

Safe from Violence in Schools

A case study on prevention of violence in
Ugandan schools through ‘Scouting for Peace’



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Authors: Semine Lykke Brorson (Peacebuilding M&E Specialist, UNICEF Uganda) and Jane Strapola Awuor-Mala (Peacebuilding Research Consultant)

Principal Editor: Dr. Monica Llamazares (Peacebuilding Specialist, UNICEF Uganda)

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Executive Summary

The Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy (PBEA) programme is an innovative programme that addresses drivers of conflict through education, and promotes peacebuilding through education sectors interventions and places great emphasis on generating evidence and identifying best practices through inquisitive research. Evaluative case studies such as this one are critical tools for the PBEA programme to demonstrate results. This case study critically examines the impact of a UNICEF-Uganda Scouts Association intervention tackling violence against children (VAC) in 560 primary schools across the 28 focus districts of the PBEA Program. This case study is intended to be used by UNICEF staff and all the partners implementing activities towards the prevention and response to violence against children presents field observations on the progress, challenges and lessons necessary for strengthening the efforts towards the prevention and response to the incidence of violence against children in schools (VACiS)¹.

The intervention was developed as a response to prevalent forms of direct and indirect violence against children in schools that not only undermine fundamental rights of children in Uganda, but is also one the main causes of school dropout and low attainment in education. Moreover, violence against children in Uganda is sustained by prevalent cultures of violence in communities and homes that fuel conflict and undermine social cohesion. Using VAC interventions in school as an entry point to promote collaborative action between schools, communities, and district authorities to tackle the issue was another key feature of the intervention, which was underpinned by a theory of change proposing that: *'If schools are used as platforms for bridging community divisions (ethnic/tribal, religious, gender) through collaborative partnerships between institutions, learners, parents, community and civil society, then education can contribute to building peace in targeted communities through increased social cohesion.*

The intervention aimed to reduce and prevent direct and indirect forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment, sexual and gender based violence, neglect, bullying, discrimination, and verbal abuse, amongst other, through the roll out of a Scouting for Peace methodology that included VAC prevention and reporting capacity development across the Scouts district and school structures, and school and community-based sensitization activities such as theatre and scout camps. The case study examines the impact of these interventions focusing around three key areas of change: child perspectives on change(s) in VACiS and experience with reporting; capacity of teachers to prevent and address violence against children in schools; and capacity of the targeted parents and community members to prevent and address violence against children in schools and around school.

The case study is based on a mixed-method assessment comprising quantitative baseline and end-line surveys among teachers and parents in three sampled Districts (Amuru in Northern Uganda, Bundibugyo in Western Uganda and Kaabong in Karamoja Sub-Region). Moreover a participatory, qualitative assessment was conducted among teachers, parents and children in target schools at the end of the project period. The study finds changes across three areas. The first is empowerment of children to report and respond to violence against children, and to actively play a role in contributing to peacebuilding in the educational environment. Constraints for children to reporting of VAC cases has been addressed by promoting the respect and attention given to children reporting such issues, and the credibility that adults in their environment ascribe to such testimonies from children. Further, the Scouting program is found to enhance the space for children to freely express themselves to teachers, which is identified as a critical component for fostering the

¹ The abbreviation VACiS is used to denote violence against children that takes place in or in relation to education, i.e. violence in schools, violence outside schools relating to education, violence committed by perpetrators affiliated with schools. The abbreviation VAC generally denotes violence against children, and is in this case study used to represent violence that is not within or affiliated with schools, such as parental violence against children or other forms of violence in the community.



© UNICEF / Michele Sibiloni. PA young boy looks at a poster on violence against children at Alere health centre II.

ability of a child to report on VACiS without fear. Further, the interactions among children at school on VAC is found to have promoted confidence to report, which in Karamoja has been manifested by cases where children have reported cases of VAC directly to the police.

Children interviewed at target schools in Bundibugyo and Amuru Districts indicated that they had experienced personal empowerment to influence fellow children and adults on VACiS prevention and response. These children explained that through scouting they gained the confidence necessary for action and skills in peacebuilding. Trust-building is found to be paramount for reporting in a context where teachers very often are seen as unapproachable authorities. Across the three Districts where children have been interviewed, there are records of children experiencing that their involvement in Scouting for Peace has contributed to their becoming role models, and that they utilize their skills as intermediaries between other children. Responses from interviewees indicate a trend of spillover from the children that are directly engaged in the Scouting for Peace initiative, to children inside and outside the school who learn and acquire skills through observation.

In the course of the study, examples of children taking action within schools and as response to incidents outside schools emerged. Head Teachers, teachers and parents interviewed during the FGD sessions explained that the *Little Magnet Theatre* is an effective instrument to open the dialogue between teachers, children and parents through presenting plays, songs and poems that portray the key problems children encounter. Further, the study has come across examples of children taking action on risks against children by involvement in conflict management and acting upon knowing of cases of abuse such as forceful early marriages.

An important element of the Scouting for Peace project has been capacity development among teachers. This has taken place through a cascading training model. Trained teachers have been, along with head masters who act as school patrons, the focal points within schools, and have facilitated school-level activities. In the one-year period that has lapsed in between the baseline and end-line exercises, teachers indicate a reduced space of acceptability of violence in the school environment. There is a reduced proportion of teachers admitting to ever having used violence against children at the school from 67% to 59%. Teachers' capacity to prevent, report and respond to cases of violence has been demonstrated through practices of schools referring cases to Police and Probation Department, and by teachers taking initiative to follow-up cases with parents.

There appears to be an increased understanding among teachers of the consequences for children of use

of physical and emotional violence. While the actual use of caning as a punitive method remains high, entry points to challenging sustained cultures of violence in schools have been created. An interesting shift is moreover seen in relation to perpetrators of violence against children at schools. Teachers report a minor reduction of use of violence by teachers, while pupil-on-pupil violence increasingly is reported to be the main type of violence at schools. Moreover, there has from 2015 to 2016 been a reduction in a category of 'others' being main perpetrators of violence at schools from 28% to 13%, which has been found to represent a drop in prevalence of parents while present at schools committing violence against children in the school environment.

The intervention is based on acknowledgement of the important role of relationships, collaboration and trust between education stakeholders to foster safe and protective school environments. The program has purposefully engaged in promoting stronger interactions between schools, parents and communities and infusion of VAC prevention initiatives into this collaborative engagement. Responses from parents indicate that from 2015 to 2016 awareness of the Scouts' presence in schools and their work on VAC prevention has increased. There are indications of increased parent-school interaction, with a reduction in proportion of parents indicating to 'never' meet their children's teachers from 14% to 7% and an increase in proportion that interacts with teachers 'a few times a year' from 34% to 46%. Further, parent respondents mention to increasingly participate in Parent-Teacher Association activities, extra-curricular activities, School Management Committee and disciplinary meetings.

The proportion of parents who find it unacceptable for a teacher to use violence against children went up from 12% to 17%. At the same time, a greater proportion of parents indicate willingness to approach the school and advocate for alternatives to corporal punishment (56% in 2015 and 75% in 2016). There is a noticeable trend of parents increasingly supporting disciplinary and judicial action towards teachers that have committed acts of violence against children. The Scouting for Peace model is said to have fostered community outreach activities by schools in support to VAC prevention and response.

The case study has consolidated critical evidence of how to effectively carry out school-based VAC prevention intervention and proposes the following recommendations to stakeholders in the sector:

1. **Cultivating a critical mass for school-level change** through targeted capacity development and mentoring interventions amongst school stakeholders to promote new norms of non-violence.
2. **Institutionalizing VACiS prevention at schools** by incorporating VACiS prevention interventions strategically into the formal structures of the education sector, which volunteer-based and co-curricular initiatives can supplement and complement.
3. **Pursuing collaborative local partnerships** by making coalitions of stakeholders in an area for coordinated, concerted efforts targeting various stakeholders with approaches ranging from awareness raising and capacity development over law enforcement and case response.
4. **Fostering dialogue on VACiS among school stakeholders** by infusing platforms and events where parents, teachers, children and school management with inclusive dialogue practices that creates a safe place to articulate problems and solutions for violence against children
5. **Addressing constraints for reporting** by reducing the fears, reluctance, lack of trust and risk of reprisals for persons with knowledge of violence and abuse, and by strengthening capacity of duty bearers to receive and handle reports with confidentiality and due process.
6. **Building capacity to prevent child-on-child violence** by strengthening peacebuilding competencies of children through formal and co-curricular learning strategies, and by building capacity of pupil leaders to be role models on non-violence.

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Acronyms

DEO - District Education Officer

FGD- Focus Group Discussion

KII - Key Informant Interview

MoESTS - Ministry of Education, Science, Tecnology and Sports

PBEA - Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Program

P1-P7 - Primary school classes from Primary 1 to Primary 7

PTA - Parent-Teacher Association

RTRR - Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response Guidelines

SMC - School Management Committee

UPF - Uganda Police Force

VAC - Violence Against Children

VACiS - Violence Against Children in Schools

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1. Introduction



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The Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy in Conflict-Affected Contexts (PBEA) programme, funded by the Government of the Netherlands, is a four year programme (2012-2015) designed to strengthen resilience, social cohesion and human security in countries at risk of, experiencing, or recovering from conflict implemented in 14 countries globally. The PBEA programme is an innovative programme that addresses drivers of conflict through education, and promotes peacebuilding through education sectors interventions and places great emphasis on generating evidence and identifying best practices through inquisitive research. Evaluative case studies such as this one are critical tools for the PBEA programme to demonstrate results. This case study critically examines the impact of a UNICEF-Uganda Scouts Association intervention tackling violence against children (VAC) in 560 primary schools across the 28 focus districts of the Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy (PBEA) Program.

The PBEA programme was launched in Uganda in 2012 to consolidate and build peace through education sector, child protection, and youth engagement interventions implemented at national and district levels. UNICEF Uganda has promoted the integration of education and peacebuilding across policies and programmes of government and partners, and built capacity of institutions and communities to address conflict drivers. UNICEF has also promoted peace through collaborative education sector partnerships. In Uganda, the PBEA

programme has been implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Sports (MoESTS), local governments in the 28 focus districts and NGO partners. The 28 focus districts were prioritized based on results from the 2012 UNICEF conflict analysis² and include all districts in the Karamoja region (Abim, Amudat, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Napak), 12 districts in northern Uganda (Agago, Amuru, Arua, Gulu, Lamwo, Kitgum, Nebbi, Nwoya, Oyam, Pader, Yumbe and Zombo), and 9 districts in Western Uganda (Bundibugyo, Kabale, Kabarole, Kanungu, Kasese, Kisoro, Kyenjojo, Ntoroko and Ntungamo)³. Several civil society organisations have supported the implementation of the programme, including the organisation at the centre of this study: Uganda Scouts Association (Scouts).

The PBEA Scouts intervention aimed to reduce and prevent direct and indirect forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment, sexual and gender based violence, neglect, bullying, discrimination, and verbal abuse, amongst other. The intervention was developed as a response to prevalent violence against children in schools that undermine fundamental rights of children in Uganda and is one the main causes of school drop out in the country. Moreover, violence against children in Uganda is sustained by prevalent cultures of violence in communities and homes that fuel conflict and undermine social cohesion. Using VAC interventions in school as an entry point to promote collaborative action between schools, communities, and district authorities to tackle the issue was another key feature of the intervention

The Uganda Scouts Association is a long-term partner of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MoESTS), and its structure is embedded in the education sector at both district (through a district coordinator attached to the district education office) and at school (Head Teachers are Scouts leaders) levels. Moreover, the School-based and child-centred scouting carries out outreach into communities, providing a critically important link between districts, schools and communities to tackle violence against children in schools collaboratively and effectively.

