MUTUMBA HIGH SCHOOL
COMMITS TO ERADICATE SCHOOL
RELATED SENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Policy Note

Applying a Whole School Approach to prevent School-Related Gender-Based Violence: Lessons from Zimbabwe

UNGEI | UNITED NATIONS GIRLS' EDUCATION INITIATIVE

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I. Executive summary

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) is increasingly recognized as a barrier to quality education and learning, particularly for girls and young women. According to the most recent global estimates, approximately 20 to 37 per cent of 11- to 17-year-olds experienced some form of emotional, physical and sexual violence in and around school in the previous year.[1] Globally, girls and boys experience and perpetuate different forms of violence. Girls experience sexual violence and psychological forms of bullying at higher rates, while boys experience corporal punishment and physical fighting.[2] The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated incidences of violence against women and girls[3], posing a greater risk of SRGBV as schools reopen.

Data on the nature and scope of violence in and around schools, particularly the gendered norms and drivers of violence, is limited. Data collected through large scale surveys do not sufficiently capture all forms of violence in schools, nor do they necessarily apply a gender analysis, and responses in and around school are not systematically tracked.

The Global Working Group to End SRGBV and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), in 2018 produced the guide, A Whole School Approach to Prevent School-Related Gender-Based Violence: Minimum Standards and Monitoring Framework. This guide lays out policies and actions to establish enabling school environments for better reporting and monitoring of SRGBV. Centred around evidence-based strategies to reduce violence against children, women and girls, the guide proposes eight domains and corresponding minimum standards that make up a Whole School Approach.

In 2018, UNGEI along with the Forum for African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter (FAWEZI), with support from UNICEF, launched a pilot initiative to test whether and how the guide's eight domains and minimum standards can be operationalized in schools. Miske Witt & Associates (MWAI)[4], a technical partner in the initiative, supported FAWEZI to design and monitor interventions aligned to the minimum standards. The pilot was implemented in ten schools (five primary and five secondary) across two districts in Zimbabwe.

One of the key activities of the pilot was FAWEZI-led Visioning Workshops which laid the groundwork for school heads, teachers, students, ancillary school staff and school development committees to take ownership of the action plans they would develop. FAWEZI identified gaps related to the domains of the whole school approach that needed to be addressed. The pilot adopted a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Approach (MEL) which intentionally applied a gender transformative lens in measuring the effectiveness of the domains in the target schools.

School-related gender-based violence is defined as acts or threats of sexual, physical or psychological violence occurring in and around schools, perpetrated as a result of gender norms and stereotypes, and enforced by unequal power dynamics. It also refers to the differences between girls' and boys' experiences of and vulnerabilities to violence.

UNESCO, GMR, UNGEI, 2015

The pilot had promising results in shifting gender attitudes and beliefs, despite several challenges in implementation, including Covid-19. The interventions indeed shifted perceptions among stakeholders, especially girls/women, and saw teachers become committed to gender equality and to fostering a learner-centred environment. Girls were afforded greater involvement and leadership roles in student councils. The formation of student clubs helped improve awareness (especially among girls at secondary school level) of different forms of violence, particularly inappropriate touching and sexual harassment. Parents became engaged through the school development committees in school prevention activities, contributing to a feeling that the school community had the potential to address violence. However, silence and stigma associated with gender-based violence persisted, as did perceptions that violence against children is 'normal.' Reporting systems were established, and students and teachers became aware of the systems, but fear of retribution and perceptions about personal safety and confidentiality deterred students from reporting incidences. Schools adopted codes of conduct, but these did not address all forms of violence and did not adopt a zero-tolerance stance.

The pilot results made it clear that more work is needed to break the silence around gender-based violence in education. Continued efforts will be required to support teachers, school heads and district education officers to implement codes of conduct, establish reporting and referral mechanisms and monitor school violence. Additionally, changing social norms requires long-term investments and the active engagement of key stakeholders at all levels.

Section VIII of the report makes a set of concrete recommendations for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers.

II. Introduction

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) is increasingly recognized as a barrier to quality education and learning, particularly for girls and young women. According to recent global estimates approximately 20 to 37 per cent of 11- to 17-year-olds experienced some form of emotional, physical and sexual violence in and around school in the previous year.[5] Globally girls and boys experience and perpetuate different forms of violence. Girls experience sexual violence and psychological forms of bullying at higher rates, while boys experience corporal punishment and physical fighting.[6]

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated incidences of violence against women and girls[7], posing a greater risk of SRGBV as schools reopen. Unfortunately, data remains limited on the nature and scope of violence in and around schools, particularly the gendered norms and drivers of violence. Data collected through large scale surveys do not sufficiently capture all forms of violence in schools, nor do they necessarily apply a gender analysis, and responses in and around school are not systematically tracked.

The Global Working Group to End SRGBV is committed to amplifying good practices and evidence-based approaches to prevent and respond to SRGBV. To address the problem of limited data and monitoring on gender-based violence in and around schools, UNGEI launched an evidence review of promising interventions to strengthen data collection, prevention and response. The review looked at good practices in addressing violence against women and girls, violence against children, including in the education sector. The review found that to strengthen routine monitoring and data collection of incidents and prevalence of SRGBV, mechanisms for reporting and responses in schools should be child-friendly, gender-sensitive and confidential. Collecting

data also requires an enabling environment in which teachers, students, school administration and leadership are aware of the gender and power dynamics that give rise to violence, have the skills to offer counselling, are empowered to report and have access to referral mechanisms outside of school.

