes on attitudes and behaviours of participants. For example, prior to the intervention just over 40% of participants believed "it was okay for a man to hit his wife" while this number dropped to under 10% in post-intervention survey.<sup>235</sup>

#### Teachers using literacy to confront bullying and help-seeking in Papua, Indonesia



Source: Karna S. Developing Positive Discipline Skills for Papua Teachers. Reducing Corporal Punishment in Schools. Presentation at 2013 Asia-Pacific Roundtable on School-Related Gender-Based Violence, Bangkok. Thailand.

Within countries, many civil society organizations are leading efforts to address SRGBV in their particular communities, including in religious schools. Since 2010 in Myanmar, *Metta Ratana Organization* and *Phaung Daw Oo Monastic Education High School* are collaborating in the implementation of gender awareness and training of trainers' project for community and monastic education school to address the issue of GBV. The programme includes gender awareness training for community and monastic teachers, training of trainers from other like-minded organizations and monastic schools, training on gender curriculum for monastic teachers as well as various classroom activities addressing gender for students from monastic schools.

There is also evidence on engaging particularly school-going young men and boys in efforts to address gender inequalities and other deep-rooted causes of violence in school settings. In Papua New Guinea, *Male Advocacy* is a Pacific action on responding and dealing with GBV, which is now targeting male students in schools to be part of the fight for women's human rights and gender equality. In India, the *Gender Equality Movement in Schools (GEMS)* <sup>236</sup> is a school-based movement that promotes gender equality among men and women and places special emphasis on working with young men. The GEMS programme has been successfully adapted to the Vietnamese context (see programme example below.)

#### Young 'male advocates' in PNG



Source: Anton M. Addressing School Related Gender Based Violence in PNG: Peer Education and Male Advocacy Program. Presentation at 2013 Asia-Pacific Roundtable on School-Related Gender-Based Violence, Bangkok, Thailand.

#### Programme Example: India

In India, the Gender Equality Movement in Schools (*GEMS*) builds on the previous successful efforts to foster more gender equitable attitudes and behaviours among youth in India and was implemented in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, the civic body that governs the city of Mumbai. *GEMS* is a school-based movement that promotes gender equality among men and women. By examining the social norms that define men's and women's roles in the society and questioning the use of men's use of violence against women and girls including early marriage, the movement encourages equal relationship between young women and girls and young men and boys. Evaluation of the *GEMS* intervention suggests a positive shift in students' attitudes toward gender equality. For example, programme participants showed a significant increase in the gender equality scores, and more students reported they would take action in response to sexual harassment. In addition, the proportion of students believing that girls should be at least 18 years old at marriage increased over time, reaching nearly 100%. Further, lessons learned from the implementation of *GEMS* revealed that public education system is uniquely placed to influence to overcome stereotypes and shape processes and understanding of non-violent attitudes and behaviours. *GEMS* experience provides evidence of a useful and feasible practice for creating and scaling discussion around gender equality within school settings –the methodology, which involves students in self-reflection, has the potential to make a positive difference in attitudes and behaviours and foster gender equality and non-violence. Finally, the success of *GEMS* in engaging young men and boys (and young women and girls) in addressing gender inequalities can be measured not only by the number of beneficiaries reached, but also by the number of spin-offs. For example, a programme has been adapted for the Vietnamese. A randomised controlled trial of the intervention in Viet Nam is currently underway (2013-2015).

Source: Achyut, P., Bhatla, N., Khandekar, S., Maitra, S., & Verma, R.K. 2011. Building support for gender equality among young adolescents in school: Findings from Mumbai, India. New Delhi, India: International Center for Research on Women.

Information on the Vietnamese adaptation of the *GEMS* programme is available at: <http://www.icrw.org/media/news/youth-program-expands-vietnam>

Another emerging SRGBV programme approach in the region is campaigns and programmes targeting men and young fathers as non-violent caregivers, and active participants in child education. In India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam, *MenCare*, a global fatherhood campaign, has been implemented to promote men’s involvement as equitable, non-violent fathers and caregivers in order to achieve family well-being and gender equality. One of the campaign’s premises is the fact that fathers are a key asset in promoting and achieving children’s educational attainment. The campaign encourages fathers to read to children, follow their progress in school, and interact with and know their teachers.

Despite a number of good and piloted programmes addressing violence in schools, not many have been taken to scale, and for many, their impact has yet to be rigorously evaluated. Our review finds that the majority of SRGBV programmes are stand-alone and not multi-sectoral, initiated mostly by multilateral organisations, large international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), often by local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or community-based organisations, and less frequently by national or local governments.