2 Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy (PBEA) Programme, Highlights of 2014, UNICEF, Uganda

3 UNICEF PBEA Programme, Annual Report (2014:5)

2. Context:

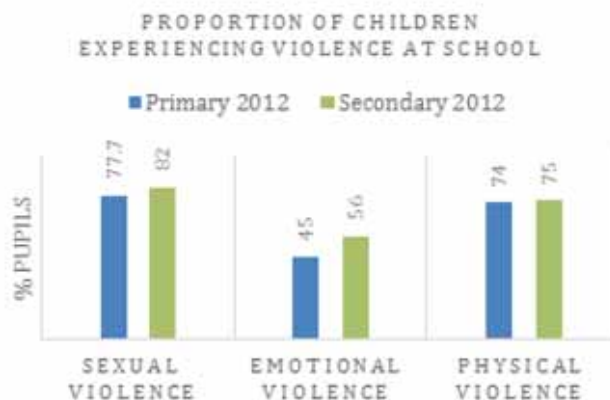
Violence against children in Ugandan schools

Access to education is one of the fundamental rights of every child, which should be delivered in a conducive and safe learning environment free from violence. However, studies in Uganda have revealed that violence against children in schools is widespread in both rural and urban settings.⁴

Violence against children in schools has been found to contribute to drop out and poor performance. It is further indicated that even with the ban placed on corporal punishment by the Ministry of Education, caning remains a common practice. However, most cases of violence against children in schools are not reported for various reasons including; limited understanding of children’s rights and responsibilities, societal acceptance of violence against children as part of learning, mismanagement of reported cases of violence against children, prevalence of harmful practices, absence of a recognized and harmonized mechanism on reporting and response to violence against children; and gaps in the existing laws on violence against children.⁵

Efforts have been made to gauge the scope and gravity of violence against children in school. While it is a highly sensitive matter to obtain reliable data about, attempts of mapping the prevalence have been made along with perceptions-based measurements of scale of the problem. According to randomly sampled children in primary and secondary schools across Uganda in 2012⁶, the frequency of children experiencing violence in schools calls for urgent action, with exposure to both physical violence and sexual violence being highly alarming:

Table 1: Proportion of children experiencing violence at school



4 Ministry of Education and Sports (May 2014:11), Reporting, tracking, Referral and Response (RTRR) Guidelines on Violence Against Children in Schools, The Republic of Uganda: Refers to violence against children in schools to include all acts of violence inflicted on children of school going age 3-18 years within the school setting. These includes ; acts of violence on children in schools and during school activities, acts of violence on children on their way from homes to schools, acts of violence on children on their way from schools back to their homes.

5 Ministry of Education and sports (November 2012: 11, 21-22), Assessing child protection / safety and security issues for children in Uganda primary and secondary schools, Republic of Uganda

6 Ibid.

According to the same study children aged 10-13 years and below 10 years were the most likely to experience emotional abuse by a teacher compared to other age brackets⁷, as exemplified in a statement from a girl in Eastern Uganda:

"Every teacher that comes in class hurls insulting words to us - especially academically weak pupils. They make us feel like we are useless. Some older pupils end up deserting schools because of this" - 13 year old girl, Mbale district

Moreover, verbal and emotional violence is found to often target humiliation of the gender, age, physical appearance, intellectual capacity or family background and status of a child, whereby the acts in addition to being violent can also be discriminatory.⁸ In addition to teacher-on-pupil violence, there are also reports of frequent use of violence among learners, including in ways that appear to be part of a system of school-endorsed violence as 'class monitors' are mentioned to cane other learners who make noise – with the acceptance of teachers. Further, teachers are reported to play a negligible role in managing conflicts between children and prevent and respond to violence between learners.⁹

Children's access to reporting of violence in schools was found to be at a very low level in 2012: 5% of children stated to report cases to parents, 8% to police, 5% to deputy Head Teachers, 41% to class teacher, 13% to senior male/ female teacher and 27% to Head Teachers. The main factors that hindered reporting were found to be fear of reprisal by perpetrators, lack of trust in available options, inadequate knowledge of where to report, lack of services such as help lines and lack of awareness by the children in their rights as enshrined in the national laws.¹⁰

Another method of grasping the scope of violence against children in schools has been through a perceptions-based survey on conflict, education and peace carried out by Harvard Humanitarian Initiative with the support of UNICEF in 2014. In this, more than 60% of the strata of young respondents in PBEA's target regions have indicated that violence and lack of school safety is a problem in schools:

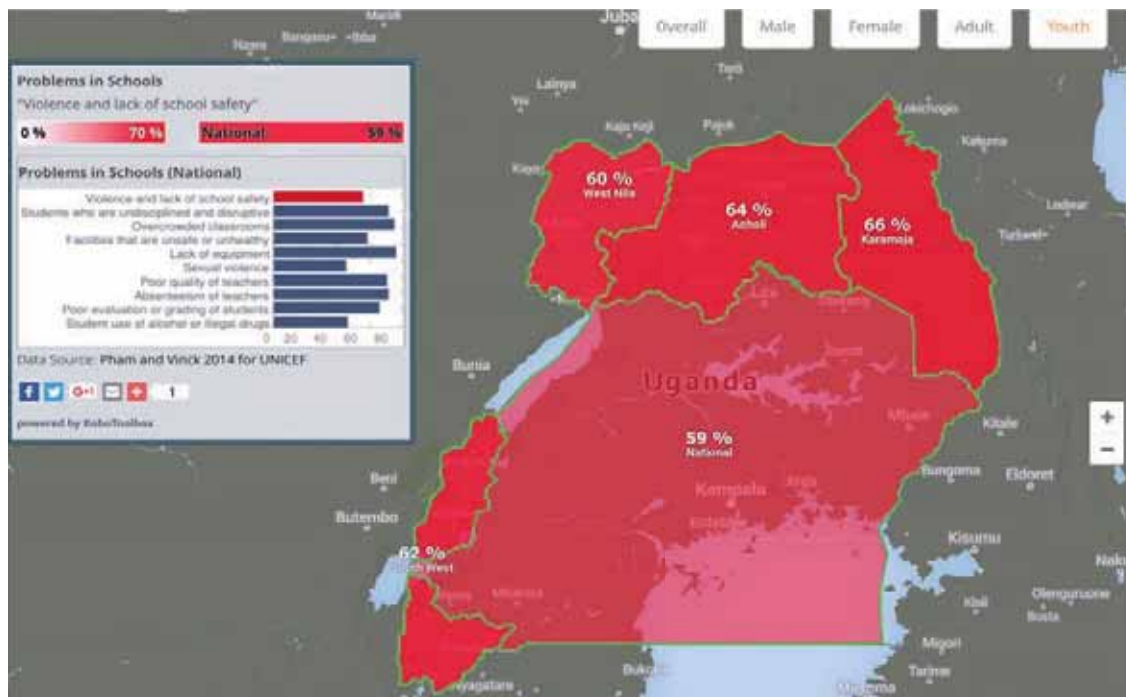
7 Ministry of Education and Sports (2012:42) Assessing Child Protection/Safety and Security Issues for Children in Ugandan Primary and Secondary Education, Kampala, Uganda

8 Ibid (2012: 42)

9 Llamazares, M. Lykke-Brorson, S., Malagala, A, Okot, B., Education, Conflict and Peace in Uganda : An Education Sector Conflict Analysis, 2014-2015

10 Ministry of Education and sports (November 2012: 11, 21-22), Assessing child protection / safety and security issues for children in Uganda primary and secondary schools, Republic of Uganda

Figure 1: Map of youth respondents' perception of violence in schools being a problem



© UNICEF / Pham and Vinck 2014, <http://www.peacebuildingdata.org/interactivemaps/UGANDA2014>

Table 2: Geographical, gender and age break-down of prevalence of respondents indicating that violence is a problem in Ugandan schools (Pham and Vinck 2014)

| Problem | National average | Answers by region and gender | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------------------|------|------------|------|----------|------|-----------|------|
| | | Acholi | | South-West | | Karamoja | | West Nile | |
| | | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male |
| Violence and lack of safety in schools | 59% | 58% | 61% | 87% | 31% | 59% | 55% | 45% | 70% |
| Sexual violence in schools | 46% | 32% | 43% | 81% | 12% | 39% | 52% | 43% | 62% |

| Problem | National average | Answers by region and age group | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|---------------------------------|-------|------------|-------|----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | | Acholi | | South-West | | Karamoja | | West Nile | |
| | | Youth | Adult | Youth | Adult | Youth | Adult | Youth | Adult |
| Violence and lack of safety in schools | 59% | 64% | 56% | 62% | 52% | 66% | 53% | 60% | 57% |
| Sexual violence in schools | 46% | 40% | 36% | 51% | 45% | 42% | 42% | 49% | 54% |

Incidences of direct and indirect violence against children in schools in Uganda is observed to be compounded and supported by cultures violence in surrounding communities and homes. Violence against women and children is prevalent in areas that are also conflict-affected, either by legacies of recent armed conflict or by newer conflict drivers related to access to land and resources or grievances about exclusion and inequity. Crucially for conflict-sensitive education, violence against children in schools has negative impact on retention, learning achievements and completion, which in turn sustains patterns of inequity and exclusion.

3. Theory of Change

This intervention has been carried out with the aim of contributing to a safer school environment, in which children are protected from violence. The project strategy has been developed based on the underpinning theories of change:

If education authorities, schools, learners, parents, communities, and key civil society actors come together to promote 'safe schools' **then** cultures of violence will be challenged contributing to building peace in and around schools.

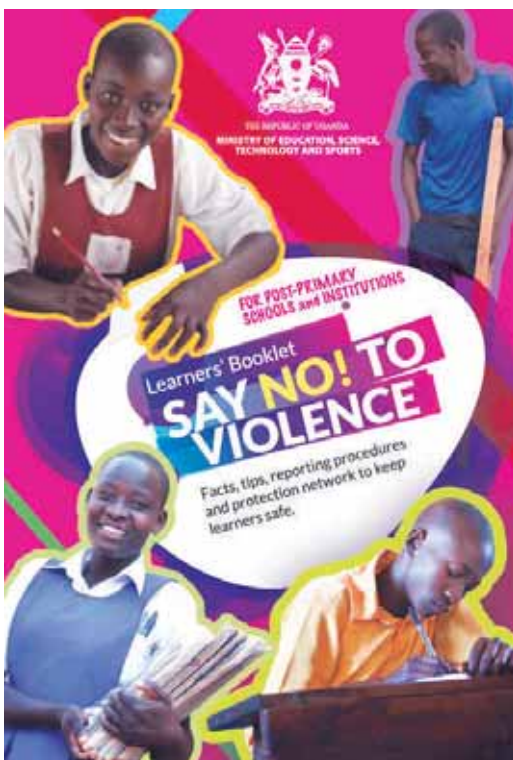
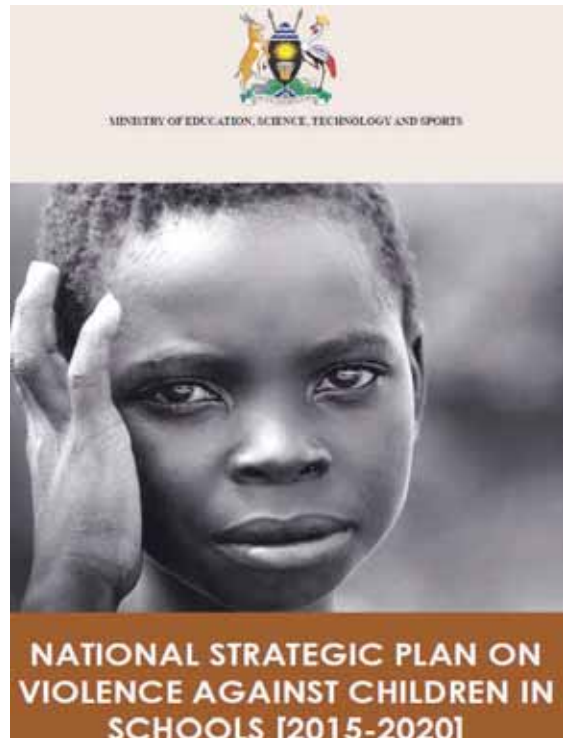
and

If schools are used as platforms for bridging community divisions (ethnic/tribal, religious, gender) through collaborative partnerships between institutions, learners, parents, community and civil society, **then** education can contribute to building peace in targeted communities through increased social cohesion

As such, violence in schools is looked at with a peacebuilding lens as not only acts of abuse but also as impediments to education to contribute to peaceful communities. The theory of change stipulates in the first instance to building capacities and systems in education to protect children from violence, and that safe and peaceful schools can be at the center of collaborative partnerships that in turn is able to contribute to peace and non-violence both within and beyond schools.