To this end, the guide A Whole School Approach to Prevent School-Related Gender-Based Violence: Minimum Standards and Monitoring Framework was produced, in 2018, for policymakers and practitioners to establish policies and actions at school level which would establish an enabling environment for better reporting and monitoring of SRGBV. The guide was developed through wide consultation with experts (policy and data specialists) from the fields of violence against women and girls, education and child protection. Based on evidence-based strategies to reduce violence against children, women and girls, the guide proposes eight domains and minimum standards (see Figures 1 and 2) that make up the Whole School Approach and offers a set of process and impact indicators to steer monitoring and evaluation.

In 2018, the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) along with the Forum for African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter (FAWEZI), with support from UNICEF, launched a pilot initiative to test whether and how the eight domains and minimum

standards can be operationalized in schools. Miske Witt & Associates (MWAI), a technical partner in the initiative, supported FAWEZI to design and monitor interventions aligned to the minimum standards. The pilot was implemented in ten schools (five primary and five secondary) across two districts in Zimbabwe.

Implemented over the period October 2018 – December 2020, including during the COVID-19 lockdown, this policy note briefly describes the pilot, highlights what worked and lessons and recommendations for policy action. The target audience for this policy note are education practitioners, policymakers, researchers and donors.

III. Whole School Approach to prevent School-Related Gender-Based Violence

a. What is a Whole School Approach?

Applying a comprehensive Whole School Approach is widely recognized as good practice in working holistically to promote student health and wellbeing and echoes evidence from other school-based health and violence prevention initiatives.[8] Implementing whole school strategies is not the only possible approach to addressing and monitoring SRGBV, albeit evidence suggests that a Whole School Approach represents an effective solution because it has potential to address all forms and drivers of violence.[9]

A Whole School Approach is a strategy that builds on the interconnectedness of schools, communities and families to improve the school environment for students, staff and community members.[10] The success of a Whole School Approach is dependent on actions at the school level, but also on how well they are linked to national and sub-national policies and integrated with ongoing systems of planning, monitoring and budgets at provincial and district education departments.

The model consists of eight inter-connected domains (see Figure 1) which work together to prevent and respond to SRGBV and affect the drivers of violence. The drivers are identified in the Minimum Standards guide as: normalization of violence against children, silence around violence against women and girls, rigid gender roles, stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, and inequality and discrimination.[iv] Each domain has a set of minimum standards to guide implementation (see Figure 2).

The theory of change is that over the implementation period, changes in attitudes, behaviours and practices will contribute to a shift in the drivers of SRGBV leading, in turn, to a reduction in incidence of SRGBV over the long term. In the short term, an increase in reporting of incidents of violence in and around schools may occur as a result of more awareness, better reporting systems and shifts in attitudes among students, teachers and school administrators. This process is non-linear.

Figure 1: Domains of a whole school approach

NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

CODES OF CONDUCT

TEACHERS & EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT STAFF

CHILD RIGHTS, PARTICIPATION & GENDER EQUALITY

REPORTING, MONITORING & ACCOUNTABILITY

INCIDENT RESPONSE

SAFE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS IN & AROUND SCHOOLS

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

School Leadership & community engagement

TO CREATE SAFE & GENDER SENSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Figure 2: Minimum standards of a Whole School Approach

1. School leadership and community engagement

MS 1: School principals, teachers, student councils and parents work together to develop a whole school approach to prevent and respond to SRGBV

MS 2: Local entities such as women's organizations, the police, the judiciary, and child welfare agencies partner with schools to prevent and respond to SRGBV

2. Code of conduct

MS 1: Key definitions of the different forms of SRGBV are outlined in the code

MS 2: The code provides an unambiguous, zero-tolerance stance on SRGBV

MS 3: The code emphasizes conduct promoting a positive and safe school environment

3. Teachers and educational staff support

MS 1: Teachers have the capacity to identify, respond to, and prevent SRGBV

MS 2: School structures promote women's leadership and support teachers who experience violence

MS 3: Teachers have the skills to use positive and gender-responsive teaching and learning methods

4. Child rights, participation and gender equality

MS 1: Child rights approaches are integrated into curricula

MS 2: Student leadership is centralized and girls and boys equally represented

MS 3: Healthy peer relationships are promoted and student awareness and attitudes about gender norms and SRGBV improve

5. Reporting, monitoring and accountability

MS 1: Students have safe and confidential spaces to report experiences of SRGBV

MS 2: Reporting mechanisms are linked to support systems

MS 3: School protection or review organisations are in place to improve monitoring and accountability

6. Incident response

MS 1: Child-centered procedures are in place for responding to the different needs of girls and boys who experience SRGBV

MS 2: Establish referral links with local child protection systems

7. Safe and secture physical environments in and around schools

MS 1: Sanitary facilities are safe and secure

MS 2: Classroom architecture and design is gender-responsive

MS 3: Students move safely to and from school

8. Parent engagement

MS 1: Parents are involved with school in keeping learners safe

MS 2: Parents use positive parenting and discipinary techniques

IV. The context

FAWEZI, in consultation with the Department of Learner Welfare Services at the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE), identified the districts of Shamva and Chitungwiza. Shamva, located 90 kilometres from the capital Harare, a former gold mining town, is a poor, rural community with high levels of sex work, trafficking and child marriage and low enrolment of girls in secondary schools, due to distance and other gendered barriers. Chitungwiza, located 30 kilometres from Harare, is a peri-urban former industrial community with high rates of unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse. School enrollment is often higher in primary than secondary school due to higher costs for secondary school and because secondary-age children often engage in paid or unpaid labour to meet their family's basic needs. Parents sometimes choose to send their secondary-school age children, usually boys, to 'private' secondary institutions around town that are less expensive.[11] The pilot was implemented in three primary and two secondary schools in Shamva and two primary and three secondary schools in Chitungwiza.