The majority of programmes appear to function in isolation, addressing only one or two forms of school-related violence. They rarely include broader public advocacy and awareness around school-based violence, gender inequality, masculinities/femininities, sexuality or gender identity, bullying or discrimination against LGBT students. There are also a lack of programmes addressing awareness and skills of judicial officials and media to prevent re-victimisation. Often these programmes report facing many challenges such as having difficulties reaching different school levels, unwilling staff and teachers, and issues with continuous/sustained funding.

SRGBV programmes, especially in schools, have often a limited understanding of such concepts as gender, masculinities/femininities, sexuality, sexual diversity, real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Efforts to detangle gender expectations (e.g. to address such questions as, ‘what it means to be a boy’ or “what it means to be a girl”) in schools are not sufficiently part of the programmes’ agendas. Thus, these programmes show a clear bias in their understanding of SRGBV, especially in terms of victim and perpetrator. These views reflect hetero-normative conceptualisations of victimisation in schools: the victim is usually seen as a girl being sexually abused by a male teacher, and a boy being physically abused by male or female teacher and older classmates. The data presented in the earlier sections of this review provide alarming evidence for the multi-faceted, complex, and diverse character of perpetration or experiencing of SRGBV by school boys and school girls (e.g. both boys and girls experience and perpetrate such forms of violence as bullying and social exclusion, or technology-based indirect forms of violence such as cyber-bullying) and therefore this programmatic approach is highly problematic.

Teaching aids and communication materials, *The Story of Love, Viet Nam*

The image shows a teaching aid titled "VÒNG TRÒN BẠO LỰC" (Cycle of Violence). It features three illustrations: a male teacher holding a stick over a boy, a girl being sexually abused by a male teacher, and a boy being physically abused by a male teacher. A circular arrow connects these scenes, indicating a cycle of violence. Text in Vietnamese is present, including a warning sign and a statement about the cycle of violence.

Source: Swanton B. *The Love Journey: Good practices in curriculum adaptation*. Presentation at 2013 Asia-Pacific Roundtable on School-Related Gender-Based Violence, Bangkok, Thailand.

Finally, SRGBV programmes in the region addressing sexual violence and abuse in schools appear to primarily focus on working with teachers to prevent sexual violence and abuse and rarely with students to guide them on how to protect themselves from abuse, understand their rights, and be aware of legal support or child protection mechanisms to which they have recourse in the case of abuse or harassment. Further, these programmes tend to be gender-blind, and often see children as genderless. In terms of sexual violence, this blindness stems from multiple issues, including stereotypes that men and boys are perpetrators and never victims, taboos around girls’ sexuality

and sexual activity, and deep-rooted discomfort in discussing homosexual contact (whether consensual or coerced).<sup>237</sup> SRGBV programmes in the region do not sufficiently examine incidents of school-related violence through a gender lens. Moreover, programmes addressing sexual violence and abuse against boys in schools are very rare or inadequately incorporated into school efforts to prevent and mitigate sexual violence.

#### Core elements to consider when programming on SRGBV

Here are some core elements to consider when developing programmes to address SRGBV:

- Review the existing evidence base on the causes, manifestations and associated risk and protective factors for SRGBV and identify any data gaps;
- Conduct rigorous assessment of existing programmes, of donor and government support, and take into consideration any lessons learned from evaluations or programme reports including in the target area;
- Consider entry points to address the issue (e.g. gender equality, women's rights, human rights (including the right to education), youth empowerment, child protection, school safety, sexual and reproductive health or school health more broadly) and identify partners in these domains;
- Create partnerships with stakeholders, including public institutions, authorities, teachers and parents to ensure support and coordination of efforts, sustainability and effectiveness;
- Consider programme synergies and complementarities with existing initiatives inside the education sector (e.g. in areas such as curriculum, teacher training, peer education) and outside the education sector (e.g. community mobilisation and awareness-raising, access to services (including health, legal or child protection));
- Apply research findings to programme design, and ground program elements and activities in traditions and culture, where possible, to ensure buy-in and support of local community and stakeholders;
- Identify indicators to measure programme effectiveness and outcomes, and put in place monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that enable periodic programme review and readjustment, as necessary, to meet identified targets;
- Test any programme approaches through pilot/pre-testing mechanisms and use ongoing monitoring to inform programme implementation;
- Recognise that significant shifts to gender and social norms takes time and efforts at multiple levels through a comprehensive approach. Remember that you are making a difference.

## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Causes, Nature, Manifestation, Scale and the Consequences of SRGBV

In the Asia-Pacific region, school-going children are at risk of different forms of SRGBV. The available data on prevalence and the existing research evidence presented in this review suggest that the most common forms of SRGBV in Asia-Pacific are corporal punishment; physical, psychosocial and sexual violence abuse; and bullying. The causes of school-related violence in the region are not confined to schools but are varied, complex and multi-faceted, closely linked with broader societal norms and acceptance of violence including acceptance of disciplinary approaches within schools by parents, teachers and students themselves, deeply ingrained gender inequalities and rigid gender expectations, and the situation at home and in the family. Often the violence that school-going boys and girls experience is associated with travel to and from schools and/or linked to broader conflicts or crises in the region.

In terms of the scale of SRGBV in the region, the evidence is scattered and difficult to compare across countries due to varying methodological approaches. The overall lack of data on SRGBV, particularly on sexual violence, may be partly due to cultural taboos and stigma around discussing sexual experiences of school-aged youth (whether consensual or coerced); limited awareness by communities of violence and abuse that students can and do experience in schools and other educational settings; poor reporting mechanisms and data management systems on these areas; and cultural acceptance of violence (particularly physical and verbal) by students, teachers and communities as part of “growing up” (in the case of peer violence) or “maintaining authority/discipline” (in the case of violence perpetrated by teachers or other education sector staff.)

The evidence that is available, however, demonstrates that corporal punishment in schools; physical, psychosocial and sexual violence and abuse of, and among, students; and bullying (including bullying based on real or perceived sexual orientation or gender expression/identity) merits programmatic and policy responses to ensure children’s rights including to education and health.

Moreover, acts of school-based violence often go unreported and unpunished. Students may not report incidents of SRGBV out of fear of victimisation, stigma, punishment or ridicule, or because they as well as teachers, school principals and parents see violence as a ‘normal’ part of school life. In many settings systems for reporting violence are also simply unavailable, or students may think that they can’t be trusted.

Consequences of SRGBV in educational institutions in the Asia-Pacific region can be longstanding and severe. Violence that students experience in and around schools, on the way to and from schools, or because schools are far or located in crisis or conflict-affected settings include negative impact on health, severe injuries and death as well as impaired psychosocial well-being of students, low enrolment, low educational achievement, disruption in schooling and even complete withdrawal from schools. Finally, violence witnessed or experienced in schools by students leads to discrimination and social marginalisation of both school-going boys and girls, and is associated with likelihood of perpetrating or experiencing violence in their adult life.

### Policies

While laws and policies on the protection of children from violence, neglect, exploitation or abuse are in place in majority of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region, implementation is weak, challenging, and often isolated with only a few successful results. Where policies and laws addressing school-related violence are in place, there is a need to improve the transparency and effectiveness of legal processes and enforcement mechanisms. This includes, in particular, the decentralisation of policies and laws to local levels so that there is awareness among communities,

schools and learners that they exist and that measures taken to ensure that they can be enforced.

A review of the SRGBV policy and legislative environment in the region makes it apparent that powerful cultural and social gender stereotypes influence policy development and implementation. Further, child protection laws often see children as ‘genderless’. Reflection and understanding about gender norms (and rigid gender constructs affecting boys and girls in schools) and child sexuality is not mirrored in SRGBV policy response in the region.

National action plans are also insufficient at present to support policy implementation, for example regarding teacher education or mechanisms to report or monitor violence. Increased inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination is required by governments, NGOs and partners to support holistic attention to SRGBV.

## **Programmes**

The SRGBV programme response in the Asia-Pacific region includes, in large part, the implementation of global campaigns with some regional or country focus, strong programmatic response in the developed countries of the region, and some good country-specific initiatives. Most SRGBV programmes in the region address violence against children more broadly (i.e. in multiple settings beyond schools); aim to build community awareness with a focus on corporal punishment; or to create violence-free schools. There are some notable curriculum approaches (including the GEMS programme in India and its adaptation in Viet Nam) which aim to create more equitable gender norms and relations (while addressing GBV as one component.) Several country-based initiatives address GBV through broader life skills or within SRH/HIV programme approaches. Programme examples addressing the prevention or response to SRGBV in refugee or internally displaced persons (IDP) settings were unable to be identified, and violence against LGBT and other minorities in schools were found only in Australia and New Zealand. While there were a significant number of programmes using media (including social media approaches) there were limited examples of impact, while the rigorous monitoring and evaluation of programmes in general was quite scarce. Finally, there appears to also be a lack of programmatic practice in the region with professionals from faith-based organizations, religious leaders and clerics, police, military, and judiciary, and multi-sectoral collaboration with the education sector to bring these programmes together in a coherence and coordinated fashion.