Program overview

In response to growing evidence of the endemic nature of violence against children in Ugandan schools, UNICEF through a cross-sectoral intervention engaging education and child-protection through the PBEA programme, supported the Government of Uganda to develop the National Strategic Plan on VACiS (2015-2020) and the Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response (RTRR) guidelines on violence against children in schools. A child-friendly version of the RTRR Guidelines has been developed for use at schools. UNICEF supported the establishment of an inter-sectoral committee on VAC (ISC), which brought together key stakeholders to collaboratively tackle the issue. Finally a toll-free child helpline was established to enable the safe reporting and referral of cases of violence against children. Broadly, the national strategic plan on VACiS provides the national overview on violence against children in Uganda; the conceptual framework, vision, objectives and guiding principles, the broad interventions, institutional, implementations and financing framework; monitoring and evaluation; and roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders. The RTRR guidelines on the other hand provide background information on violence against children in schools, legal and policy frameworks on VACiS in Uganda, challenges and success factors to Reporting, Tracking and Referral, preliminary interventions, purpose and guiding principles on RTRR, and forms for referrals and feedback.



The RTRR guidelines have been reinforced by the issuance of a MoESTS circular re-emphasizing the ban of all forms of violence in education institutions in Uganda. UNICEF's work on VAC prevention is thus rooted in the endorsement and publication of new and strengthened guidance on the national legal framework against violence in schools. UNICEF has supported a range of initiatives to break the culture of violence against children, and this case study looks in detail at Uganda Scouts Association's school-based interventions. It should, however, be noted that other interventions targeting normative and behavioural change of key stakeholders that have contributed to VAC results include Uganda Police Force (UPF) school-outreach, community dialogues (during which District Education Officers, schools, communities and children have come together to discuss issues including VAC prevention), as well as the previously mentioned toll-free Child Help Line to strengthen reporting, referral and response systems. These 'package' of school/community/district level interventions to promote conflict sensitive and safe education and collaborative partnerships of key stakeholders have provided a conducive environment for the VAC-specific interventions examined by this Study.

Scouting for Peace

The UNICEF-Scouts partnership, and the roll out of a 'Scouting for Peace' methodology in and around schools, was pursued to support the above policy and institutional efforts at school and community levels. Using the Uganda Scout Association countrywide network, the collaboration envisioned to help raise awareness about the Child Helpline and the documentation and dissemination of good practices on elimination of VAC in and around schools. UNICEF also played a key role in strengthening the capacities of Uganda Scout Association's countrywide volunteers to integrate conflict sensitive education to the Scouting for Peace Model. This involved trainings at national and district levels on peace building, and development and dissemination of policy guidelines on violence against children in schools and around schools leading to the development and implementation of action plans to the 28 focus districts of the PBEA programme.

Each district covered three days of training targeting 20 schools (560 schools in total), in which school-level focal points were trained on peacebuilding, RTRR guidelines and VACiS prevention. Subsequently these teacher scout leaders were responsible for leading school-level activities, which included formation of school clubs and implementation of Scouting for Peace modules with the scout members; implementation of peace camps for children; formation of school-community groups reaching out to non-scout children and parents; child-led dramas on VACiS through the *Little Magnet Theatre* approach and community outreaches. The intervention aimed to promote change around three groups of stakeholders, namely children, teachers and parents/community members.



© UNICEF / Stephen Wandera | A P5 pupil displays "Stop Violence" placard during 'Scouting for Peace' activities marking International day of Peace in Bundimagwara primary school in Bubukwanga sub-county in Bundibugyo district in western Uganda)

Study methodology

The study is based on a mixed method assessment, consisting of a baseline and endline implemented in April 2015 and May 2016 respectively and a qualitative and participatory assessment led by an external consultant in three sampled districts from November 2015 to February 2016.

Quantitative baseline and end-line

Early in the program period, in May-June 2015, a tablet-based baseline survey was carried out in 3 sampled Districts - Amuru District in Northern Uganda, Kaabong District in Karamoja and Bundibugyo District in Western Uganda. District selection was informed by criteria of exposure to conflict and conflict-recovery, and within Districts purposeful sampling of parents and teachers was conducted at 20 schools targeted by the Scout intervention. 1,217 respondents comprising 76% parents and 24% teachers in target schools were included in the baseline survey, and in May 2016 the survey was replicated in an end-line exercise. End-line data collection took place in the same Districts and schools, while the randomized sampling of parent and teacher respondents was repeated. The quantitative assessment only targeted adult respondents, whereby all data from children in this case study stems from qualitative, child-sensitive data collection as detailed below.

Qualitative outcome assessment

In December 2015 – January 2016 a participatory, gender sensitive and qualitative outcome assessment was carried out among teachers, parents, children, scout leaders, District authorities and other stakeholders such as a Police. In-depth data collection was collected in the same three Districts where the baseline and end-line surveys were conducted (Amuru, Kaabong and Bundibugyo), while additional data collection mostly from local government officials took place in 18 Districts across the focus sub-regions of the PBEA programme. Across the three Districts, qualitative data was collected in 10 schools with a total of 311 respondents (185 males and 126 females) participated, out of which 92 were children (44 male and 48 females). All quotes and qualitative data utilized below stems from this data collection in the mentioned locations and period.

Table 3: Overview of respondents in qualitative assessment

| Category | Male | Female | Total |
|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Children | 44 | 48 | 92 |
| Teachers | 14 | 8 | 22 |
| School Management committees/ parents | 64 | 56 | 170 |
| District Education Officers | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| District Inspector of Schools | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Senior Education Officers | - | 3 | 3 |
| Uganda Police Force Officers-in-charge of Child and Family Protection Units | - | 3 | 3 |
| Scouts District Executives Commissioners | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| Total | 185 | 126 | 311 |

Focus group discussions sessions were conducted with 170 parents, School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members (64 males and 56 females) covering 10 schools and another one with 8

Scouts leaders at a national scouting event. In total, 10 focus group discussion sessions were conducted using two sets of focus group discussion guides.

Key informant interviews were administered at three levels. The first level involved face-to-face interviews with head teachers, teachers and scout patrons; the second involved interviews with District authorities and the final level was by telephone to District Education Officers and Scouts officials from Districts that could not be reached physically.

At school level, the key informant interviews guide was administered to 22 teachers (8 females and 14 males) from 10 schools to enable sensitive issues be discussed away from the public. Another key informant interview guide was administered face-to-face to 10 district education officers, 4 District Inspector of Schools, three Senior District Education Officers and 3 officers in-charge of Child and Family Protection Unit of Uganda Police Force. The last set of key informant interviews were administered by telephone to 11 respondents comprising 5 District Education Officials and 6 Scout District Executive Commissioners.

Child-sensitive methods

Consent from children and their parents to participate in the study were sought through the head teachers and teachers who visited homes to engage with parents and children prior to the dates set for interviews. During the interviews, participatory tools customized to respect the ages of the children and their levels of internalization of issues, creating an enabling environment where all participants had a chance to air their views. Interviews were conducted in morning hours and ensured to end in time for children to return home for lunch-time. Throughout the interviews, teachers from the same school that the children attended were present as the critical duty bearers; with each interview conducted in the schools that the children attended.

The topic under investigation was introduced using the method of play code, an approach that helps children to relax, engage and partake in a community-based research processes in a non-threatening manner. The approach is made to appeal to children by building on Music, Dance and Drama (MDD) taught in Ugandan schools and utilizing visual tools. The play codes presented daily life scenarios involving children, teachers and parents and depicted various forms of violence against children on schools. A total of 10 scenes of play codes were presented to 92 children (44 males and 48 females) in 10 primary schools across Karamoja, Acholi and Western regions of Uganda. Twenty two (22) teachers from the 10 schools were also present.

The scene opened with a classroom set up: *A teacher is seen in class, walks round to check whether pupils have done the homework given to them the previous day. He finds out that one boy failed to do his homework while another forgot his book at home. A girl who come to school late knocks at the door and the teacher answers. All the three pupils are called names, caned and asked to kneel down throughout the lesson and this brings to an end the play code.*

A step by step discussion follows to decode the play by allowing the children to describe what they saw and heard, what they think was happening in the play. It is then probed further 'who among participants went through similar experiences before the schools closed last term?' and asking 'Please tell us what happened?'. As the children respond to these questions, their responses are recorded with intervals of group songs and dance to break the monotony and arouse their interest.

Findings

Child empowerment in prevention of violence and peacebuilding in education

Increased knowledge on abuse, rights and reporting

As part of the project, Uganda Scouts Association has built on its existing embedded structure within the primary education system to form school-based clubs, in which the 'Scouting for Peace' methodology would be implemented by teachers trained under the intervention. This had an explicit aim of raising awareness among children about abuse and violent acts that are banned in Uganda, and to empower children with access to reporting pathways for cases to surface and be reported. The school clubs formed a basis for implementation of peace camps, which were implemented with specific emphasis on VACiS prevention. During the qualitative data collection, the District Executive Commissioner of Uganda Scouts Association in Kabarole District specifically mentioned that the peace camps were very important because they enabled the children to begin to nurture values around the unacceptability of children being victims of violence and the need to act collectively in addressing VACiS. The District Executive Commissioner for Scouts in Bundibugyo noted that due to the sensitivity affiliated with many VAC cases, and the risk of an individual child to be threatened or dominated to silence by a perpetrator, the school clubs make up an important social infrastructure for the children. He added that *'threatening a club is not as easy as threatening an individual child'*

The knowledge and skills that children acquire through scouting is stated to have played an important role in enhancing trust among children, and between children and community. Children interviewed at Bundibugyo District said that scouts are known to be honest and with upright values, therefore whenever they begin addressing issues related to VACiS, people pay attention to them. This statement was also echoed by a pupils who said:

'Being a scout is good. When people know you, they will always call upon you to help solve problems in and outside school. When you talk they listen and fellow children know that when you say something is bad, it is truly bad' - male pupil at Bundibugyo Junior school

As such, one of the constraints to reporting of VAC cases that the child-centered intervention has been addressed by promoting the respect and attention given to children reporting an issue, and the credibility that adults in their environment ascribe to such testimonies from children. Further, the Scouting program has been found to enhance the space for children to freely express themselves, which is identified as a critical component for fostering the ability of a child to report on VACiS without fear. Scouts trainers, children and teachers interviewed in three primary schools in Bundibugyo District, reported that camp fire sessions were held during the 'peace camps' to encourage participants to reflect and discuss behaviors and practices of children as well as adults.