Within the broader context of Zimbabwe, studies across the country found that intimate partner violence, corporal punishment, bullying, sexual harassment and sexual violence are accepted and widespread in society.[12] The 2014 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) data showed that 37.7 per cent of respondents believed children need physical discipline[13] and such attitudes led to violent behaviours. Data from the 2011 National Baseline Survey on Life Experiences of Adolescents (NBSLEA) found that almost 60 per cent of girls and 40 per cent of boys had experienced physical violence perpetrated by their parents.[14] Among other authority figures, teachers were the primary perpetrators of physical violence for boys and girls in both age

groups. Data from Violence Against Children Surveys (VACS), 2019 from Zimbabwe show that more boys than girls experienced physical punishment at the hands of a male teacher (7 per cent male versus 4 per cent female) and boys were more likely to perpetuate physical violence on their peers, both boys and girls. According to the Global School-based Student Health Survey (GSHS), over 55 per cent of youth (11 to 15-year-olds) reported being bullied on one or more days over the prior 30 days. Qualitative studies identified bullying as a gendered form of violence in Zimbabwe. For example, schoolmates and teachers bullied girls from poorer families, calling them "fat girl" or "old mama" for dirtying their uniforms during menstruation because they could not afford sanitary pads each month.

The VACS (2019) analysis on sexual violence finds that girls and boys report similar rates of sexual violence perpetrated by classmates and teachers.[15] According to the National Baseline Survey on Life Experiences of Adolescents (NBSLEA) report, of youth ages 18–24 who had their sexual debut prior to age 18, girls (41 per cent) were more likely to experience unwanted or pressured (sexual harassment or threats) sexual intercourse compared to boys (7 per cent). Among 18- to 24-year-old girls who experienced sexual violence prior to age 18, boyfriends (77.7 per cent) were the most common perpetrators of the first incident.[16]

V. Overview of the pilot activities

At the outset, FAWEZI led a series of Visioning Workshops bringing together teachers, school heads, ancillary school staff, members of school development committees and students. This activity was critical for school heads and staff to take charge of and truly own their action plans to implement the domains of the Whole School Approach.The purpose of the workshops was to identify entry points and operationalize the minimum standards,

identifying practical actions to strengthen each of the eight domains.

Among the eight domains, the domains on school codes of conduct (domain 2), reporting, monitoring and accountability (domain 5) and incident response (domain 6) were found to be the weakest areas in all schools and identified as areas to be strengthened. Guidance and counselling teachers received periodic training on sexual and reproductive health, but had little knowledge and understanding of gender concepts, gender-based violence, how to report gender-based violence or the use of positive discipline. FAWEZI identified the following interventions to fill the gaps identified during the Visioning Workshops: (1) train teachers to identify and respond to SRGBV, gender-responsive teaching and learning and positive discipline; (2) empower students and young women to recognize violence and speak up through the TUSEME[17] ("Let us speak out" in Kiswahili) curricula and student clubs; (3) improve awareness of Zimbabwe's laws and policies regarding gender-based violence and use of corporal punishment; and (4) establish or strengthen school codes of conduct with gender-responsive content that refers explicitly to acts of violence and gender-based discrimination.

Overview of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Approach

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Approach for this pilot used a gender transformative lens to examine the effectiveness of introducing the domains of a Whole School Approach. The MEL Approach intentionally focused on examining gender norms and drivers of SRGBV from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, school support staff, community members and government education authorities. While more traditional programme evaluation approaches may attempt to capture the impact of an intervention on direct participants only, this approach included measuring effects on stakeholders (e.g., other school staff and students not directly involved in FAWEZI's training) and the wider community.

The MEL Approach was designed on the hypothesis that if interventions address the eight domains and corresponding minimum standards holistically and with the entire school community, the drivers of SRGBV will be disrupted. Data collection instruments were designed to measure both the drivers of SRGBV and the minimum standards from stakeholder groups representing the whole school community.

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Approach responded to two central questions:

1. What is the status of stakeholder knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to the drivers of SRGBV?

    a. Whether and how did knowledge/ attitudes/behaviours differ by stakeholder group (students, teachers, other stakeholders) and by gender?

    b. Whether and how did knowledge/ attitudes/behaviours shift/change over time?

2. Whether and how did the school's alignment with minimum standards shift/ change as they participated in SRGBV programming?

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning was designed alongside the pilot activities (see Figure 3), ensuring coherence and providing FAWEZI opportunities to adapt its activities based on findings from the baseline and monitoring activities. Collaboration between the technical team and the implementation team was a hallmark of the MEL approach. The findings (Section VI) shed light on shifts in attitudes as a result of FAWEZI's interventions.

Figure 3: SRGBV pilot project activities

Sept 2018 - Feb 2019
- Situation Analysis Review of SRGBV tools/resources
- Develop baseline tools for pilot project

Mar - Sept 2019
- Prepare and conduct Visioning workshops
- Individual school visits for baseline data collection

Oct 2019 - Feb 2020
- FAWEZI developed and conducted various in-person workshops related to SRGBV and implementation of activities
- MWAI partnered with FAWEZI to monitor SRGBV activities

Mar 2020 - Oct 2020
- FAWEZI and MWAI adapted to all virtual work due to COVID-19

Nov 2020 - Feb 2021
- Endline data collection in four schools, final report completed in the beginning of 2021

MEL methodology

Quantitative and qualitative survey instruments were developed to collect demographic data and information about SRGBV at baseline and endline. These instruments measured the drivers of violence, as well as the domains and related minimum standards, by adapting items from previously validated and tested instruments (e.g., CARE's Gender Equitable Index, USAID/RTI's Survey of Student Gender Attitudes used in Uganda, and the USAID Education in Crisis and Conflict Network Safer Learning Environments Assessment Toolkit).