## **Emerging recommendations for the Asia-Pacific region**

There is clearly a need for more and better sex-disaggregated data on SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific region. Data on GBV are obtained through multiple channels and instruments at present, including:

- National surveys of GBV;
- Health Management Information Systems data;
- Demographic and Health Survey data and other large scale household surveys;
- National surveys on violence against children;
- Survey of media reports;
- Targeted school-based surveys including the Global School-based Health Surveys;
- Crime surveys.

Not all of these capture all forms or manifestations of GBV in and around educational institutions, nor do they address all age ranges and gender identities/expressions, as demonstrated in this review. Obviously any push for more data on this issue must also be accompanied by attention to ethical principles that minimise the risk of potential harm resulting from data collection, and ensure that any remaining risks are outweighed by the potential benefits.

Addressing GBV in society requires a multisectoral approach, and the education sector can play a critical role in preventing and responding to school-related gender-based violence. This requires efforts at multiple levels within the education sector, such as:

- the establishment of protection policies in education that ensure safe and secure learning environments for all learners, and mechanisms (e.g. teachers codes of conducts that are implemented and enforced) to hold perpetrators accountable for incidents of violence;
- the inclusion of elements such as gender equality, human rights, and non-violence in the school curriculum and the use of existing programmes (e.g. sexuality education, citizenship education) to raise awareness of GBV and how to prevent it;
- awareness-raising and skills development among teachers to incorporate the above elements into their teaching practice, which may require in some cases pre- and in-service training that enables teachers to consider their own knowledge, attitudes and values on these issues;
- interventions to improve school safety on the way to school (e.g. bus safety measures, partnerships with law enforcement to promote “safe corridors) and within schools (e.g. “school climate” interventions that establish safe spaces, lighting in and around schools);
- establishment of redress mechanisms for those that have experienced violence (e.g., access to school counsellors, nurses or social workers, peer support mechanisms) and the promotion of confidential referrals to services (e.g. health, legal, child protection) where needed; and
- the promotion of links between schools, parents and communities to build awareness on the issue of gender-based violence (e.g. through homework assignments, parent-teacher associations, school events).



Based on existing global research findings including from the Asia-Pacific region, and as affirmed by participants of the Asia-Pacific Roundtable on School-Related Gender-Based Violence, the following principles lay out recommended conditions and approaches, which contribute to sound and effective responses to SRGBV<sup>238</sup>. These are put forward as recommendations for countries in the region to take up as they strengthen their efforts to prevent and respond to school-related gender-based violence in the region.

Clear conceptualisation	A clear articulation of the problem to underpin policy and action.
Comprehensive and integrated action	Action plans that offer a holistic long-term strategy that build national child protection systems within a supportive policy environment. The action plan is complemented by community engagement to bring about a fundamental change in attitude and behaviour towards GBV at the community level.
Policies underpinned by robust, research-based evidence	National data collection that is centralised and adequately resourced for recording, reporting and monitoring violence in and around schools.
Effective legislation and regulation	Institutional capacity to implement policies to address SRGBV and enforce laws designed to bring perpetrators of violence to justice using standardised procedures for the police and judiciary and built-in monitoring mechanisms.
Inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration	Harmonisation of policies and legislation and the coordination of responses across sectors and levels of government.
Safe and effective reporting and response	Local reporting and response mechanisms that are safe, effective and consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
Well-supported and well-trained personnel	Strengthened pre- and in-service teacher education programmes and school-based support for teachers and managers, including the appointment of ‘focal/focus’ teachers as a first port of call for children who have experienced violence.
Transparency and accountability	Dissemination of reliable and up-to-date information about relevant policies and legislation through media channels suited to diverse locations and circumstances.
Participation and inclusiveness	Inclusive approaches to working with communities that ensure that the concerns and experiences of diverse groups, including minorities, people with disabilities and people with low income, are not ignored.
Gender transformative teaching and learning mechanisms	Education content, including curricula, textbooks, pedagogy and classroom practices that are gender-sensitive and contribute to gender equitable attitudes and non-violence.