In terms of acquisition of knowledge, interviewed children demonstrate awareness on links between the roles and behaviors of children and adults in relation to both the prevalence of VAC and the potential of preventing it. They note that if a child works on his/her behavior, by obeying the rules set at home and school, and at the same time gaining confidence to report things that are not right, then violence against children can be reduced. Children interviewed at target schools in Bundibugyo and Amuru Districts noted that they had experienced personal empowerment to influence fellow children and adults on VACiS prevention and response. These children explained that through scouting they gained the confidence necessary for action and skills in peace building. In the view of Scout trainers in Kabarole and Bundibugyo Districts, scouting builds the character of children by providing a road map of life, which – when applied - goes beyond the individual child to the wider society. As such, the foundation for changes in child-teacher interactions and children taking action on VAC prevention and reporting is found to have been laid in peace camps, where concepts of VACiS have been introduced and trust-building among children as well as between children and teachers have taken place.

Child-led reporting of violence

Interviews conducted across locations in Western Uganda, Northern Uganda and Karamoja Sub-Region with children, teachers, parents, Scout officials, District Education Officials and Police, indicated that there is a greater understanding among children on the methods and importance of reporting cases of VACiS. Children at Kabuga, Amuru Lamogi and Bundimagwara Primary Schools indicated that the place they would turn to for reporting depends on who the perpetrator is. For instance at Bundimagwara Primary School, children noted that if a teacher is the perpetrator, then they will not report to an authority within the school, but outside. Likewise, they said that when parents are the perpetrators, then they will report to someone outside the home to avoid jeopardizing their safety, including turning to fellow pupils, a teacher and scouts.

Trust-building is found to be paramount for reporting in a context where teachers very often are seen as inaccessible authorities. Children interviewed in Amuru District explained that reporting to a friend of a pupil who is a scout member, as "teachers are very strict and this makes it difficult for to report to them". When probed, children further elaborated that this makes it difficult to feel free to open up to teachers. Further, children expressed a constraint in reporting of cases directly to teachers because of experiences that "teachers do not keep secrets", meaning that children experience that practices of confidentiality and due sensitivity may not be fully protected within the school setting. This underscores the relevance of effective protective networks within schools and capacity development of school stakeholders on reporting and case management practices. Children in Amuru Districts elaborated that they in many cases prefer to share reports with friends in school and then rely in a friend to find "a good teacher" who he or she can confide in. In Amuru, Bundibugyo and Kaabong Districts, schools with and without functional school-level scout clubs were visited, and it appears that through the scouts' intervention, teachers' living up to this in the eyes of the children has been strengthened.

An example of how the relationship between teachers and pupils helped reveal information for VACiS prevention in a target school was encountered in Pajar Primary School in Kaabong District, where a 10-year-old boy reported a case of children being exposed to pornography by a man. When this teacher from Pajar was interviewed, he said:

'When this 10-year-old reported to me, I went straight to the head teacher who called upon the police officers at Kaabong requesting for quick intervention. The Police acted very fast and this man was arrested in the same place the 10-year-old had mentioned. He was taken to court and charged. He is now serving a jail sentence and we are happy because our children are safe'

Interactions among children at school on VAC is found to have promoted confidence to report, which in Karamoja has been manifested by cases where children have reported cases of VAC directly to the police posts. This was reported during the key informant interview at Lodiko Police Post in Kaabong where the officer-in-charge stated that the post had received children coming to report on various forms of VAC and neglect including cases of parents not paying school fees or buying books, forced marriages and child labour and exploitation. In Bundibugyo District, the Police expressed a trend of children coming to report cases of child labour, as was also expressed by a scout member in P4 at Bundimagwara Primary school:

'I went to the police to report that my friend's mother and father stopped him from attending school because they wanted him to go to collect Cocoa. But also, he was taking care of the small child. So last year I went straight to Bubukwanga Police Post and I told them that my friend was going to bring cocoa and not going to school. So the police listened. When I finished, the police went and arrested the mother, so now they cannot stop my friend from going to school. He is in school until we close school'

Police in Kaabong and Bundibugyo stated that, although some parents were not willing to come forward and give evidence, particularly in cases of early marriage, actions have been taken to swiftly address reported cases and for the affected children to return to school. Successes in arresting and prosecuting alleged perpetrators based on reporting from children was also reported by the District Education Officer of Nakapiripirit and the officer in charge of Bundibugyo Child and Family Protection Unit.

Child-to-child mediation and conflict management

Across the three Districts children interviewed note that their involvement in Scouting for Peace has contributed to their becoming role models, and that they utilize their mediation and conflict management skills to support other children. Scouts in schools in Bundibugyo District mentioned that the program has empowered them:

"Things changed when I joined Scouts. Being a Scout is good, when people know you, they will always call upon you to help solve problems in and outside school. When you talk they listen, and fellow children know that when you say something is bad, it is truly bad" - P7 scout in Bundibugyo

Personal empowerment has also been linked by children to changes in practices that they have adopted through the guidance of scouting, as a P6 pupil scout leader in Bundibugyo states:

"Before we become scouts, we stole, we cheated teachers and parents, we fought and disrespected adults and fellow children, now we are different, a scout is not allowed to do these bad things" – Male P6 scout leader in Bundibugyo

Scout officials in Kabarole and Amuru Districts expressed that scouting promotes values of thinking of others, leadership and setting direction. As they have observed such changes in the scout members they also narrate that in the process other children - whether scouts or not - learn from them. Responses from interviewees indicate a trend of spillover from the children that are directly targeted to children inside and outside the school who learn and acquire skills by watching what the scouts do. In the words of a scout official, this is how Scouting for Peace values spreads across schools and villages influencing non-scouts who are learning and modelling the values, characters and behaviours of scouts in the programme.

Notably, with good behaviour and character displayed by the scouts, fellow children, teachers and parents eventually see the Scout members as role models. When asked how scout members in school were helping to contribute to peace in the school environment, Scout trainers and teachers at Bundimagwara and Kabuga primary schools in Bundibugyo said that children develop confidence in the scouts, allowing them to provide counsel to those who engage in conflict promoting activities and risky behaviours. Interviewed children such as female P7 scout leader at Bundimagwara Primary School in Bundibugyo District shared the same sentiments regarding the work they as scouts were doing to positively affect the behaviours of their fellow pupils:

'We the scouts call the children here in school when they fight others, steal things belonging to other people, or disturb teachers. Some even destroy school property. When we call them, like we are taught at the peace camp, we tell them why it is bad to do those things, and many accept because they know we are helping them, and in our school many are copying the behaviour of scout people and having good behaviour also' – female P7 scout leader in Bundibugyo

Child empowerment in prevention of violence and peacebuilding in education

In the course of the study, examples of children taking action within schools, and as response to incidents outside schools, emerged. The first strand of examples relate to the implementation of dramas under the title of Little Magnet Theatre, which scout clubs across schools venturing into as a means of child-led advocacy targeting pupils, teachers and parents. During interviews, children from three primary schools in Bundibugyo explained that during the peace camps they were taken through orientation on Little Magnet Theatre and performed music, dance and drama on peace, which they later on utilized to perform for parents and community members.

A Scout official for Bundibugyo and Kabarole Districts underlined that exposing children to real community settings to implement the knowledge and skills learnt during the peace camp is one of the practical ways of helping them engage with their communities. They also narrated how children pass peace messages, safe learning environment; reporting and responding to VACiS and around schools to communities. The

respondent stated that: *“the Little Magnet Theatre is a powerful way that children use to cleverly draw a line for any indications of VAC in the homes they visit with humour. Through the songs and dances they prompt children in some of the homes to open up and talk about the violence they have witnessed. It is this tenet of community scouting that children have used on return to their respective school and communities”*

Head Teachers, teachers and parents interviewed during the FGD sessions explained that the *Little Magnet Theatre* is an effective instrument to open the dialogue between teachers, children and parents through presenting plays, songs and poems that portray the key problems children encounter. After the presentation of a problem in the drama, questions are presented to parents to kick starts a dialogue in which children present issues affecting them and at the same time probing teachers and parents to develop action points committing them to the protection in school and at home. A head teacher in Bundimagwara Primary School in Bundibugyo District explained:

‘After the presentation of say a song, or drama, pupils discuss the message or problem highlighted, and talk about the causes and how it affects children, parents and teachers, this way, the bad behavior are easily discussed and each person present is helped to understand why they should change’

An example of a Scouting for Peace product in the Little Magnet Theatre includes the following poem:

The Peace Poem

Peace! Peace! Peace!
 What a good friend you are
 Homes, schools, districts and countries are missing you
 Where have you been and who scared you away?
 Peace! Peace! Peace!
 We have been crying for you
 You have left a vacuum in homes without you
 What a good friend you are

 Oh! Parents, teachers and stakeholders
 We need positive peace in our homes, schools and in our communities
 to promote development of our country [...]

[identity withheld]

P6 pupil and Scout leader at Bundimagwara Primary School

In Kyenjonjo District, the District Education Officer described how VACiS sensitization and training has been integrated in community gatherings such as church functions, weddings, fundraisers among others through the concerted efforts of the District Education Officer, the District Scouts Commissioner and community leadership structures including schools. The District Education Officer and Senior Inspector of Schools interviewed narrated that during such community gatherings, children use the *Little Magnet Theatre* to pose problems affecting children and challenge parents and the adult community to discuss and come up with practical solutions for protecting children in and around schools.

The capacity of children to organize and take action to prevent VACiS was also reported in Bundibugyo District. During the play code sessions with children from Bundimagwara, Kabuga and Bundibugyo Primary Schools, scout members reported that:

“when ethnic clashes between the Bakonjo and the Bamba hit Bundibugyo, children and youth jointly with the entire Scouts structure in the district intervened because communities from the opposing sides vandalized properties of schools they regarded as belonging to the ‘other side’, forcing children to flee”.

To prevent this form of violence against them, they organized peace dialogues at the community level, jointly with pupils that were not members of scouts, and walked door-to- door meeting fellow children with peace messages, leading to a final dialogue with teachers and school re-opening to allow children to resume their education:

‘At the end of this peace process by children, calm was restored, and parents began sending thank you messages to the District Inspector of Schools for bringing Scouts and UNICEF to support the crisis’ - District Inspector of Schools (and District Commissioner of Scouts) in Bundibugyo

Further, the study has come across examples of children taking action on risks against children beyond the school - particularly in relation to children being exposed to risks of forced marriages. In one of two examples the District Education Officer and the Senior Inspector of Schools in Kabarole explained how children in a primary school took action when a child in P7 in the school was at risk of an early, forced marriage:

“a pupil at the primary school whispered to her fellow pupil that her parents had taken dowry from a man who was going to marry her, that the traditional ceremony day had been set when the man would bring more goods to her parents. The friend returned to school, told the rest of the children, who organized and stormed the traditional marriage event, chasing the man who scampered for safety, and brought the girl in question back to school”.

While such response may not be as prescribed in the RTRR guidelines, it certainly demonstrates children who take it upon them to prevent something they find wrong, and corroborates the need for continuous crafting of trustful relations with adults to enable reporting of cases and response by the relevant stakeholders.

