

Safe to Learn: Diagnostic Tool¹

This diagnostic tool is designed to inform country-level collective dialogue amongst Safe to Learn partners and with national counterparts. It aims to measure the quality of national efforts to prevent and respond to violence in and around schools against a Benchmark. The Benchmarks are aligned with the Safe to Learn Call to Action, and were developed in relation to international child rights frameworks, United Nations tools and minimum standards, and good practices from the field of child safeguarding. Its overall objective is to support children's right to education and to protection from violence, and is aligned with relevant Sustainable Development Goals:

Target 4.5: *By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations*

Target 4.7: *By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development*

Target 4.a: *Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.*

Target 5.2: *Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.*

Target 16.2: *End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children*

Each Benchmark is assessed by checkpoints at Subnational/District and school level, using nuanced measures that will be finalized with research tools. Completion of this benchmarking tool would require, in stage 1, a focus on national level laws, policies, systems and processes, beginning with desk review of legal framework and policy environment along with interviews with MOE officials. The second stage would consist of the field review, involving selection of relevant subnational units, representative districts and schools. Administrative structures vary from country to country, and the tool will need to be adapted to reflect accountabilities at various levels of the system at subnational level: e.g. States, provinces, municipalities, districts.

¹ This tool should be ready in conjunction with the draft "Safe to Learn Programmatic Framework" (UNICEF 2019) that provides background and resources linked to each benchmark. This tool is based upon similar frameworks that have already seen practical use: mainly the six-country mapping from *Child Protection in Educational Settings* (UNICEF Bangkok, 2012), but also from SRGBV Standard Indicators from UNICEF Global Strategic Plan 2018-2021; and Global Guidance on School Related Gender Based Violence (UNESCO/UN WOMEN, 2016). It incorporates elements of the UNGEI, *A Whole School Approach to Prevent School-Related Gender-Based Violence* (UNGEI, 2018); *Preventing schools-based violence: a practical handbook* (WHO, 2019) and *Child Safeguarding Standards and how to implement them* (Keeping Children Safe, 2014)

Call to Action 1: Implement laws and policies

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

Item	Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
1.1	The national government includes prevention of violence in around schools as a specific strategy in education sector policies, plans and budgets	Prevention of violence in and around schools is identified as a specific strategy in the national education sector policy or plan ²	The District authorities support the implementation of the national (or sub-national) plan or policy in schools	School implements violence prevention activities in conformity with national or subnational objectives.
1.2	There is explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in schools, and policies are in place to support positive discipline and classroom management ³	Laws that prohibit corporal punishment include clear guidance on implementation, with a process for non-compliance	District oversees implementation of law and details compliance measures.	School implements law or has an independent policy and there are repercussions for non-compliance.
		Teacher training on positive discipline and classroom management is included in pre- and in-service training	District ensures that teachers receive thorough training in techniques of classroom management.	Teachers have received training on positive discipline and classroom management in the last three years

² See 'Guidelines for education sector plan preparation' (UNESCO, GPE 2015) or 'Guidelines for developing gender-responsive education sector plans', (GPE, UNGEI, UNICEF, 2017)

³ See *Teaching without violence: prohibiting corporal punishment* (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children 2019)

1.3	The roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education in response and referral to incidents of violence are clearly set out in the multi-sectoral national child protection policy framework.	A national policy framework, strategy or other system that outlines the role of the Ministry of Education as part of the national child protection system alongside other formal actors (Health, Social Welfare, Justice, Police) ⁴	There is district-level coordination of national policy framework and support for implementation in schools	School follows national and/or district policy and coordinates with local authorities and other duty bearers
		The Ministry of Education has established a national child protection/safeguarding policy with the requirement that all sub-national authorities and schools under their purview develop their own localized policies. ⁵	The district authorities support the establishment of localized and coordinated school child protection policies, and has identified one focal point with overseeing and responding to concerns	School follows national policy or independently has established child safeguarding policies and procedures
1.4	The country has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration and in situations of armed conflict is implementing the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict ⁶ .	The Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict have been brought into domestic policy and operational frameworks as far as possible and appropriate.	The Guidelines are widely disseminated by District authorities so that all parties engaged in conflict are aware of and able to abide by them.	School level plans in place to reduce risk of attacks, to respond quickly to risks, and to have a clear plan for safe school re-opening after attacks happen.

