



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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**Subject: ENDORSEMENT OF THE CALL TO ACTION TO END VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS**

The Ministry of Education in Jordan banned corporal punishment in schools in 1981, under the school Discipline Regulation, Instruction No.4 on school Discipline. The Ministry of Education is committed to the creation of a safe and supportive learning environment in all our schools and welcomes the global coalition of partners to address safe learning environment for all children in Jordan.

In 2009, MoE and UNICEF Jordan Country Office embarked on a national "Ma'An"(together) Towards a Safe School Programme to reduce violence against children in all schools. The cumulative results of the Ma'An programme over the past years is evident. However, as in many countries, our schools continue to confront various forms of violence; including corporal punishment, sexual exploitation and abuse, bullying and online violence. Violence in the Education sector threatens to negate and erode Jordan's effort to improve the quality of Education for all children in Jordan.

It therefore gives me great pleasure to fully endorse the **Call to Action to End Violence in Schools** at global level, and to continue doing the following at the national (Jordan) level:

- Enforce and implement policies and legislations that will reduce the incidence of violence against children in and around schools.
- Improve violence prevention and response measures and mechanisms at schools.
- Institutionalize sustainable, balanced, inclusive and gender-based strategies and programmes to combat violence against children in schools.
- Enhance sustainability and scalability by reinforcing positive social norms and behaviors among teachers, students and parents.
- Invest resource allocations to promote safer schools.
- Improve data collection and evidence to effectively address violence in schools.

Regrads,

Minister of Education

  
Dr. Tayseer Al Noami



## Safe to Learn Initiative

In every country around the world, children are experiencing violence in schools. That violence comes in many different forms, from corporal punishment to attacks to bullying to sex for grades. Violence also prevents many children, especially girls and children from marginalized groups, from even attending school and accessing equal educational opportunities.

Safe to Learn is a partnership endeavor dedicated to ending violence **in and through schools**. It brings together a strong collection of **14 partners from various sectors**, including education, child protection, violence prevention, donors and others. Each partner organization has made a clear set of commitments as part of the Initiative. These commitments include what each partner will do as an individual organization and what it will do collectively with the other Safe to Learn partners to end violence in and through schools.

**Safe to Learn partners include:** UNICEF, UNESCO, UNGEI, DFID, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, the Global Partnership for Education, the Global Partnership to Protect Education from Attack, the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, Education Cannot Wait, the Office of the United Nations Special Representative to the Secretary General on Violence Against Children, the Civil Society Forum, the Global Business Coalition for Education, and Global Affairs Canada.

Safer schools will improve learning outcomes, better leverage education and health investments, shift norms and start to break the intergenerational cycle of violence.

## Call to Action

To make schools safe, **commitment is needed at the highest political level**.

The 'Call to Action' is a centerpiece of the Initiative. It is a high-level framework for programmatic and policy change to make schools safe to learn. It is not exhaustive, rather recognizes a range of contexts and highlights some key actions needed to end school violence.

It calls for:

- Strengthened **policy and legislation**
- Improved school-based **prevention and response** measures
- A **shift in social norms** to end violence in schools, and
- Effective **resource allocation** and **improved data and evidence**

**Endorsing the Call to Action demonstrates that a country is, at a senior political level, supporting the end of violence in and through schools, making them safe spaces for children and young people to learn, thrive and grow.** It gives Governments a platform to showcase their efforts and share their progress including through events, communications and learnings.

To date, 12 countries have endorsed the Call to Action. These countries include **Cambodia, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Honduras, Mexico, Moldova, Nepal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan and Uganda.**

If a country is interested in endorsing the Call to Action, a communication (letter or email) can be sent to the Safe to Learn secretariat confirming endorsement. This would usually be from a Minister of Government, or someone who has been given the authority to convey the Government's endorsement. This can be sent to [safetolearn@end-violence.org](mailto:safetolearn@end-violence.org).

## Safe to Learn Secretariat

The Safe to Learn secretariat supports partners in this endeavor and can also share tools and resources upon request. More information on Safe to Learn, including the Safe to Learn window of the Fund, and materials that may helpfully be used to support efforts to end violence in and through schools can be found [here](#).



# Call to Action



Photo © Barbara Davidson for Enact Violence

**Every child deserves to be safe and secure in school so that they can learn, grow and develop the skills and confidence they need to lead healthy and prosperous lives.**

**Schools have the potential to be transformative** in promoting positive social norms and gender equality. But for too many girls and boys around the world, school is a place of violence and fear. Schools also provide a valuable entry point for working with families and communities to end violence against children more broadly. Physical, sexual and psychological violence in and around schools, including online, affects children and young people everywhere.

**Violence is often a result of unequal gender and power dynamics.** Girls and boys experience different forms of violence. Girls are more likely to experience psychological bullying, sexual violence and harassment; boys more likely to experience corporal punishment and physical violence; children who do not conform to

gender norms or stereotypes are particularly vulnerable to violence and bullying. Children with disabilities are more than three times as likely as their peers to suffer physical violence in schools, and girls with disabilities are at up to three times greater risk of rape. In fragile, conflict and crisis contexts, students and staff face risks greater risks, such as targeted and indiscriminate attacks from the military or other groups.

**Violence impedes learning and is detrimental to children's well-being.** It decreases self-esteem, reduces attendance, lowers grades, leads many children to drop out of school altogether and can result in serious health issues. It also contributes to a destabilising cycle of violence where child victims are more likely to be perpetrators or victims later in life.