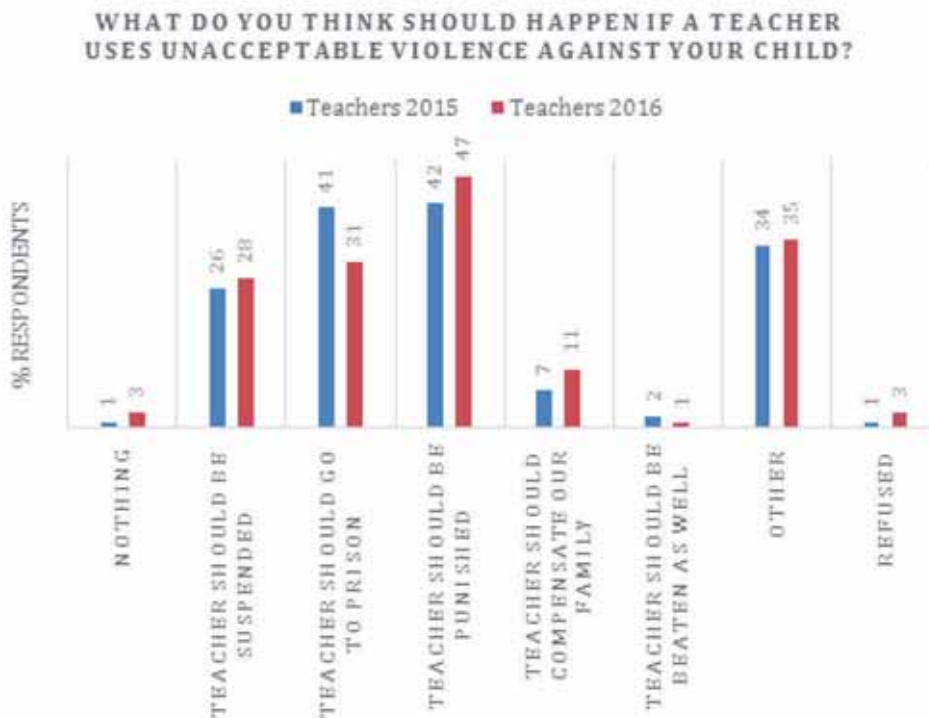
Changes at schools

An important element of the Scouting for Peace project has been capacity development among teachers. This has taken place through a cascading training model, where Trainers of Trainers have been trained centrally in partnership with UNICEF and they subsequently have carried out District-level trainings for teacher Scout leaders. These have, along with head masters who act as school patrons, been the focal points within schools, and have facilitated school-level activities. In this part of the study, changes in attitudes to violence, use of violent practices among teachers as well as practices of reporting and prevention of violence by teachers is in the limelight. The aim is to understand to what extent teachers demonstrate increased capacity to prevent and respond to VACiS. While the qualitative data among teachers mainly had been obtained from teachers that are part of the scouts movement, the quantitative data comprises responses from both scout and non-scout teachers in target schools.

Teachers' knowledge and awareness about VACiS

In the quantitative baseline and end-line exercises, teachers have been questioned about acceptability of various types of violent acts, circumstances of acceptability of violence and response by teachers. There has been a reduction in percent of teachers agreeing to the statement 'slapping or caning children is part of disciplining them' from 42% in 2015 to 34% in 2016. For the statement 'children learn more when teachers can discipline them by slapping and caning' there has been a change from 26% approving in 2015 to 21% in 2016. Moreover, since 2015 there has been increment in the proportion of teachers in favor of disciplinary action towards their peers who commit acts of violence deemed unacceptable.

Table 4: Teacher attitudes to response to cases of VACiS



In the one year period in between the surveys, there has not been significant evidence of a change in teacher's attitude towards general acceptability of violence; in one out of three sample Districts a moderate increase is observed in the fraction of teachers indicating that it under *no circumstances* is acceptable. In the same way, the circumstances under which teachers do find it acceptable have remained more or less constant with 'child

being disobedient' ranking highest as a circumstance where teachers find it acceptable to resort to violence.

In Amuru and Kaabong Districts there is a higher frequency of teachers indicating that violence leading to severe pain and sexual abuse should not be allowed. This could indicate an increase in awareness on these forms of violence over the program period, and teachers have on average in the baseline expressed a stronger attitude on not allowing these certain types of violence in schools than seen in the end-line.

Findings in the qualitative data collection suggests that trained teachers have gained a new understanding of how violence in schools affects learning for children - especially corporal punishment. For instance teachers and parents interviewed in Kabuga and Bundibugyo Primary Schools admitted to previously viewing corporal punishment as a needful learning incentive, but said that the situation is slowly changing with teachers beginning to use child-friendly language and alternatives to corporal punishment. These sentiments were also shared by the District Education Officers of Bundibugyo, Nakapiripirit and Amuru Districts respectively. In Bundibugyo this was corroborated by the Child and Family Protection Unit, who also narrated to increasingly experience teachers employing alternative methods to corporal punishment. Children in Bundibugyo District gave examples of alternatives to corporal punishment employed such as slashing grass, sweeping of classrooms, working in the school garden, sweeping office and picking rubbish within the school. The trained teachers have been the focal points of introducing VACiS prevention activities in their school in the scout clubs and through community outreaches. The qualitative data collection picked up some incidences of teachers experiencing this as difficult in an environment where they experiences resistance and criticism from teacher colleagues, who found it intrusive and leading to imbalances in students' preferring the particular trained teacher. Against this background, the strategies to promote school-wide norm changes can be further developed, i.e. by strengthening the links between the roll-out of VACiS prevention through informal, co-curricular forums such as the scouting structure, and the formal management structure from MoESTS over District Education Officers and school management

Role of teachers in reporting and responding to cases of violence and abuse

Schools are noted by parents to have increased reporting of cases of violence against children to Police and Probation Department, as it has gone up from being mentioned as one of the ways in which the school addresses violence by 16% in 2015 to 25% in 2016. This is supported by responses from teachers, where this form of response has gone up from being mentioned by 15% in 2015 to 22% in 2016. Parents also experience that schools increasingly reach out and talk to parents as a means to address violence against children, which has increased from mentioned by 56% to 64% of parents. In two out of three surveyed Districts, teachers follow the same trend and report that schools increasingly respond by talking to parents, which has gone up from 55% to 61% in Amuru and from 48% to 57% in Kaabong. Sadly, caning continues to be an applied punitive method at school, reported by more than a third of teachers across locations.

In the qualitative data, teachers have in some schools been found to play a critical role in protecting children within and outside school. According to teachers interviewed at primary schools in Amuru and Kaabong Districts, children staying under the care of extended relations like step-parents are particularly vulnerable. They reported to have witnessed cases where teachers have initiated follow ups with families when cases of mistreatment of children are reported. In Kaabong District interviewed children provided another example of reporting to a teacher leading to referral and response:

'Before we closed school, my friend in P7 class went to the hospital, and the doctor [abused her]. She came and said this to me, then we went to our teacher and told her what happened, our teacher went to head teacher, then our head teacher went to see a big person at that hospital, then the doctor was taken by police' - P7 female pupil in Kaabong District

Further, interviews with teachers and District Education Officers substantiated the procedures followed by teachers in cases where referrals are successfully made. For instance, teachers interviewed at three different

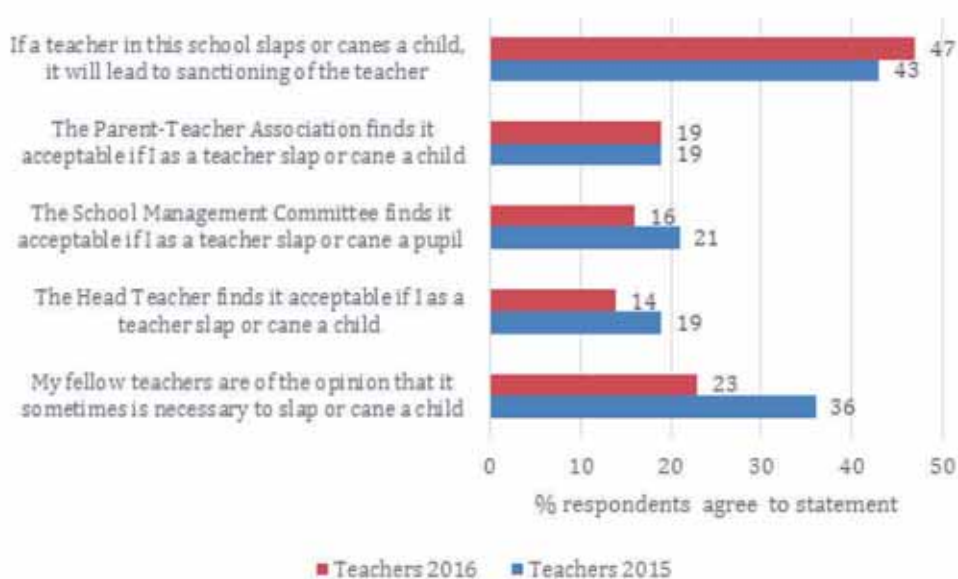
primary schools in Amuru and Bundibugyo Districts reported that, upon having received reports from children about rape, forced marriage, neglect and physical abuse of children by parents and neighbours, the report was quickly forwarded to the head teacher and a meeting held to agree on action prescribed by the RTRR guidelines, which the head teachers at the schools in question are familiar with. Depending on the character of the case it is referred to either the Police, District Education Office or parents are normally called for a meeting. A teacher elaborated with an example:

“Before the government issued guidelines on RTRR, we had no grounds for taking action when a child was violated. But now we do. For example, a 14-year-old girl in P6 at our school was raped by a 40-year-old man. We received this report and reported to our head teacher. On receiving the report he contacted the Police who carried out investigations to enable prosecution. Although the mother is not willing to have the man prosecuted, we are involving all the department and people whom we believe can convince her to allow the girl to received justice and protection” - Teacher at Komukonyu Primary School.

Changes in abusive and violent practices at schools

The baseline and end-line assessment have also explored teachers’ self-reported practices in relation to use of violence. Firstly, responses provided in 2015 and 2016 respectively indicate that teachers in the three samples Districts experience a reduced acceptability of use of violence in schools among all school stakeholders except Parent-Teacher Associations. The graph below shows the aggregate trend across Districts, while the specific rates of approval differs significantly from location to location.

Table 5: Teacher perceptions of school stakeholder’s acceptance of VACiS



Verbal abuse and emotional violence

While there is little evidence in the quantitative data to substantiate trend of reduction in verbal abuse by teachers, anecdotal evidence has emerged in the qualitative data. In Komukonyu and Amuru Lamogi primary schools interviewed teachers mentioned that teachers previously would say things such as *‘you are stupid’* and *“ogive”* (meaning too old to be in school), but this began to change following Scouts’ sensitization

meetings and activities on peacebuilding. A P7 girl in Komukonyu Primary School in Kaabong District said: "Our teachers are now good, they do not use those bad words on us". This was reinforced in interviews with teachers at the school, who noted their changed their methods of communication to children:

'After the training by the Police department, teachers who were using arrogant language and words towards children began to change. Before the training, some of us told children that they were stupid [now] they are using good statements that is now bringing the children closer to them. And one can also see that children now feel free to share information with teachers' - Female teacher at Komukonyu Primary School.

In this case, changes were related to the work of the Police Child and Family Protection Unit that carried out sensitizations at the school, while the relevance of scouts' activities came up during interviews with teachers at Komukonyu, Otwee, Kabuga, Bundimagwara, and Bundibugyo Junior Primary Schools. Here they mentioned trainings on conflict sensitive education, safe school environment, child rights, VACiS, peace camps by scouts, and the information about the RTRR, which they had accessed through Uganda Scouts Association.