The survey instruments were written in English and translated to Shona (the primary language of most children in the study) and field tested with a sub-sample of participants. The survey items were then translated back into English and adapted based on feedback from field testing. Qualitative methods included school observations and individual interviews with school heads, guidance and counselling teachers and/or other teachers who had participated in FAWEZI work. Focus Group Discussions at each school dealt with safety, learner leadership, SRGBV reporting and incidence response. The data collection team received two days of training from MWAI senior research coordinators on gender-sensitive data collection and the use of tablets. The data collection team was led by MWAI senior researchers, who provided in-person and remote support.

As part of the monitoring, MWAI and FAWEZI used the KoBo Toolbox (www. kobotoolbox.org) to collect monitoring data. At the end of the Visioning Workshops, each school began creating a School Action Plan that included specific activities. During workshops with school heads, FAWEZI worked with schools to further formulate individual School Action Plans. MWAI and FAWEZI then collaboratively developed a monitoring tool to track individual school progress toward their action plans using the KoBo Toolbox.

Data analysis was conducted using the NVivo software package. Qualitative data were analysed across multiple instruments and across time. Quantitative data were cleaned in Excel and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics were run on all survey items to assess differences between groups (i.e., girls and women compared to boys and men; learners compared to adults; and primary compared to secondary learners) and differences over time (baseline to endline). All data were disaggregated by gender. Results in differences between men/boys and girls/women are presented in section VII, when there was a statistically significant difference when comparing the two groups.

The baseline and endline reports and a MEL toolkit can be found here:

Endline Report

Baseline Report

SRGBV MEL toolkit

VI. What worked: good practice from piloting the minimum standards in Zimbabwe

✓ **School Visioning Workshops facilitated by local experts and African gender activists led to collective ownership and a shared understanding of gender violence in the context.**

The Visioning Workshops and all subsequent workshops with teachers, school heads and ancillary staff and students were critical to school leadership taking ownership of the process, rather than it being one more administrative ask. Workshops were led by African gender experts and young women activists from Zimbabwe or from the broader FAWE regional network. This allowed participants to share and reflect upon biases and norms as an open community. Both primary and secondary students were participants in the planning workshops. Creating a safe space for the participation of students alongside their teachers and school heads was an 'eye opener' for all participants and empowered students to express their opinions creatively using theatre and arts

Impact of Covid-19

The pilot activities were restricted between March – September 2020 due to lockdowns imposed by the Government of Zimbabwe. FAWEZI used Zoom and WhatsApp to reach teachers and school heads and conducted meetings and follow-up during the lockdown. Schools in Zimbabwe opened in September 2020 in a phased approach, which meant that not all learners and teachers were back at school. Although activities were conducted online, these were less effective due to poor network connectivity and difficulties related with using online platforms like Zoom among participants.

Endline data collection was adapted and significantly constrained. Data was collected in four schools instead of all ten that had participated in the baseline study, thus comparisons by district were not made (since there were only two schools per district). Learner comparisons were made, but they should be interpreted with caution because there were only two primary and two secondary schools in the endline sample. Participation of community members and district education officials was constrained due to COVID-19 restrictions and teacher strikes that were ongoing in country at the time of data collection.

Facilitators led sessions using an appreciative enquiry approach through which participants shared the common beliefs and norms that shape their thinking. For example, men teachers shared beliefs about men's role as providers and 'owners' of everything from land and property to the women in their lives. Women and girl participants reflected upon their perception that women heads of school may not be as competent as male heads and needed support from a male deputy head to fulfil the role. Girl students brought up issues of menstrual hygiene, including the lack of access to sanitary towels and water at school. Girl students also discussed how they are targets of 'normalized' acts of violence and harassment by boy students such as 'swiping' and unwanted touching of breasts and buttocks.

These sessions led to self-reflection on beliefs and behaviours, the unequal power and privilege that shape daily relationships and interactions between men and women, boys and girls. Participants identified a range of violence from verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying and fighting experienced by all students to inappropriate touching and harassment, assault and rape (experienced mostly by girls). Teachers acknowledged the gendered nature of meting out corporal punishment, asking girls to sweep floors while boys received harsh physical punishment. The workshops served as an important foundation, motivating the school community to act together to address violence in their schools.

✅ **School level dialogues enabled school heads to identify existing levers and human resources to operationalize the minimum standards, without creating new processes.**

School heads, teachers and administrative staff at district education offices identified existing policy documents, processes and structures aligned with the minimum standards. Most schools identified existing mechanisms for reporting, such as disciplinary committees and guidance and counselling teachers who could serve as resources to strengthen domains around reporting, monitoring, accountability and incident response. Several schools established suggestion boxes at prominent locations and revived disciplinary committees to monitor and respond to complaints.

All ten schools had school development committees at varying levels of functioning and these included parents and community representatives. Student councils with girl and boy prefects were a common feature in all ten schools. These were supported to improve awareness on child rights, participation, gender equality (domain 4) and parental engagement (domain 8). Schools Development Committees worked with parents to improve the physical school environment using a range of activities: messaging on zero tolerance in and around schools, building school walls, fixing sex separate toilets and installing waste disposal.

Awareness of laws and policies governing violence against children, women and girls improved monitoring and accountability among district education officers and school heads.