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## Annex I: Useful Internet Hyperlinks

Programmes cited in the review	
Acid Survivors Foundation (Bangladesh)	<a href="http://www.acidsurvivors.org/SAAV-SAAAT">http://www.acidsurvivors.org/SAAV-SAAAT</a>
Adolescent Girls Coalition	<a href="http://coalitionforadolescentgirls.org">http://coalitionforadolescentgirls.org</a>
Because I Am a Girl	<a href="http://www.becauseiamagirl.com.au">http://www.becauseiamagirl.com.au</a>
Bell Bajao	<a href="http://www.bellbajao.org">www.bellbajao.org</a>
Child Helplines	<a href="http://www.childhelplineinternational.org/">http://www.childhelplineinternational.org/</a>
Choices curriculum	<a href="http://irh.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/04/CHOICES_8.5x11_web_0.pdf">http://irh.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/04/CHOICES_8.5x11_web_0.pdf</a>
Cool School	<a href="http://www.peace.net.nz/index.php?pageID=24">http://www.peace.net.nz/index.php?pageID=24</a>
Enough is Enough	<a href="http://enoughisenough.org.au/site/21/schools-programs">http://enoughisenough.org.au/site/21/schools-programs</a>
Five Fingers Campaign	<a href="http://dev.saynotoviolence.org/join-say-no/%E2%80%98five-fingers-movement-stop-violence-against-women-indonesian-ngo-holds-campaign-young-p">http://dev.saynotoviolence.org/join-say-no/%E2%80%98five-fingers-movement-stop-violence-against-women-indonesian-ngo-holds-campaign-young-p</a>
Gender Equality Movement in Schools (GEMS)	<a href="http://www.icrw.org/where-we-work/gender-equity-movement-schools-gems">http://www.icrw.org/where-we-work/gender-equity-movement-schools-gems</a>
The Girl Effect	<a href="http://www.girleffect.org">www.girleffect.org</a>
Got Stared At	<a href="http://www.gotstared.at">http://www.gotstared.at</a>
Learn Without Fear: The Global Campaign to End Violence in Schools or Campaign Against Corporal Punishment of Children	<a href="http://plan-international.org/learnwithoutfear/the-campaign">http://plan-international.org/learnwithoutfear/the-campaign</a>
MenCare	<a href="http://www.men-care.org">www.men-care.org</a>
Safe and Strong School Initiative	<a href="http://web.education.unimelb.edu.au/yrclinked_documents/YRC_ResearchReport37.pdf">http://web.education.unimelb.edu.au/yrclinked_documents/YRC_ResearchReport37.pdf</a>
Transformative Education for Gross National Happiness	<a href="http://education4gnh.webs.com/about">http://education4gnh.webs.com/about</a>
Together for the Girls	<a href="http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/about/participants/tfg/en">http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/about/participants/tfg/en</a>
United Nations Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women Campaign	<a href="http://endviolence.un.org/about.shtml">http://endviolence.un.org/about.shtml</a>
Viet Nam- Hành trình Yêu thương (The Journey of Love)	<a href="http://www.partners4prevention.org/news/school-based-prevention-project-launched-da-nang">http://www.partners4prevention.org/news/school-based-prevention-project-launched-da-nang</a>
Yaari Dosti	<a href="http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/horizons/yaaridostieng.pdf">http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/horizons/yaaridostieng.pdf</a>

Global/Regional Policy Frameworks and Analyses		
Beijing Declaration (1995)	Global	<a href="http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/declar.htm">http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/declar.htm</a>
Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)	Global	<a href="http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx</a>
Desk Review for Concern: Promising Practice in School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) Prevention and Response Programming Globally	Global	<a href="http://www.ungei.org/resources/files/Promising_practice_in_school_related_gbv_prevention_and_response_programming_2012.pdf">http://www.ungei.org/resources/files/Promising_practice_in_school_related_gbv_prevention_and_response_programming_2012.pdf</a>
The Crucial Role of Health Services in Responding to GBV	Global	<a href="http://www.prb.org/igwg_media/crucial-role-hlth-srvices.pdf">http://www.prb.org/igwg_media/crucial-role-hlth-srvices.pdf</a>
The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children	Global	<a href="http://www.une.edu.au/asiacentre/PDF/No19.pdf">http://www.une.edu.au/asiacentre/PDF/No19.pdf</a>
Addressing GBV through USAID'S Health Programs	Global	<a href="http://www.prb.org/igwg_media/GBVGuide08_English.pdf">http://www.prb.org/igwg_media/GBVGuide08_English.pdf</a>
Men and the Prevention of GBV: A conceptual Framework	Asia-Pacific	Greig, A., Basnyat, A. & Lang, J. n.d. Men and the Prevention of Gender-based Violence: A Conceptual Framework for Policy Change. Partners for Prevention

