



INEE Global Consultation

***Promoting Safe Learning Environments:
Minimizing Violence in Schools and Enhancing
Education as a Protection Tool***

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Content Table

- 1. What is a Safe Learning Environment?
- 2. Why the need of safe education?
- 3. How to address violence in schools?

1. What is a Safe Learning Environment?



Violence in schools
and educational settings



Violence when
attending schools

Violence when
accessing schools

Violence related
to education programs

UNHCR Children Participatory Assessment, 2005-2007

1. What is a Safe Learning Environment? (ctd)

Safe Learning Environments should be free from...

- Physical and psychological violence
- Punishment
- Sexual and gender-based violence
- HIV and sexual violence
- Bullying
- Fighting, physical assault, and gangs
- Homicide and serious injury
- Weapons in schools
- Military recruitment
- Economic exploitation



1. What is a Safe Learning Environment? (ctd)

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Child's right to **non-discrimination** (article 2)

Child's right to **freedom of expression** (article 13)

Child's right to **protection from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation** (article 34)

Child's protection against all forms of **physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse** (article 19) and from **cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment** (article 37)

Respect of child's **human dignity** (article 28)

1. What is a Safe Learning Environment? (ctd)



- INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies (2004)
 - Analysis/response strategy: Education response strategies prioritise the safety and well-being of all children and youth, including those who are vulnerable or have special education needs.

1. What is a Safe Learning Environment? (ctd)



- Other definition: more limited scope
 - Create safe learning environments with safe construction and retrofit
 - Maintain safe learning environments with school disaster management
 - Protect access to education with educational continuity planning
 - Teach and learn disaster prevention and preparedness
 - Build a culture of access and safety

Disaster Prevention for Schools – Guidance for education Sector Decision-Makers, UNISDR, 2008

1. What is a Safe Learning Environment? (ctd)



- **UNHCR definition of safe learning environment:**

Education and recreational activities :

- **Raise awareness of children about their rights.**
- **Provide displaced children with the knowledge**, skills and attitudes and empower them for the future.
- **Protect displaced children** from various risks inside and outside schools.
- **Help address psychosocial needs** (reassuring routine, sense of normality, social interactions, care and guidance...).
- **Convey lifesaving messages** through educational activities (nutrition, sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, landmine safety, water and sanitation, and the environment).

Education as a tool of protection

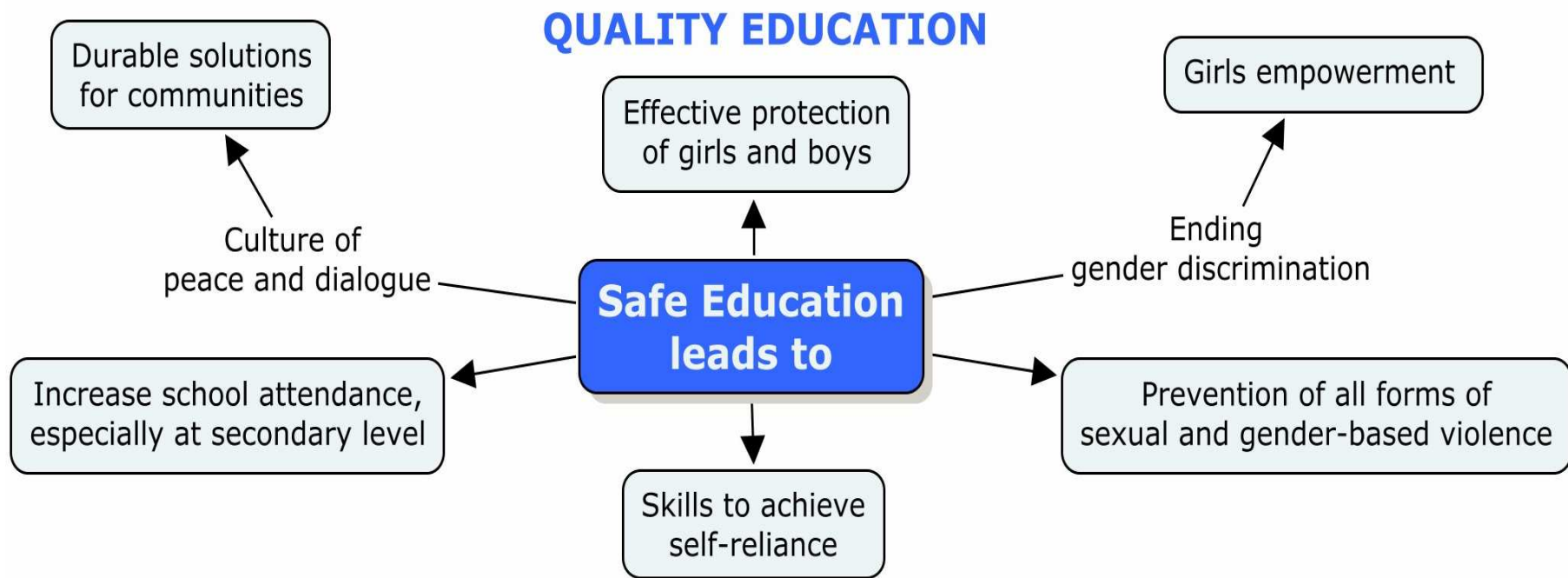
2. Why do we need Safe Education?

Impacts of violence:

- Health
- Social impacts
- Educational impacts



2. Why do we need Safe Education? (ctd)



3. How to address violence in schools?



Responding to violence in educational settings

- 6 Guiding principles:
 - **Right-based Approach:** Convention on the Rights of the Child and the best interests of the child.
 - **Continuity:** from emergency to durable solutions, and for all educational activities – formal and non formal.
 - **Community Participation:** school leaders, education authorities, and parent-teacher associations involved
 - **Holistic Approach:** School-based interventions managed with transparency and accountability to the community
 - **Partnerships:** partnerships with Ministries of Education of the countries of origin and of asylum, UNICEF, UNESCO and NGOs specialized in education
 - **Confidentiality:** Response mechanisms guarantee confidentiality and the physical safety of the victim/survivor.

3. How to address violence in schools? (ctd)



UNHCR Framework for prevention and response strategies

- **Situational Analysis:** identify the causes of violence in school and assess existing support services, resources and capacities.
- **Prevention Measures:** to create a safe and supportive learning environment.
- **Response Mechanisms:** to ensure victims/survivors have access to quality services.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** to ensure safe education is effectively achieved.

3. How to address violence in schools? (ctd)



Examples of Good practices – Malawi and Namibia (with JRS)

- **Ensuring learning environments are child-friendly** (nice infrastructures, library and availability materials...)
- **Building the capacity of the education staff** (good working conditions, in-service trainings, recruitment of female teachers and vice principals, codes of conduct)
- **Enriching the curriculum** (peace education, child-participatory methodology & alternative discipline)
- **Empowering the students** (awareness-raising campaign, income generating activities in schools, boy's and girl's clubs)
- **Establishing monitoring mechanisms** (monitor drop-outs, enforcement of codes of conduct, reporting mechanisms)

3. How to address violence in schools? (ctd)

Examples of Good practices
Malawi and Namibia (with JRS)

Challenge: Creating a sense of ownership



- Establishing effective reporting mechanism
- Empowering the Parents
- Addressing the root causes of violence in schools (consequences of displacements and protracted situations, wider social and security environment)
- Lack of effective and adapted teacher's training
- Enforcing codes of conduct
- Information sharing and coordination



***For more information: www.unhcr.org
(Education section)***

Thank you for your attention.