FAWEZI held leadership training with district education authorities and school heads to review a range of policies and circulars governing prohibition of and response to physical, sexual and gender-based violence. The knowledge of these circulars in Zimbabwean law enabled district education officers to revive non-functioning reporting systems between the district and schools. District education officers established guidelines for monitoring, which placed the responsibility to report and respond to incidents upon the school heads. At endline, 61 per cent of participants (versus 46 per cent at baseline, a 32 per cent increase) reported that they were aware of laws against corporal punishment and were able to name laws that protect the rights of women and girls, indicating an improved awareness of relevant laws and policies around school violence.

VII. Key findings and lessons learned on shifting norms and implementing minimum standards

Beliefs about rigid gender roles for women shifted, while normalization of violence against children, women and girls and inequitable gender views among students persisted.

The findings showed promising results on shifts in gender attitudes and beliefs. Attitudes related to women's gendered roles were more equitable over time among both men/boys and women/girls. Thirty-five per cent of adults and students overall disagreed that women's role is taking care of home and family, compared to 14 per cent at baseline. However, attitudes normalizing traditional gender roles for men persisted, i.e., three-fourths of participants agreed that "a man's role is earning money for the family" and that "boys who helped their mothers at home were sissies."

Both women/girls and men/boys were able to describe how power dynamics at home favoured boys and men, supporting violence against women and girls. At the same time, boys and men were significantly more likely than girls and women to agree that wives should not report violence (see Figure 4). Participants (equally men/boys and women/girls) continued to agree that violence against children occurred at home and in schools and was 'normal' (see Figure 5).

Figure 4

Stakeholder agreement at the endline that if a husband beats his wife she should not report it to authorities for the sake of her family, overall and by girls/women and boys/men

Group	YES!	yes	no	NO!
Girls/women (n=141)	10%	4%	6%	79%
Boys/men (n=91)	19%	8%	12%	62%
Overall (n=232)	13%	6%	9%	72%
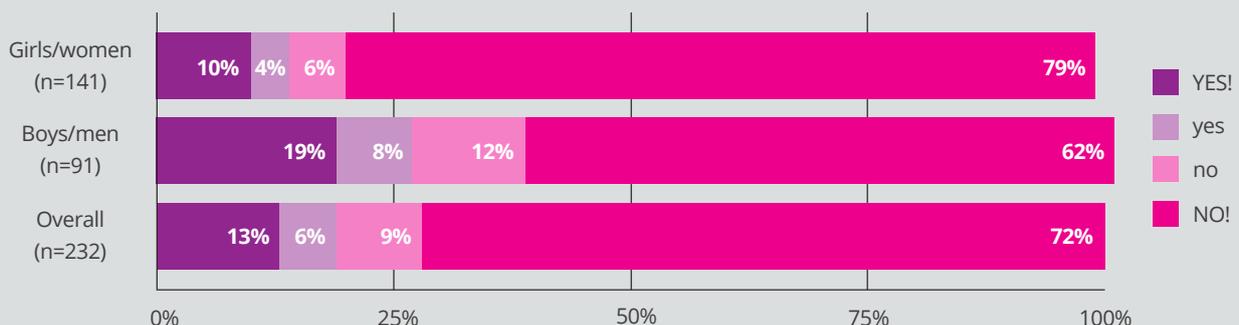
About 75 per cent of participants continued to agree/strongly that girls who wear short skirts are inviting trouble and there was no significant difference when comparing the responses of men/boys with women/girls (see Figure 6). At a rural secondary school, when talking about

If you are a girl and you look smart, you will be called a prostitute trying to seduce the male teachers.

Female secondary school pupil at a rural school

SRGBV at school, one boy echoed this belief by stating, "Girls should avoid putting on short skirts; we are not lying. All our thoughts and minds are on their legs, and we are not concentrating." Students held even more inequitable views than adults regarding girls' clothing and boys helping their mothers, indicating that these harmful gender norms are entrenched among young people (see Figure 6).

Figure 5

Stakeholder agreement at endline that violence against children is normalized (overall and by age)

	YES!	yes	no	NO!
Learners (n=139)	35%	45%	16%	5%
Adults (n=103)	18%	20%	21%	40%
Overall (n=232)	28%	34%	18%	20%
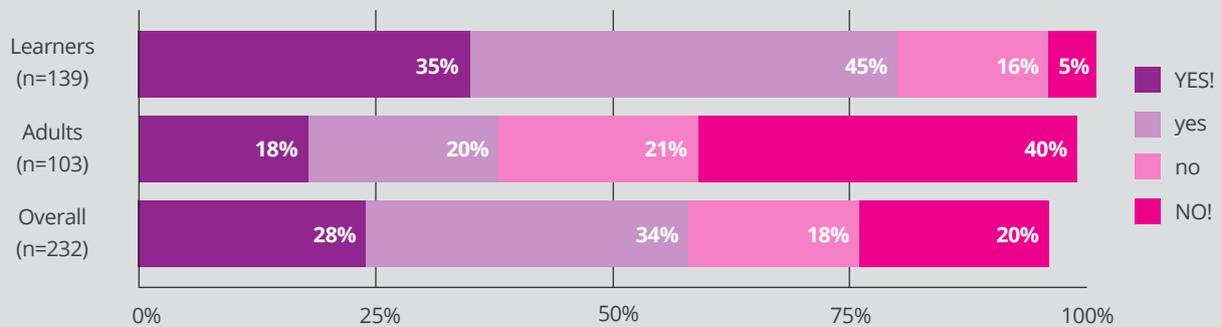
Figure 6

Stakeholder beliefs at endline related to girls' clothing and boys helping their mothers