<b>Country Specific Policies and Plans</b>		
ACT Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children Strategy	Australia	<a href="http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/231341/ACT_Prevention_of_Violence_Against_Women_and_Children_Strategy_2011.pdf">http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/231341/ACT_Prevention_of_Violence_Against_Women_and_Children_Strategy_2011.pdf</a>
Countering Bullying, Harassment and Violence Act in Schools	Australia	<a href="http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/17608/Countering_Bullying_and_Harassment_updated.pdf">http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/17608/Countering_Bullying_and_Harassment_updated.pdf</a>
Policy on Gender Equity	Australia	<a href="http://www.aefederal.org.au/Policy/GendEq2008.pdf">http://www.aefederal.org.au/Policy/GendEq2008.pdf</a>
National Safe Schools Framework	Australia	<a href="http://deewr.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0">http://deewr.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0</a>
Child Care and Protection Act 2011	Bhutan	<a href="http://www.nationalcouncil.bt/wpcontent/uploads/2011/02/Child%20Care%20&amp;%20Protection%20Act_Eng%20&amp;%20Dzo.pdf">http://www.nationalcouncil.bt/wpcontent/uploads/2011/02/Child%20Care%20&amp;%20Protection%20Act_Eng%20&amp;%20Dzo.pdf</a>
India Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009)	India	<a href="http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/rte.pdf">http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/rte.pdf</a>
Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance 2013	India	<a href="http://www.vancouverdesi.com/news/indian-parliament-passes-tougher-sexual-violence-law-in-response-to-new-delhi-gang-rape-3/523450/">http://www.vancouverdesi.com/news/indian-parliament-passes-tougher-sexual-violence-law-in-response-to-new-delhi-gang-rape-3/523450/</a>
National Approach to Eliminating Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Kiribati: Policy and Strategic Action Plan	Kiribati	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov.au/Publications/Pages/kiribati-eliminating-gender-violence-policy-action-plan.aspx">http://www.usaid.gov.au/Publications/Pages/kiribati-eliminating-gender-violence-policy-action-plan.aspx</a>
Lao PDR National Inclusive Education Policy (2011-2015)	Lao PDR	<a href="http://www.moe.gov.la/data/publications/IE_Strategy_Final_Eng.pdf">http://www.moe.gov.la/data/publications/IE_Strategy_Final_Eng.pdf</a>
SRGBV in Lebanon	Lebanon	<a href="http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002196/219623e.pdf">http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002196/219623e.pdf</a>
Hudood Ordinances	Pakistan	<a href="http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/zia_po_1979/ord7_1979.html">http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/zia_po_1979/ord7_1979.html</a>

<b>Teachers Code of Conduct/Ethics</b>		
Code of Ethics for Primary and Middle School Teachers (Amended in 2008)	China	Personal Communication with UNESCO Beijing Office, original document in Chinese
Teacher's Law of the People's Republic of China	China	Personal Communication with UNESCO Beijing Office, original document in Chinese
The Professional Standards of Primary School Teachers (Provisional), The Professional Standards of Secondary School Teachers (Provisional), The Professional Standards of Kindergarten Teachers (Provisional)	China	Personal Communication with UNESCO Beijing Office, original document in Chinese
Regulations on Teacher Qualifications	China	Personal Communication with UNESCO Beijing Office, original document in Chinese
Provisional Implementations of Penalization by the Administrative Department of Education	China	Personal Communication with UNESCO Beijing Office, original document in Chinese
National School Code of Conduct	Fiji	<a href="http://www.moe.gov.tt/general_pdfs/National_Schools_Code_of_Conduct.pdf">http://www.moe.gov.tt/general_pdfs/National_Schools_Code_of_Conduct.pdf</a>

Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong, 1995	Hong Kong SAR, China	<a href="http://teachercodes.iiep.unesco.org/teachercodes/codes/Asia/Hong_Kong.pdf">http://teachercodes.iiep.unesco.org/teachercodes/codes/Asia/Hong_Kong.pdf</a>
Code of Professional Ethics for School Teachers	India	<a href="http://www.educationhp.org/education-board-2013/Chapter_7.pdf">http://www.educationhp.org/education-board-2013/Chapter_7.pdf</a>
National Code of Conducts for teachers	Lao PDR*	* only available in Laotian
Teachers Codes of Ethics	Malaysia*	<a href="http://www.homeolibrary.com/NewHomeo_2011/HARIGURU/Guru_Motivasi/Tatasusila.htm">http://www.homeolibrary.com/NewHomeo_2011/HARIGURU/Guru_Motivasi/Tatasusila.htm</a>
Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers	Philippines	<a href="http://teachercodes.iiep.unesco.org/teachercodes/codes/Asia/Philippines.pdf">http://teachercodes.iiep.unesco.org/teachercodes/codes/Asia/Philippines.pdf</a>
DepEd Service Manual of 2000	Philippines^	<a href="https://plan-international.org/learnwithoutfear/files/philippines-toward-a-child-friendly-education-environment-english">https://plan-international.org/learnwithoutfear/files/philippines-toward-a-child-friendly-education-environment-english</a>
Council of Pacific Education Code of Ethics for the South Pacific, 2010	South Pacific	<a href="http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/COPE%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf">http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/COPE%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf</a>
Education Professional Standards, Thailand, 2005	Thailand	<a href="http://www.ksp.or.th/Khurusapha/en/download/007.pdf">http://www.ksp.or.th/Khurusapha/en/download/007.pdf</a>
Government policy	Timor-Leste	<a href="http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?cat=39&amp;lang=en">http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?cat=39&amp;lang=en</a>
Code of Conduct for Primary School (example)	Viet Nam	Informal translation and analysis from UNESCO Ha Noi. In Viet Nam, the code of conduct for teachers are defined independently for teachers for different levels and categories, i.e. nursery, primary, secondary school levels, vocational training or higher education etc. and covers many issues.

## Annex II: Experts Contacted

Name	Organisation	Form of Contact
Fiona Leach, PhD Professor	University of Sussex Sussex, England	In-person
Nandita Bhatla Senior Technical Specialist - Gender and Development	International Center for Research on Women New Delhi, India	Email and in-person
Blossum Gilmour Health Project Manager	CARE International Goroka, Papua New Guinea	Email
Timo Ojanen PhD Candidate	Mahidol University Bangkok, Thailand	Email and in-person
Margaret E. Greene, PhD Researcher	GreeneWorks Global Washington DC, USA	Email
Omar Robles Researcher	Independent Consultant Washington DC, USA	Email
Glenn Milles, PhD Researcher, Asia Community Building Facilitator	Love 146 Phnom Penh, Cambodia	Email and in-person
Antonia Luedeke Child Protection Specialist	UNICEF, New York, USA	Email
Marcos Nascimento, PhD Researcher	University of Rio de Janeiro Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	Email
Karoline Davis Associate Director – Gender and Development & Asia Pacific Gender Coordinator	World Vision India Chennai, India	Email

Name	Organisation	Form of Contact
Yvonne Rafferty, PhD Professor	Pace University New York, USA	Email and in- person
Yeva Avakyan Senior Gender & Evaluation Advisor   Child Development and Protection Team	World Vision US	Email