⁴ These set out the mandated roles and responsibilities of state actors in the national child protection system. See section 2.1, UNESCO/UNWOMEN 2016 for a discussion of child protection systems

⁵ See UNICEF 2012; Keeping Children Safe 2014.

⁶ The Safe Schools Declaration is an inter-governmental political commitment that provides countries the opportunity to express support for protecting education from attack during times of armed conflict; the importance of the continuation of education during war; and the implementation of concrete measures to deter the military use of schools. See more details: <http://www.protectingeducation.org/safeschoolsdeclaration>

Call to action 2: Strengthen prevention and response at school level.

School staff, students and management committees provide safe and gender-sensitive learning environments for children

Item	Benchmark	National	Sub-national/District	School
2.1	Key violence prevention strategies are embedded in curriculum-based activities for children ⁷	National curriculum includes age appropriate approaches that (i) develop life skills, (ii) teach children about violence and safe behavior, (iii) challenge social and cultural norms and promote gender equitable relationships.	District supervises and assures information and curriculum is implemented in schools	Schools deliver formal school syllabi that includes life skills, safe behavior, and equal relationships.
2.2	Child safeguarding principles and procedures are in place in schools, inclusive of codes of conduct, and safe recruitment standards ⁸ .	National guidelines detail process by which all schools respond to child protection concerns, including referral to services. The Ministry of Education has a focal point.	District has step-by-step procedures for schools to follow and has identified one focal point with overseeing and responding to concerns.	System for responding to child protection concerns is in place following district or central guidelines, or school if no policy. School has focal point with responsibility for responding to protection incidents.
		National guidelines clearly outline norms and standards of ethical behavior to be included in Teacher Codes of Conduct.	Codes of conduct required for all staff including District and Schools. District/sub-national authorities ensure compliance of Codes of Conduct in schools	School has Code of Conduct that is publicly posted and requires all teachers to understand and comply; Ramifications for violations are proscribed and enforced; Requires written signatures by all staff; includes Codes of behavior for students.

⁷ Section 3, WHO 2019, Schools-based Violence Prevention: A Practical Handbook. This links to Benchmark 3.2 and 5.3

⁸ See UNICEF 2012; Keeping Children Safe 2014; UNGEI 2108. This links to benchmark 1.3 above.

		The establishment of safe and confidential reporting mechanisms for students is mandated for all schools. There is a working, accessible national reporting mechanism such as a national child helpline.	District supports schools in implementation of reporting mechanism and ensure availability of support mechanisms. It has its own mechanism for response when reports are elevated.	Students are aware of and use reporting mechanism to report experiences of violence. It is linked to support services and includes there is a monitoring system for reporting and accountability.
		National pre- and in-service training for school staff includes their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations.	District authorities ensure that teachers receive pre- or in-service training on their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations.	All schools staff receive pre- or in-service training on their obligations on child safeguarding, including reporting and response obligations. Staff are adequately trained to prevent revictimization of children and are knowledgeable about the referral pathway in place in the locality.
		There are national policies that regulate hiring of new teachers and staff and their transfer to ensure suitability for working with children.	Districts implement the policy requiring background checks when recruiting or transferring teachers.	School follows or has individualized methods to vet staff to ensure their suitability for working with children; it requests new hires or districts to report previous convictions or reasons for transfer.
2.3	Each school has at least one focal point who is capacitated to provide front-line mental health/psychosocial support to children experiencing violence.	Ministry of Education has a training program or special curriculum for school counselors that includes children's mental health and well-being; and has arrangement or referral procedures when a child or	District has support mechanism for school counselors and refers to specialized services to assist schools when necessary.	School counselor is in the school and is capacitated to provide front-line mental health/psychosocial support to students; and has identified a referral source for range of specialized services (mental

		his/her family needs specialized services.		health, medical, family services...)
2.4	The physical environment in and around schools is safe and designed with the well-being of children in mind ⁹ .	There are established national standards for school buildings and grounds that address student safety	The District authorities are aware of national standards and monitor improvements to schools' physical environment.	School design reflect national guidelines. The community, students and staff have mapped unsafe areas and have identified solutions for these areas. Sanitary facilities are safe and secure, classroom architecture and design is gender-responsive, and students move freely to and from school.