		YES!	yes	no	NO!
Girls who wear short skirts are inviting trouble	Adults (n=103)	45%	22%	10%	24%
	Learners (n=139)	71%	13%	8%	7%
Boys who help their mothers at home are sissies	Adults (n=103)	11%	6%	11%	73%
	Learners (n=139)	36%	8%	8%	47%
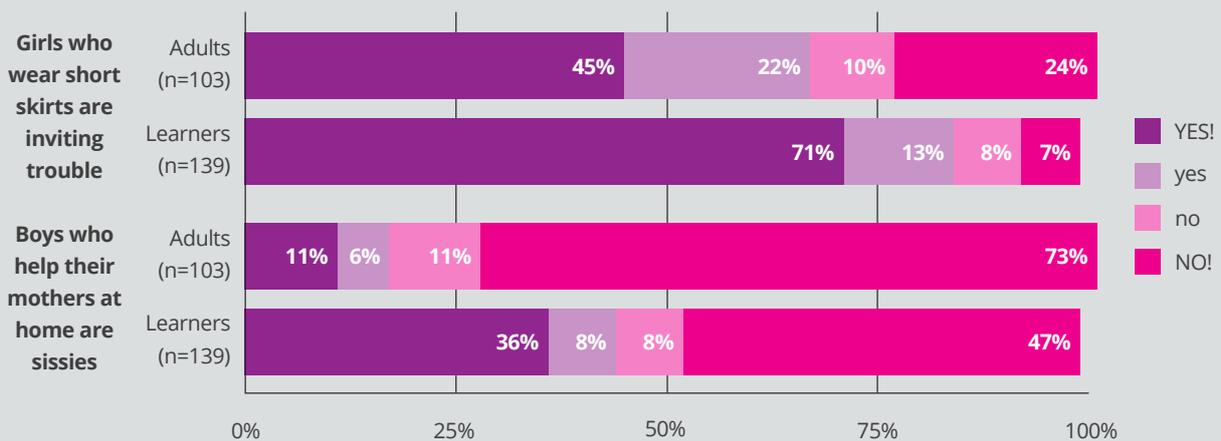
Reporting mechanisms were established, but fear of retribution and victim blaming remained barriers to reporting incidents.

Teachers and staff at endline stated that learners feel comfortable reporting issues of SRGBV at their schools. Teachers believed that learners are comfortable because there are multiple methods for reporting, such as talking to a trusted teacher or leaving an anonymous note in the suggestion box. Staff at all schools mentioned that they keep the reporting confidential to protect both victims and perpetrators.

Yet, in contrast to their teachers' perceptions, learners (girls and boys) reported that they were not comfortable reporting violence even though, they, along with the teachers and staff, were aware of referral pathways. The most significant reasons learners (girls and boys) gave for non-reporting was fear of retribution, being blamed for the abuse (see Figure 7) or not being taken seriously. Other reasons included reporting processes not being child-friendly and gender-sensitive, such as having a safe and confidential location to report. Girls, in particular, stated that they were not comfortable reporting sexual harassment

Minimum Standards related to Reporting, Monitoring, Accountability, and Incident Response

MS 1: Students have safe and confidential spaces to report experiences of SRGBV

MS 2: Reporting mechanisms are linked to support systems

MS 3: School protection or review organisations are in place to improve monitoring and accountability

and violence for fear of being blamed or asked what they did to instigate it. One of the girl respondents stated that it is the female teachers, who blame the victim when there are instances of sexual harassment. Boys likewise reported that they were hesitant to report an incident. Since many social and gender norms dictate that boys should appear powerful and aggressive, boys worried about being bullied or being perceived as weak if they reported victimization.

Figure 7

School stakeholder agreement at endline that "learners who report SRGBV at this school are often asked what they have done to initiate the abuse they have experienced"

	YES!	yes	no	NO!
Adults (n=94)	19%	26%	13%	45%
Learners (n=128)	45%	23%	7%	25%
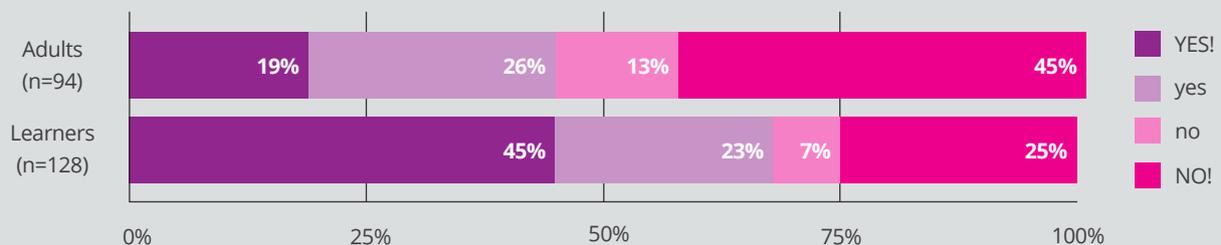
✅ **Learners had a broader understanding of different forms of violence and what zero tolerance meant, but the codes of conduct did not completely reflect this.**

Learners and teachers had an improved ability to recognize verbal, physical and sexual violence and abuse throughout the course of the pilot. Learners reported that bullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment and corporal punishment were commonplace. Learners also shared instances of harassment perpetrated by teachers, such as a comment from a female student at an urban secondary school:

"We have teachers who drink alcohol, [and] they don't consider you a female student. They can be talking to you while they're touching you, they don't have boundaries as male teachers to female students."

While school staff discussed SRGBV in terms of learner-to-learner violence, focus group discussions with learners made it clear that teacher-to-learner violence also occurred in the schools.

