

Leadership Commitment TO PREVENTION OF Violence against CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS

DEVELOPED BY:
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75%
of children in schools are disciplined by caning

STATUS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS

Violence against children in schools undermines children's safety, and inflicts physical, emotional, and psychological pain. This induces fear in learners and results in poor performance and low retention in school.

Types of violence against children in schools



Source: Policy Paper on Violence Against Children in Schools-Education Local Expertise Centre Uganda [ELECU] June 2017

Causes of violence against children in schools



Drug and substance abuse



Negative perceptions on disability



Parents and teachers perceptions and attitudes to discipline

Government and civil society initiatives to address violence against children in schools

The Ministry of Education and Sports, together with development partners and religious institutions have implemented programs to prevent violence against children in schools including:

- Policy on inclusive education (Under Cabinet review)
- The Basic requirements and Minimum Standards for Education institutions (MoES)
- Girls Education Movement and Safe Schools Environment (UNICEF)
- The Children's Rights Club (Save the Children)
- Good Schools Program (Raising Voices)
- Learn without Fear (Plan Uganda)

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS

- Cultural beliefs and practices that undermine children's rights including those with disability
- Societal acceptance of violence against children as part of the learning process
- Collapse of traditional social networks which has eroded the family and community support systems that ensured safety and security of children
- Poverty which makes children more prone to economic and sexual forms



The main perpetrators of violence against children, including those with disability, are parents, peers, teachers and other school staff, relatives, and other adults in schools and surrounding communities.

How can we prevent violence against children in schools?

- Create violence-prevention programs
- Improve capacity of duty bearers to enforce children's legal protection
- Create a child-friendly and safe school environment that is inclusive and responsive to children with special needs
- Recruit and train teachers in child-friendly programming and children's rights including those with special needs
- Ensure fair remuneration and good working conditions; develop school regulations and accountability mechanisms
- Sensitize parents, teachers, students and communities about violence against children.



- **Encourage change in attitudes and socio-cultural norms:** Examine norms that perpetuate violence against children including those with special needs, offer alternative modes of discipline to parents and teachers, and train all school staff in non-violent approaches to education.
- **Introduce gender responsive programming:** Ensure that lessons and teaching materials promote gender equality by introducing a gender dimension in life-skills lessons for both boys and girls. Train teachers and other staff to address gender discrimination and gender-based violence.
- **Raise parents' and teachers' awareness of the risk of cyber-bullying:** Introduce initiatives in schools to encourage informed and responsible online behavior for children.
- **Share global good practices:** Reinforce international co-operation, coordination, and sharing of knowledge of good practices, programs and evidence-based research to end violence against children.



“Every child, including those with disability, has a fundamental right to education. This education needs to be delivered in a conducive and safe learning environment that is free of violence.”

What can government do to prevent violence against children in schools?

- **Utilize existing data and research on VACiS for policy reformation:** Government agencies should use research evidence as a basis for engaging policy makers and implementers on the legal and policy issues related to VACiS.

Ministry of Education should review key laws and policies and incorporate provisions of VACiS in a school environment with focus on the Education Act and the Penal Code Act. The review will need parliamentary amendments and the process should begin with lobbying the relevant parliamentary committees –the Parliamentary Committee on Education and the Committee on Children.

Ministry of Education should strive to promote mandatory reporting of VACiS legal and policy provision and expeditiously enforce it in key ministries and government agencies. This should be handled in tandem with the policy review and integration of prevention as a strategy in VACiS.

- **Implement the National Strategic plan on VACiS:** Government should allocate resources to VACiS programs by lobbying parliament and the support of education funding partners. These resources should support the establishment of the Technical Implementation Unit on VACiS within the Ministry of Education and build its capacity to coordinate the implementation of the National Strategic Plan and its associated National Action Plan.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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