Physical violence

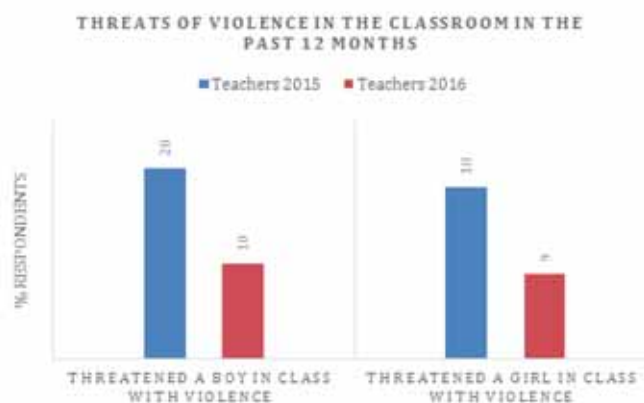
The sensitive character of use of violence inherently makes it a challenging subject to study. In this case study a number of proxy indicators as well as direct questions have been included in the baseline and end-line surveys, and practices have been further explored in the qualitative data collection.

There has been a drop from 67% to 59% of teachers stating that they have 'ever used violence against pupils'. This may very well be treated as a proxy indicator for that teachers in the time between the baseline and end-line are reacting to an environment where violence is less tolerated among school stakeholders. As indicated above, teachers decreasingly feel that school management and government bodies endorse use of violence, which – potentially in combination with an actual reduction in use of violence – could be the source of reduced willingness to indicate to have used violence at any point. A Head Teacher and Scout official in Bundibugyo described how the Scouting for Peace training influenced his views and practices at the school:

'We went to Kampala last year and attended a workshop where UNICEF taught us about conflict sensitive education. I was surprised because in the past, I was among the teachers who [...] really caned those who broke school rules. But during the Kampala training, UNICEF [explained] how children get affected when we caned them, that education can't be enjoyed in an environment where children are threatened with canning and other forms of abuse. So after getting this training and knowing the truth, we came back and I trained the rest of the teachers then organized a peace camp' – Head Teacher at Bundimagwara Primary School (and District Executive Commissioner for Uganda Scouts Association)

In addition there has been a drop in self-reported use of threats of violence by teachers against both boys and girls:

Table 6: Teachers' self-reported use of threats of violence in the classroom

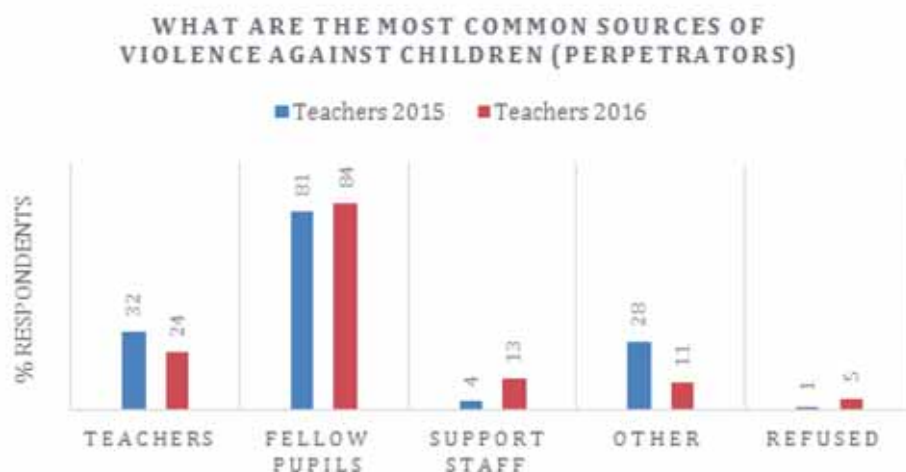


Among the teachers who indicate to have used violence against pupils at any point, the proportion that indicate to have done so in the past year has remained fairly constant at 85% in 2015 and 82% in 2016. The reasons indicated by teachers for having used violence against pupils has also remained constant, with 'indiscipline' being the most frequently mentioned circumstance. Teachers self-reporting to apply caning as a punitive method has remained steady at approximately a third of teachers, while there has been an increase in teachers resorting to suspension of pupils from school from 17% to 28%. A pupil in Bundibugyo District further provided an example of an alternative method of disciplining having been adopted in his school:

'Last year before the school closed, some children did not do homework, and some came late after the ringing of bell, but the teacher punished them by telling all of them to write a letter committing not to do the mistake again' - P4 scout leader at Kabuga Primary School in Bundibugyo District

In terms of frequency of violent incidents, it remains fairly constant how often teachers indicate to have witnessed violence in schools. Respondents' perceptions are that teacher-on-pupil violence has decreased whereas pupil-on-pupil violence and violence carried out by other school staff has increased. There is further a big reduction in a category of 'other' perpetrators, which has dropped from 28% to 11% between 2015 and 2016. A closer look at the details provided about the 'other' category reveals that this majorly represents a reduction in parents as perpetrators of violence against children at schools.

Table 7: Teachers' indication of perpetrators of VACiS



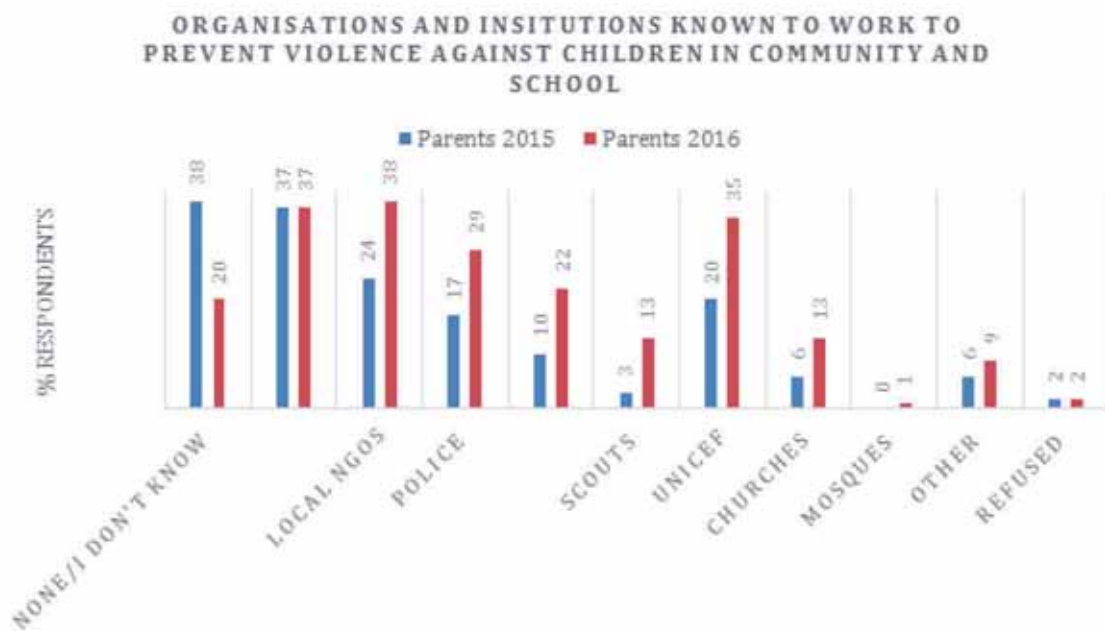
In relation to schools' response to incidents of violence, 22% of teachers in 2016 indicate that victims get assistance through referral to police and probation department against that being mentioned by 18% of teachers in 2015. Teachers themselves also indicate increased frequency of having had followed up witnessing cases of violence by talking to offenders. From 2015 to 2016 the prevalence of this course of action by teachers has increased from 54% to 69%.

School-parent-child interaction over VACiS

The intervention is based on acknowledgement of the important role of relationships, collaboration and trust between education stakeholders to foster safe and protective school environments. The program has purposefully engaged in promoting stronger interactions between schools, parents and communities and infusion of VAC prevention initiatives into this. Activities in pursuit of this has included The Little Magnet Theatre, formation of school-family groups and capacity development of teachers to follow-up cases of suspected abuse and violence.

In the year that has lapsed between the time of the baseline and end-line data collection, a shift is noted in knowledge about stakeholders engaged in initiatives to prevent violence against children. There are indications of noticeable increased visibility of actors that have been part of implementing PBEA-activities including the Police, Government actors (local and national), Scouts, UNICEF and churches, while there is also a significant drop of proportion of respondent who do not know of any actors working on VAC prevention in their surroundings. Responses from parents indicate that there from 2015 to 2016 has emerged greater awareness of the Scouts' presence in schools, and their work on VAC prevention. From the baseline to the end-line there is an increase from 39% to 51% of parents expressing to have heard about the Scouts' system in schools, and among these respondents there has been an increase from 41% to 66% that have heard about the Scouts' activities to prevent violence against children. When it comes to the ways in which parents experience Scouts' addressing violence against children the main change is seen in 'talking to parents', which in the baseline was mentioned by 36% and in the end-line by 46% of interviewed parents.

Table 8: Parents' knowledge of organizations and institutions working on VACiS prevention



Examples of parents and guardians taking initiative to take action to follow up issues relating to violence have emerged in the qualitative data collection. For instance in Otwee and Pajar Primary Schools in Amuru District, some parents and caregivers were able to make follow ups with teachers in an effort to address the fears that they had noted in their children as indicated in the testimonies below:

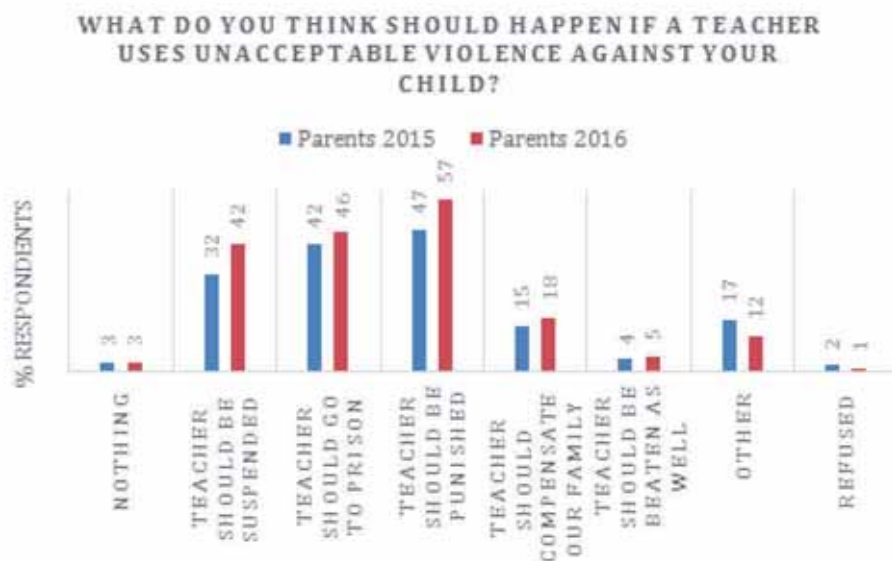
"I am a caregiver taking care of my small sister who is in this school. When I noticed that her performance had gone down I came to school and sat down with the class teacher to talk about the problem. In the discussion, I came to know that [my sister] was fearful regarding the punishment they were given whenever they failed in mathematics. So we agreed that she must not be beaten to enable us see whether she will improve. Now [she has improved] because the teacher stopped beating her" - Female caregiver at Otwee Primary School

A teacher also re-countered the number of parents that visited Otwee primary school to discuss with teachers cases of VACiS.