During the pilot, FAWEZI worked with the school community to draft codes of conduct, expanding on existing school rules. The newly drafted codes of conduct referred to sexual and gender discrimination and named the different forms of violence, such as bullying and sexual violence, that occurs at school. However, sexual harassment and corporal punishment were not described nor included. None had a zero-tolerance stance and only one mentioned reporting mechanisms and sanctions for violations. Learners interviewed at endline were able to state that school rules should include no bullying, no harassment, no violence and that learners should report cases of SRGBV. Learners had an acute understanding of their rights and what zero tolerance implied and how the school rules should be disseminated so that everyone is

aware of their rights. More work is needed to be done in consultations with different stakeholders about the codes of conduct and defining acts of violence, including harassment, which could call for a zero-tolerance stance.

Minimum Standards related to Codes of Conduct

MS 1: Key definitions of the different forms of SRGBV are outlined in the code

MS 2: The code provides an unambiguous, zero-tolerance stance on SRGBV

MS 3: The code emphasizes conduct promoting a positive and safe school environment

Figure 8

Areas of improvement versus where work is needed

Improvements

- Students increased awareness of different forms of violence.
- New codes included: gender, bullying and sexual violence.
- Codes were longer and more comprehensive at endline than at baseline.

More work is needed

- Paper copies of codes did not describe harassment and corporal punishment as SRGBV.
- Only one school outlined reporting mechanisms and no codes had a zero-tolerance stance.

✅ Student clubs promoted greater equality between girls and boys.

Girls and women agreed more strongly than boys and men that there was gender equality in learner leadership in the schools (see Figure 9). Girl students reported opportunities to serve in leadership positions at all schools; and almost all students (girls more than boys) felt that these leadership opportunities were equitable among girls and boys.

After the TUSEME training, SRGBV learner clubs were formed at three of the four endline schools. These helped to educate students and school staff about the codes of conduct and SRGBV reporting processes. In addition, the TUSEME workshops helped empower students to work together to prevent and respond to SRGBV. The student clubs helped inform participants of their rights and helped increase knowledge of SRGBV and reporting. Students reported that the clubs "teach students to avoid early pregnancy" (rural secondary boy); "help us protect our bodies" (rural primary boy); and a majority were convinced that the clubs offer them a space to share information and support one another to promote safety

> **Minimum Standards related to Child Rights, Participation, and Gender Equality**
>
> **MS 1:** Child rights approaches are integrated into curricula
>
> **MS 2:** Student leadership is centralized and girls and boys equally represented
>
> **MS 3:** Healthy peer relationships are promoted and student awareness and attitudes about gender norms and SRGBV improve

in school. One female urban primary school student responded that the SRGBV learner club was a place where "students share information with other students on issues of abuse."

Many clubs were not able to begin their work before the school closures in March 2020 and, since schools were not fully operational during endline data collection, the clubs also had less time than originally planned to conduct activities.

Figure 9

Stakeholder agreement at the endline related to gender equality in learner leadership by gender

	YES!	yes	no	NO!
Girls/women (n=144)	3%	19%	35%	43%
Boys/men (n=96)	6%	27%	44%	23%
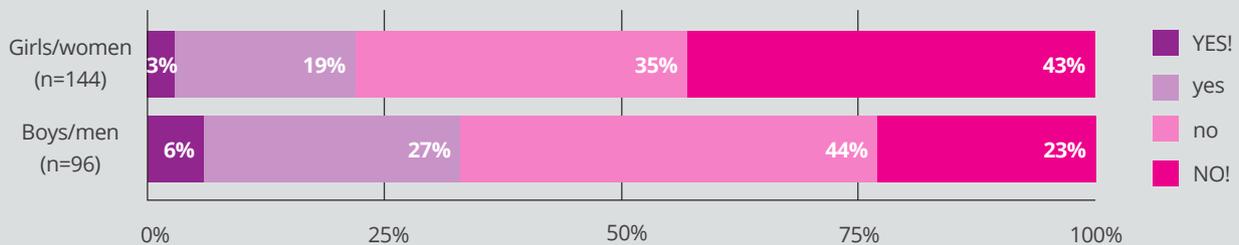
Teachers and educational staff exhibited positive and gender-responsive behaviours, attributed to training on SRGBV and gender-responsive teaching and learning.

Participants' perceived that teachers and educational staff were more gender aware in their teaching and learning practices (see Figure 10). Teachers noted that they discussed gender sensitivity in terms of treating girls and boys equally and that girls and boys have the ability to do similar tasks. More girls and women agreed that teachers exhibited more equitable behaviours, used positive discipline and worked to create a safe learning environment (see Figure 11).

There were contradictory responses to the use and experience of corporal punishment from teachers and learners, revealing how the use of physical punishment is 'normalized.' However, teachers narrated greater confidence in the use of positive discipline, attributing FAWEZI's adapted workshops on SRGBV and gender-responsive teaching and learning for giving them concrete tools to use instead of physical punishment.

Minimum Standards related to Teachers and Educational Staff Support

MS 1: Teachers have the capacity to identify, respond to, and prevent SRGBV

MS 2: School structures promote women's leadership and support teachers who experience violence

MS 3: Teachers have the skills to use positive and gender-responsive teaching and learning methods

Figure 10

School stakeholder beliefs related to safe, positive, and gender-responsive behaviors of educational staff over time

Legend: YES! / yes / no / NO!