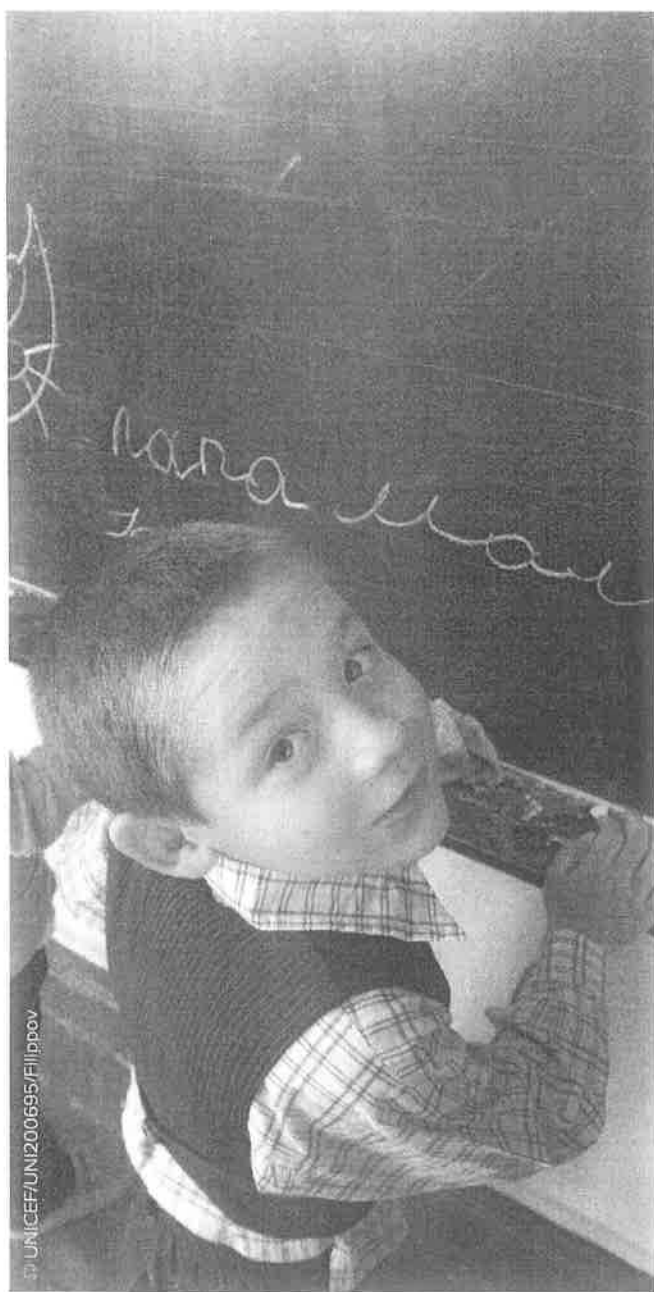


Whether sexual exploitation for grades, corporal punishment in the classroom or bullying and harassment, all forms of **violence in schools can and must be prevented**. It is both the right and the smart thing to do—morally, socially and economically—as it enhances a child's chances of staying in school, increases their ability to fulfil their potential and breaks the cycle of violence.

### **Together we can end violence in schools.**

We must ensure that children's voices are heard, and they have the space to take action.

Teachers, communities, governments and leaders must be accountable for prevention of and response to violence, and prioritize the individual needs and well-being of the child and everyone in the school community.



## **Ending violence in and around schools requires coordinated efforts at multiple levels.**

### **We call upon partners to support national and sub-national governments to:**

#### **Implement policy and legislation**

National, regional and local governments develop and enforce laws and policies that protect children from all forms of violence in and around schools, including online.

- Ministries of education implement policies to improve systems, capacity, and skills to prevent and respond to violence in schools across the education system.
- National governments prohibit corporal punishment in schools and promote positive discipline.
- National governments establish multi-sectoral child-friendly response and referral mechanisms to support victims of violence in schools.
- National governments endorse and implement the Safe Schools Declaration and use the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict.



## Strengthen prevention and response at the school level

School staff, students, and management committees provide safe and gender-sensitive learning environments for all children that promote positive discipline, child-centered teaching and protect and improve children's physical and mental wellbeing.

- School curricula are reviewed and strengthened to include effective approaches to preventing violence and promoting equality and respect.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures, such as codes of conduct, digital safety guidance, or violence reporting procedures are implemented and monitored in schools.
- Schools ensure the physical environment in and around schools is safe and designed with the well-being of all students in mind.



## Shift social norms and behavior change

Parents, teachers, children, local government and community leaders recognize the devastating impact of violence in schools and take action to promote positive social norms and gender equality to ensure schools are safe spaces for learning.

- Schools promote child-rights education and ensure children and teachers know their rights and respect the rights of others.
- Schools, parents and community leaders work together to promote non-violent behaviors and promote a safe school environment.
- Students, parents, caregivers, teachers and



community members empower one another to speak up and take positive action against violence that they or their peers have experienced.



## Invest resources effectively

Increased and better use of investments targeted at ending violence in schools.

- National Governments increase domestic resources to support people, programming, and processes to end violence in schools.
- Donors increase resources targeted at the country and global level to end violence in schools, investing in effective approaches.
- The Private Sector increases financial, technical and in-kind resources to end violence in schools.



## Generate and use evidence

Countries and the international community generate and use evidence on how to effectively end violence in schools.

- Governments, schools and donors support the disaggregated data collection and monitoring of activities that prevent violence in schools.
- Donors and research partners increase investment in research and evaluation about interventions to prevent violence in schools (in particular longitudinal studies).
- Schools collect disaggregated data on incidents of violence in a safe and ethical manner to support targeted and better-quality interventions.