"Last year alone, there were over 10 parents, mostly mothers, who visited our school to tackle problems that their children had." - Teacher at Otwee primary school

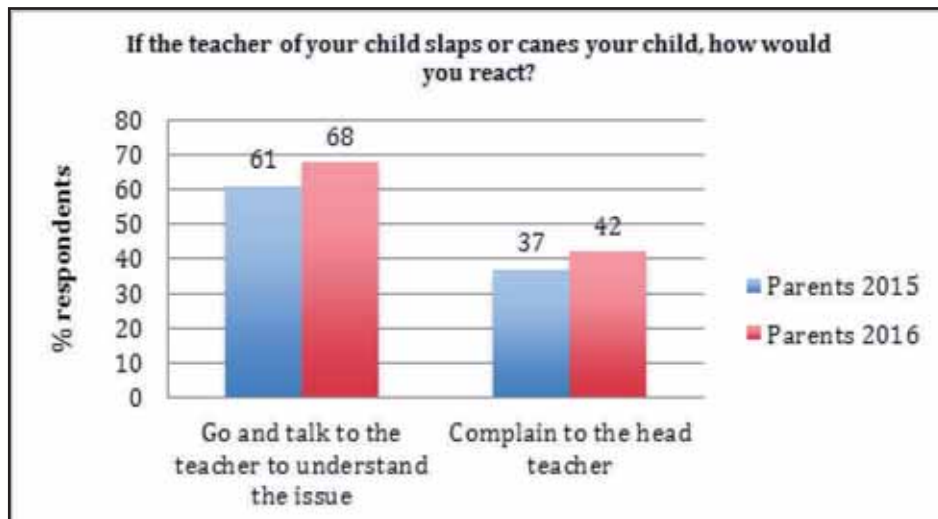
There is a noticeable trend of parents increasingly being in favor of disciplinary and judicial action towards teachers that have committed acts of violence against children, most noticeably seen in an increase in parents supporting teachers being suspended and punished in the event of committing acts of violence perceived as unacceptable:

Table 9: Parents' attitude to response to cases of VACiS



The proportion of parents who find it unacceptable for a teacher to under any circumstances to use violence against children went up from 12% to 17%. At the same time, a greater proportion of parents indicate willingness to approach the school and advocate for alternatives to corporal punishment (56% in 2015 and 75% in 2016). More parents express intentions of seeking dialogue with the school in case a teacher slaps or canes their child, as 42% would react by complaining to the Head Teacher against 37% that would do that in 2015. Further, the proportion of parents that would react by going and talk to the teacher to understand the issue has increased from 14% to 21%.

Table 10: Parents' self-reported response to cases of VACiS against their child



The qualitative data collection has revealed more about the details of the teacher and children-led community oriented activities. The Scouting for Peace model is said to have fostered schools having conducted community outreach activities. These have been carried out purposely to sensitize parents, families and communities in VAC in schools and at home, inform about mechanisms of prevention and reporting, including sharing of contact details of law enforcement personnel working with the Child and Family Protection Unit. The outreach process include activities such as song performances led by Scouts or hired bands, and processions of Scouts that march through communities carrying and signing messages culminating in a performance in a central location for the community. After each presentation, dialogue over VAC is stimulated. Questions are posed to community members to identify problems relating to VAC, analyze the causes and scrutinize the effects it has on children. Further, a collaborative process of developing practical actions for addressing the forms of violence presented and discussed is facilitated. Moreover, some skits and songs are presented to illustrate and disseminate ways in which parents, families and communities can prevent and address violence against children and encourages to create space within families for children to raise their voices about the violence they encounter in and around schools.

In addition to community outreach programmes, the existing platform of termly Parent-Teacher-Association (PTA) meetings held in schools have also offered entry points for sensitization on VAC and the role and responsibilities of parents. These meetings have been utilized as platforms for the District Education Officers, Police Officers from the Child and Family Protection Units, teachers, children and Scouts are given opportunity to sensitize parents and conduct sessions to develop action plans for preventing and addressing VAC.

Across the 18 districts reached in this study, there were indications of efforts by some parents working with teachers and other relevant authorities to report on VACIS. The Yumbe district education officer noted that

“A good number of parents in Yumbe district are aware of the RTRR guidelines and had begun reporting through EduTrac”.¹¹

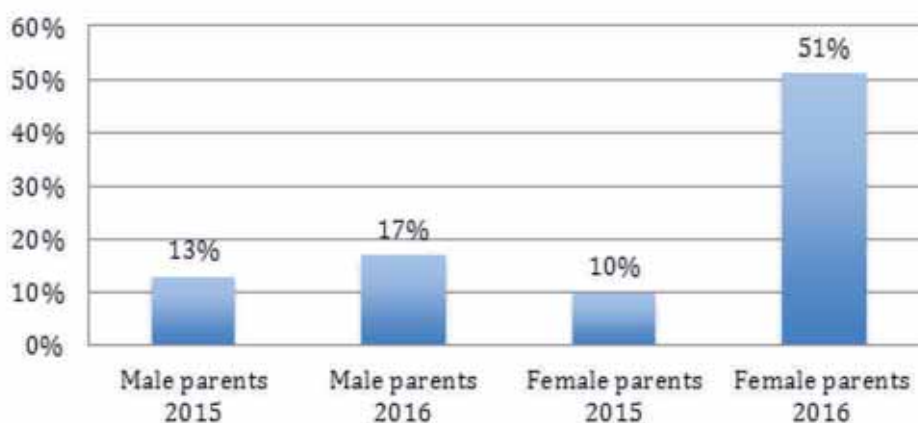
Further, some schools have as part of the program formed ‘school-family groups’ comprising scouts, other pupils, teachers and parents. ‘School-family groups’ are highlighted by an official in Ntoroko District to play an important role of reaching out to both children and parents and promote supportive and protective environments:

“Each [school-family group] is allocated a number of children whom they support with guidance, counselling and mentorship to enhance peace promoting behaviours through self-discipline, while at the same time influencing parents to prevent and address any forms of violence that may affect children in schools. These groups have played a critical role in peace building” - District Inspector of Schools, (and Scouts Patron) in Ntoroko district

There is a minor increment in parents that indicate less tolerance towards use of violence against children. In 2015 12% of parent said that it was ‘never’ acceptable for a parent to slap, smack or beat a child, which in 2016 had increased to 16%. It is found that this trend is mainly driven by an increase in zero tolerance among female respondents, indicating that there has been a greater attitude change among mothers than among fathers, and that as a result of the intervention there may be new intra-household dynamics and discussions over potential incidents of violence against children.

Table 11: Parents’ attitudes to parental use of violence against children

% parents stating that it is ‘never’ acceptable for a parent to slap, smack or beat a child



¹¹ EduTrac is a mobile-phone based data-collection system that helps the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MoESTS) collect data on education services at school level. Head teachers, teachers, and other administrators who work closely with the schools send data into the system about importance aspects of access and enjoyment of education rights by children and adolescents e.g. attendance, enrolment, teachers’ absenteeism, violence against children, etc

Learning and recommendations

The intervention under study has been implemented with the aim of fostering capacity of teachers, parents and children to contribute to reduction of violence in schools. It has capitalized on the role and existing structure of the Scouts movement in Uganda to build capacity and cascade sensitization within schools and across communities. In the process, a number of crucial learning points have been made, informing recommendations for enhancing impact for children in school-based VAC prevention interventions.

Cultivating a critical mass for school-level change

In many schools the starting point for the intervention has been widespread acceptance of the use of violence as a 'disciplinary method'. Through this intervention one teacher, a scout leader, in each target school has been trained and tasked to implement the school-based activities for children and to disseminate the messages to other teachers. In the qualitative data collection, a critical challenge to creating momentum and support for the VACiS prevention work was noted:

'The club weakened because my fellow teachers began accusing me of inciting the children against them, that the children preferred me as the best teacher so they gradually began sabotaging scouts activities' - Teacher and Scouts Leader in Gulu District

This experience points to the importance of stimulating a conducive environment for not only children, but also teachers to break the silent endorsement of violence, and to be empowered to challenge prevalent cultures of violence within schools. This intervention has been found to have influenced the extent to which teachers experience that the management structure around them accepts use of violence in schools, but that perceptions of acceptability of use of violence among teachers themselves generally has been more steadfast. For teacher-driven VACiS prevention interventions to be successful, it is found that the formation of a critical mass of advocates at the school-level is essential for success. In future interventions it may be considered whether trainings should target more teachers in each school, including Head Teachers, to effectively foster a school-level coalition that can drive change.

Institutionalizing VACiS prevention at schools

This intervention has employed a strategy of working with the volunteer-based structures of scout activism among teachers in schools. While important results have been achieved and the approach has strengths, it is also vulnerable to variance in localized dedication, motivation and initiative. Moreover, some Head Teachers have argued that scouting activities consumed a lot of time that would otherwise be spent on implementing activities defined in the school calendars. While it is suggested that volunteer-driven teacher initiatives are maintained, it should also be noted that prevention of the widespread use of violence in Ugandan schools is of such importance and urgency that it should not be relegated to volunteer, co-curricular activities in schools alone. With the backing of the Ministry of Education's formal publications on the ban of violence in schools and the dissemination of the RTRR guidelines and the Child-friendly resource pack, it is recommended that VACiS prevention is prioritized as a strategic initiative in the formal structures of the education sector – and that School Management Committees, Head Teachers, teachers, children and parents are reached through these. Co-curricular activities can then make up an important supplement by augmenting and nurturing internalization of a culture of non-violence amongst school stakeholders.

Pursuing collaborative local partnerships

In pursuit of the above, local collaborative partnerships between stakeholders in education and child protection have been found to be crucial. Violence against children stems from a range of causes, a range of perpetrators and require equally broad range of responses to be effective. Concerted efforts by District Education Officers, District Development Officers, District Health Officers, Police, local leaders,

school management and governance stakeholders, service providers and actors such as civil society organizations, religious and cultural institutions, the Child Help Line and media, hold the potential to transform norms and practices. It is encouraged that local coalitions are formed between actors who in different ways contribute to influencing attitudes, regulating practices, ensuring access to reporting and providing response to cases. Further, linkages with events and platforms in the education sector should be purposefully pursued. Examples of that include participation in the existing platforms of termly Parent-Teacher-Association meetings of Police Child and Family Protection Unit and dissemination reporting methods (RTRR) and access to the toll-free Child Help Line.

Addressing constraints to reporting

In the process of developing this case study, a number of constraints for reporting of cases of violence were observed and pinpointed areas to be addressed to strengthen reporting practices. The first group of constraints relates to the sensitivity of cases, such as sexual violence – and particularly cases of sexual violence leading to early pregnancies. These grave types of offences against children justify rapid and effective responses, yet these are also indicated to be the types of cases most reluctantly reported to the authorities by respondents. Awareness raising about sexual violence and capacity development to receive reports and respond with sensitivity will be of utmost importance to strengthen access to protection and redress for such offences.

The next group of constraints have to do with parental reluctance to report cases. This is indicated to be linked to a range of causes; fear over cost of involving the police i.e. due to demands to cater for transport for police officers etc; parents taking part in by-passing the system and obtaining monetary compensation directly from perpetrators to 'settle' the matter; fear of intimidation by perpetrators, particularly in cases involving significant individuals in the community, as was exemplified by a DEO in Northern Uganda:

"A 16-year-old girl in P6 who was under the care of an uncle was raped by a senior politician at the school. The Education Office and uncle tried in vain to protect and ensure that justice was done to the girl. But the politician who had been arrested only stayed behind bars for three weeks, came and took the girl by force as a seventh wife and ensured that the uncle was harassed"

The third group of constraints is those that children face in reporting of cases. Children in this study have indicated fears of violent reprisals from parents in the event that they report parents to authorities, indicating the mounting need for protective structures and family-based interventions. Experiences of children 'bouncing' at Police stations, with police officers not accepting to take reports from child and sending them back to the parent are also an impediment to reporting. Moreover, lack of trust between children and teachers creates environments where children are not free to express themselves and rely on teachers as a source of help. This has been found to be sustained by cases, where children that have turned to teachers have had experiences of teachers not adhering to principles of confidentiality and failing to protect the child in question.