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> For example, the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)'s Programme of Action, and the UN 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action denounce violence and call for measures to protect all human beings, especially women and girls, from all forms of violence. Article 19 of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) calls on State Parties to take all appropriate measures, including through education, to protect children from all forms of violence, including sexual abuse. UN Resolution 61/143 (2007) regarding the 'Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women', calls upon the international community, including the United Nations system, to enhance national efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, including through 'the sharing of guidelines, methodologies and best practices'.
- <sup>2</sup> The World Report on Violence against Children was published in 2006, and brought significant attention to the school as a forum for violence against children. United Nations. 2006. World Report on Violence against Children. New York: UN. See also: United Nations. 2006. In-depth Study on all Forms of Violence Against Women. New York: UN. Leach, F. and Dunne, M. with Salvi, F. 2013. School-related Gender-based Violence: a global review of current issues and approaches in policy, programming and implementation responses to School-related Gender-based Violence (SRGBV) for the Education Sector. Background research paper prepared for UNESCO. University of Sussex, November 2013.
- <sup>3</sup> For example, the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2013 focused on the 'Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls', with prevention and the provision of support services to victims/survivors being a primary focus. In preparation for the CSW meeting, an experts meeting on GBV was held in Bangkok in September 2012, in order to explore ways of preventing and addressing GBV through a multi-sectoral approach with a focus on legal and policy guidelines. Education was identified as one of the priority areas for strategic intervention. The UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) has called for concerted action to develop national plans to end SRGBV. See: <http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/03/gender-based-violence-is-a-major-threat-to-girls-education-says-ungei/>. See also: 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. Working: Plan International.
- <sup>4</sup> Some of the key terms employed in the search included: school violence, abuse, physical violence, sexual abuse, psychological violence, bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- <sup>5</sup> The Asia and the Pacific region refers to the specific UNESCO definition, which does not forcibly reflect geography. It refers to the execution of regional activities of the Organization: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Niue, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Macao, and Tokelau\* (\*associated member). Complete list of countries available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/worldwide/asia-and-the-pacific/>
- <sup>6</sup> The Consultant conducted a comprehensive internet search using Google search engine for reports, publications, project documents, evaluations and mid-term programme evaluations. In addition, a search was undertaken for documentation on school-level interventions, community-level interventions and multi-sectoral approaches to SRGBV in the Asia-Pacific region.
- <sup>7</sup> The Open University Library database available at: <http://www.open.ac.uk/> and <https://msds.open.ac.uk/students/index.aspx>
- <sup>8</sup> For a complete list of individuals contacted, please see Annex II in this review.
- <sup>9</sup> Leach, F. and Dunne, M. with Salvi, F. 2013. School-related Gender-based Violence: a global review of current issues and approaches in policy, programming and implementation responses to School-related Gender-based Violence (SRGBV) for the Education Sector. Background research paper prepared for UNESCO. University of Sussex, November 2013.
- <sup>10</sup> For more information on the meeting visit: <http://www.unescobkk.org/news/article/countries-come-together-to-share-good-practice-and-lessons-learned-on-school-related-gender-based-vi/>
- <sup>11</sup> Leach, F. and Dunne, M. with Salvi, F. 2013. School-related Gender-based Violence: a global review of current issues and approaches in policy, programming and implementation responses to School-related Gender-based Violence (SRGBV) for the Education Sector. Background research paper prepared for UNESCO. University of Sussex, November 2013.
- <sup>12</sup> UNICEF, Plan West Africa, Save the Children Sweden West Africa and ActionAid. 2010. Too Often in Silence: A report on school-based violence in West and Central Africa. See also: Fulu, E., Warner, X., Miedema, S., Jewkes, R., Roselli, T. and Lang, J. 2013. Why Do Some Men Use Violence Against Women and How Can We Prevent It? Quantitative Findings from the UN Multi-country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok: UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV.
- <sup>13</sup> United Nations General Assembly. 2007. Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women (61/143). Available at: [http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/policy\\_and\\_research/un/61/A\\_RES\\_61\\_143\\_EN.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/policy_and_research/un/61/A_RES_61_143_EN.pdf) (last accessed on February 24, 2014)
- <sup>14</sup> While all countries have ratified the CRC, not all countries have signed it. Those in the region that have not signed the CRC include: Cambodia, India, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nauru, Singapore, Tajikistan, Thailand and Timor-Leste.
- <sup>15</sup> UNICEF. Desk Review of Violence Against Children in Education Settings in South Asia. Concept Note. Kathmandu: UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia.
- <sup>16</sup> Greene, M., Robles, O., Stout, K., and Suvilaakso, T. 2012. A Girl's Right to Learn Without Fear: Working to End Gender- Based Violence at School. Toronto: Plan Canada. UNESCO. 2012. Good Policy and Practice in HIV and Health Education. Booklet 8: Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying. Paris: UNESCO.
- <sup>17</sup> UNICEF. 2009d. State of the World's Children. New York: UNICEF.
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- <sup>20</sup> Barker, G., Pawlak, P. 2012. Hidden Violence Preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of adolescent boys. Case Studies and Directions for Action. A Briefing Paper by MenCare. Washington, DC.
- <sup>21</sup> News report by the Belfast Telegraph, Darker side of the Maldives: Public lashings, religious extremists and a gay blogger with his throat slashed, April 11, 2013. Available at: <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/darker-side-of-the-maldives-public-lashings-religious-extremists-and-a-gay-blogger-with-his-throat-slashed-29189177.html> (last accessed on February 7, 2014).

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- 37 Statement from a member of a group labelled as gang interviewed as part of the study. Please see: The Asia Foundation and Maldivian Institute for Psychological Services, Training and Research. 2012. *Rapid Assessment of Gangs in Malé*. Colombo: The Asia Foundation.
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