Call to Action 3: 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 to ensure schools are safe spaces for learning.

Item	Standard	National	Sub-National/District	School
3.1	There is wide dissemination and engagement with stakeholders to build knowledge and appreciation of child rights and laws prohibiting violence.	National government and policy supports the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage stakeholders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence at the national level.	Districts support the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage schools, community members/leaders on child rights and laws prohibiting violence at the district level.	Schools support the implementation of activities to disseminate information and engage students, teachers, parents and community members on child rights and laws prohibiting violence at the school level.

⁹ UNGEI 2018 Domain 7; WHO 2019 Section 6.

3.2	Specific, evidence-informed interventions are researched and implemented, addressing social norms that drive key forms of violence and/or helping children manage risks ¹⁰ .	National policy supports the development and implementation of evidence-informed initiatives ¹¹ that address broad social norms that drive key forms of violence (e.g. e.g. , bullying and online harms, sexual abuse and exploitation, youth and gang violence).	Districts support the implementation and monitoring of initiatives in schools/communities that address social norms that drive key forms of violence.	Schools support the implementation and monitoring of initiatives in the school and surrounding community that address social norms that drive key forms of violence.
3.3	Young people, parents, teachers and community members in and around schools are engaged and active on the topic of school violence.	Ministry of Education supports national, contextualized communication for development initiatives to empower and engage students, parents and broader communities in dialogues and action against violence	District level communication for development strategy for implementation of media, arts, or other awareness raising and empowerment activities	Extra-curricular or community-based arts, drama, print documents, or other activities that promote awareness and collective action at the school and for parents and families

Call to Action 4: Invest resources effectively

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

Item	Standard	National	Sub-national/District	School
4.1	Domestic resources that have been allocated to support interventions and capacity building	Educational system budget includes costed	District receives and allocates resources for	School receives earmarked budget for

¹⁰ WHO 2019 Section 3

¹¹ INSPIRE (2016) offers strategies to draw from

	activities to prevent and respond to violence in schools.	strategies for violence prevention and response, adequate resourcing and reflections in budgets.	violence prevention and response	violence prevention and response
4.2	Development partners provide resources targeting national or subnational level to end violence in schools, investing in effective approaches	Development partners provide targeted funds, technical assistance, and programmes through implementing partners for prevention and response to violence in schools	District coordinates monitors and reports on use of targeted resources	School access targeted resources for prevention and response to violence.
4.3	There is private sector engagement in the provision of financial and non-financial resources including technical support, expertise and advocacy towards ending violence in schools.	Private philanthropy, foundations, CSR, social impact investors, etc., provide targeted funds, technical assistance and programmes through implementing partners for prevention and response to violence in schools.	District coordinates monitors and reports on use of targeted resources	Schools access targeted resources for prevention and response to violence.

Call to action 5: Generate and use evidence

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

Item	Standard	Central	Sub-national/District	School
5.1	Information and reporting of incidents allow for disaggregated baseline information and monitoring	Central information system that records incidents and monitors	District has record keeping of incidents occurring in schools	Maintenance of confidential records about protection

	of trends and that reflect needs and gaps in the system ¹²	trends, fed by District or local authorities		related incidents in the school
5.2	There is regular data collection on prevalence and forms of violence in schools using methods that follow high ethical standards ¹³ .	National Statistics Office and Ministry of Education monitor data on prevalence and forms of violence through regular participation in international school-based survey programmes (every 3-5 years)	District support implementation of school-based survey programmes	Comprehensive questions on prevalence and forms of violence are included in regular school-based survey programmes.
5.3	Decisions on replication and scale-up of violence prevention initiatives are based on evaluations of trailed models and approaches ¹⁴ .	National Governments conduct robust monitoring and evaluations of violence prevention initiatives in order to inform replication and scale-up.	Districts support implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities for violence prevention initiatives to inform replication and scale-up.	School support implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities for violence prevention initiatives to inform replication and scale-up.

¹² UNESCO-UNWOMEN 2019 Global Guidance on addressing school-related gender-based violence, Section 2.6

¹³ Such as through the relevant modules of the Global Schools-Based Student Health Survey (GSHS)

¹⁴ See WHO 2019 Section 9