The fear of experiencing repercussions cuts across the constraints for reporting identified in this study. At the system level, one aspect of strengthening reporting is to cement the access pathways of reporting and another is the careful crafting of relations of trust, procedures of confidentiality and resilience of the system to abide by due processes. Emphasis should be on child protection, witness protection as well as capacity and integrity of responding law enforcers.

Fostering dialogue on VACiS among school stakeholders

In this intervention, the relevance and value of dialogue between teachers, parents, school management, authorities and particularly children has been identified and promoted. The creation of spaces where children can safely express how they experience violence and abuse, and where adults take responsibility of communicating the regulations and consequences to potential perpetrators have formed important avenues to break the silence of violence and to empower children and adults. One of the most important prerequisites for reporting of cases of violence is trustful relations among stakeholders. As mentioned above these stakeholder relations are as a starting point often spurred by lack of trust and fear of reprisals, which

continuous relationship- and trust building through dialogue can mitigate. It is recommended that efforts are invested into furthering methods of child-inclusive school-based dialogue on VAC and that dialogue methods are strategically infused into school and school-community interactions.

Building capacity to prevent child-on-child violence

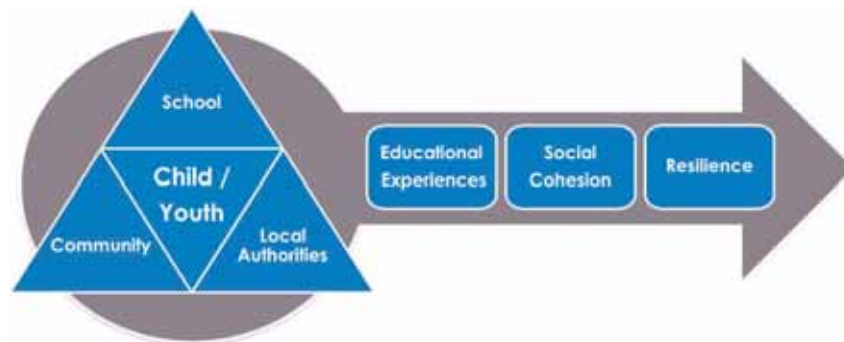
This study cements that in addition to teacher-on-pupil violence in schools, the scale of violence committed by children affecting other children is at a level that requires attention and action. For children to access safe and protective learning environment – and for schools to operate at platforms that foster peace in communities – pupils need to access education in schools where no form of violence is tolerated. Practices of violence among children are linked to lack of non-violent dispute management mechanisms among children in schools, and a culture of prefects 'assisting' teachers in promoting 'discipline' through committing school-endorsed violence against other children. To address this it is encouraged to promote increased implementation of the elements of the primary school curriculum on peacebuilding competencies that, as the subjects are non-examinable, often are not prioritized in the teaching schedule. It is recommended that schools purposefully complement this with inclusive co-curricular activities where peacebuilding skills can be nurtured, tried and promoted. Lastly, it is recommended to effectively roll out the existing ban of violence in schools also among prefects and rather strengthen capacity prefects to act as role models for non-violence.

Conclusion

This project was initiated with an aim to build schools' institutional capacities to prevent and respond to violence, and thereby reducing incidents of violence against children in schools. Moreover, schools were intended to operate as platforms for collaborative partnerships that would form the bases for safe learning spaces and peacebuilding in schools and beyond. The school-based approach of teacher and child-driven activities has been found to be successful in empowering children to report cases of violence, foster more trustful relations between children and teachers, and to give children a voice and space to contribute to violence prevention and peacebuilding in schools and the community. The project has operated in a context, where teacher-on-pupil violence has been a widespread norm. The capacity development for teachers is found to have influenced particularly the experience of social acceptability of violence within the school environment, and teachers' capacity to respond and follow up on reports of violence and abuse.

Interaction and relationships between school stakeholders have been strengthened, providing a platform for increased collaboration between parents and teachers and for children to increasingly be heard on VACiS. The intervention has corroborated the relevance of inclusive peacebuilding programming in education as a means of making children's experience of education better and safer, and for social networks around school as a building block in social cohesion in the community:

Figure 2: Model for local collaborative partnerships in education



Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Uganda Population-Based Survey on Peace & Education, December 2015

The study finds the approach of operating through existing school-based structures relevant, and that such has potential of transforming relationships and interaction at schools into spaces of non-violence. It identifies more opportunities of pursuing this, including through the strengthening of implementation of curriculum sections on peacebuilding, training of more school-level stakeholders, broadening of collaboration over VAC prevention and concerted efforts in the formal and co-curricular school structures.

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Annex 1: MoESTS Circular re-emphasizing ban of acts of violence against children in Schools

Telegram: "EDUCATION"
Telephone 234451/8
Fax: 234920



Ministry of Education, Science,
Technology & Sports
Embassy House
P.O. Box 7063
Kampala, Uganda

In any correspondence on
this subject please quote No: ADM/92/308/01

August, 2015
CIRCULAR NO.2/2015

To: Chief Administrative Officers
District Education Officers
Inspectors of Schools
Heads of Early Childhood Development Centers
Heads of Primary Schools
Heads of Secondary Schools
Principals of Primary Teacher Training Colleges
Heads of Farm, Technical and Vocational Schools and Institutes.
Principals of Health Training Institutes

BAN ON ALL ACTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS, INSTITUTES AND COLLEGES

1. The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports has noted with great concern the increasing acts of violence against children/learners in schools, particularly bullying, administration of corporal punishment (caning), sexual abuse such as defilement and rape, use of and distribution of pornographic materials, sexual harassment, emotional violence, neglect and negligent treatment.
2. Violence against children/learners undermines the security and safety of children in schools, inflicts pain and fear among children in schools, reduces children's retention and performance in schools, undermines their right to education, right to protection and a right to development.
3. The Government of Uganda through the 1995 Constitution Article 24, the Children Act Cap 59 (2008), the Penal Code (Amendment) Act 8 (2007), the Domestic Violence Act (2010), Employment Act (2006) outlaws acts of violence against children in schools.
4. The following measures must be observed by all the educational institutions, whether government aided, community or private.
 - a) All acts of violence against children/learners i.e. corporal punishment, bullying, neglect and negligent treatment such as failure to meet the children/learners physical needs like

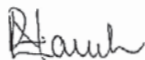
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food, water, menstrual hygiene related needs for girls; sexual abuse such as defilement and rape, speaking to children in a sexual manner, making marriage proposals to learners, fondling/touching in a sexual manner, subjecting learners to watch sexual scenes, audio and print materials of sexual nature; drug abuse; emotional violence; school fires among others must stop forthwith.

- b) Teachers/Instructors/Tutors should utilise their privileged relationship with children/learners to detect children at risk of violence, take measures to support children/learners to open up and report such cases to the Senior Woman/Man Teacher/Instructor/Tutor for guidance and counseling and any other support that can help prevent the cycle of violence.
- c) Schools/Colleges/Institutes should assign the Senior Woman/Man Teachers/Instructor/Tutor or School/College Counselor the role of the Violence Against Children in Schools (VACIS) Coordinator and put in place appropriate and child friendly communication mechanisms such as suggestion boxes, toll free telephone services/contacts to encourage children/learners report cases of violence in schools/colleges/institutes freely and confidentially.
- d) The Head teacher/Principal with the support of the Senior Woman/Man Teacher/Instructor/Tutor should record, report and follow-up all acts of violence against children encountered in schools/Institutes and colleges with other relevant actors:
 - i. Cases that are capital in nature such as defilement, rape, grave physical injuries must be recorded and reported immediately to police for investigation and prosecution.
 - ii. Cases that require administrative procedures within the Education Sector for breach of civil servants' rules such the Teachers' Professional Code of Conduct (2012), the Teaching Service Commission Regulations (2012), MoES Circular NO. 15/2006 on Ban on Corporal Punishments in Schools, Institutes and Colleges, Schools rules and regulations must be recorded and reported to the School Disciplinary Committees, District Education Officers and or Education Service Commission for appropriate action according to the relevant laws, rules and regulations.
 - iii. Cases that are civil in nature must be recorded and reported to Family and Children Courts for appropriate action.
 - iv. Teachers/Instructors/Tutors and Children/learners must report all children/learners that perpetrate violence against other children/learners such as bullying, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, drug abuse etc. to the Head teacher/Principal and to the Disciplinary Committee for action according to the schools/colleges/institutes' rules and regulations.
 - v. Every educational institution should review its rules and regulations with a view of introducing safe, child friendly and positive learning sanctions/actions to replace corporal punishment to children/learners. The Schools/Institutes/Colleges Management Committees/Boards should approve the revised rules and regulations.
 - vi. Schools/institutes/colleges should sensitize and educate children/learners, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff on the different forms of violence in schools/institutes/colleges, the existing laws and mandatory processes and procedures that have to be undertaken in the event of violence within the schools/institutes/colleges. Schools/institutes/colleges should orient children/learners,

teaching and non-teaching staff on the Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response guidelines on violence against children in schools as well as the Alternatives to Corporal Punishment Handbook.

- vii. Schools/institutes/colleges should allocate some resources to cater for specialised support services for the Child survivors and victims of violence such as medical check-up and treatment in case of defilement, HIV/AIDS, grave physical injuries; counseling in case of emotional abuse; as well as meeting expenses associated with the follow-up of cases that are reported to other actors for action. Some of these may include medical examinations and treatment, appearing before police for further investigations, attending courts sessions along with the child survivor to give evidence and for cross-examination among others.
- viii. Schools/institutes/colleges should review their programmes to accommodate sessions on life skills development programmes and training for children/learners to help them develop social and personal skills (life skills) to protect themselves against violence. Some of the topics to cover in these sessions should include but not limited to sexuality and reproductive health education, self-confidence and esteem, effective communication and negotiation.
- ix. Schools/institutes/colleges should keep records on all cases of violence against children/learners encountered in schools/institutes/colleges including actions taken by the schools and other actors such as the Police, Probation and Welfare Officers, Local Courts and Health Workers.
- x. Schools/institutes/colleges should ensure full access and inspection of school facilities and records, permit unannounced visits and private consultations with children/learners and school staff on violence against children in schools/institutes/colleges by Institutions that are legally mandated to protect children against violence.
- xi. Where these guidelines are ignored or abused, the culprits will be held criminally responsible for their actions. They will face the law, in particular the Education Act (2007), the Public Service (Teachers) Act, the Children Act Cap 59 (2008), and the Penal Code (Amendment) Act 8 (2007).
- xii. It is expected that educational institutions should develop and apply safer, professional and acceptable methods of guiding and counseling children/learners, Teachers/Instructors/Tutors and parents in the use of non-violent learning and discipline and taking action against perpetrators of violence against children in schools/institutes/colleges.



Dr. Nassali Lukwago Rose
PERMANENT SECRETARY

CC Members of the Inter Sectoral Committee on Violence Against Children in Schools
All Chairpersons, Local Council V
All Chairpersons of District Education Committee

All Chairpersons of the District Child Protection Committees
All Secretaries of Education, District Local Councils
All State Attorneys
All District Police Commanders
All District Directors of Health Services
All Probation and Social Welfare Officers
All Municipal Education Officers
All Board of Governors, Primary Teachers Colleges, Farm and Technical Schools
All Governing Councils of Colleges
All Chairpersons of School Management Committees
All Chairpersons of Parents & Teachers Associations
All Chairpersons of Board of Directors in Private Schools
All Chairpersons of Heads of Farm, Technical and Vocational Schools and Institutes.
All Town Clerks
All Local Courts