- Baseline (n=1033): YES! 3% | yes 23% | no 32% | NO! 39%
- Endline (n=241): YES! 5% | yes 16% | no 28% | NO! 51%
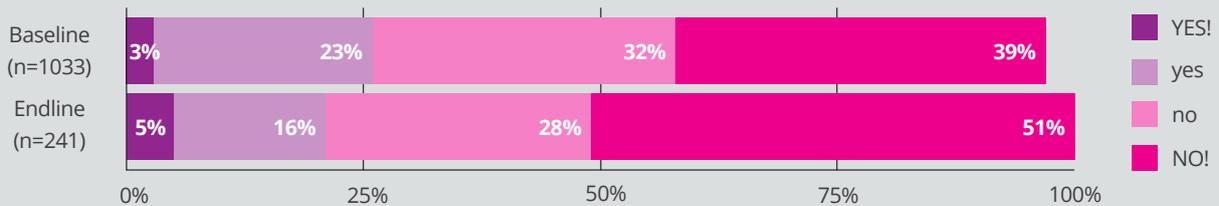
Figure 11

Stakeholder perceptions related to safe, positive and gender-responsive behaviours of educational staff over time, by gender

Legend: YES! / yes / no / NO!

Boys
- Endline (n=96): YES! 4% | yes 21% | no 30% | NO! 45%
- Baseline (n=429): YES! 6% | yes 28% | no 32% | NO! 35%

Girls
- Endline (n=145): YES! 6% | yes 13% | no 26% | NO! 55%
- Baseline (n=604): YES! 6% | yes 20% | no 32% | NO! 42%
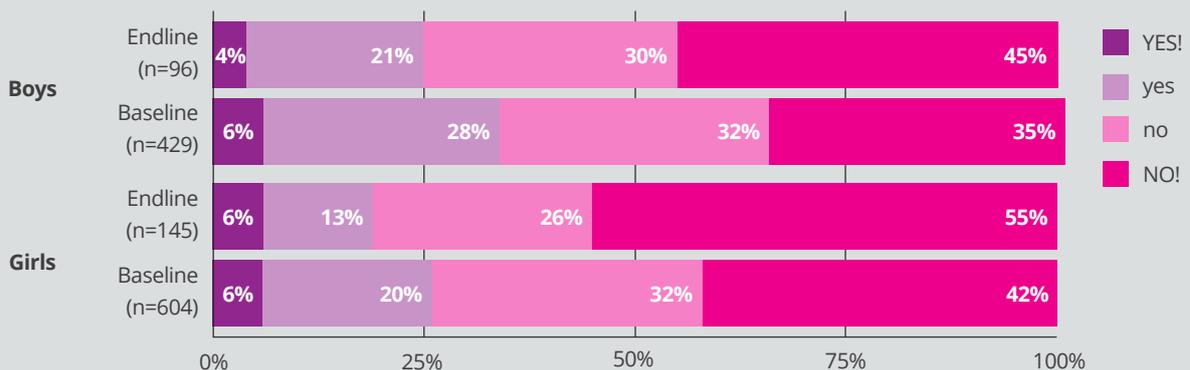
✅ **Continuous and sustained work is needed with parents and community organizations to shift gender inequitable attitudes at home.**

Staff at all schools reported working with community organizations at both the baseline and the endline, and about two-thirds of surveyed stakeholders reported, at endline, that they were familiar with more community organizations working to respond and prevent SRGBV. Perceptions about parental engagement in school activities increased significantly over time, although more adults than learners agreed that parents were more actively engaged in school activities. Teachers held parent-teacher meetings and disseminated information about SRGBV, with the idea that parents will further share this information with others in the community. Parents and school management committees devoted attention to securing the physical environment in and around schools through the building of school walls and fences and supplying menstrual hygiene and sanitary materials for girls.

It was observed that parents were positively engaged in prevention in terms of reporting safety concerns and not using physical discipline. However, as the attitudes and beliefs about gender indicate (above), more work is needed at home and at community level to shift harmful and inequitable gender norms.

Minimum Standards Related to School Leadership, Community Engagement, and Parent Engagement

MS 1: School principals, teachers, student councils and parents work together to develop a whole school approach to prevent and respond to SRGBV

MS 2: Local entities such as women's organizations, the police, the judiciary, and child welfare agencies partner with schools to prevent and respond to SRGBV

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

The measurement of the drivers of violence and interventions strengthening the eight domains and minimum standards showed promising results in shifting gender attitudes and beliefs. The interventions made significant gains in shifting perceptions among stakeholders, especially girls/women, that teachers are committed to gender equality and foster a learner-centred environment. There was greater involvement of and designation of leadership roles to girls in student councils. The formation of school clubs for girls and boys improved awareness of the different forms of violence, particularly inappropriate touching and sexual harassment among learners, especially among girls at secondary school level.

The engagement of parents through the school development committees in school prevention activities contributed to a feeling that the school community can together address violence. However, the silence and stigma associated with gender-based violence persisted as did perceptions that violence against children is 'normal.' Despite the establishment of reporting systems and learners' and teachers' awareness of them, fear of retribution and perceptions about safety and confidentiality deterred students. Both girls and boys believed that if they reported an incident, they would be asked what they did to instigate it and girls, in particular, feared retribution. While codes of conduct were developed, these did not address all forms of violence and none took a zero-tolerance stance. More work needs to be done on breaking the silence around gender-based violence in education and ensuring that teachers, school heads and district education officers are supported to strengthen and implement codes of conduct, monitoring school violence and reporting mechanisms.

The findings from the pilot emphasize that several social, cultural, and economic factors in schools and communities give rise to gender-based violence in and around schools. Whole School Approaches are effective and a holistic way to curb school-related gender-based violence, and they can be complex to implement for education ministries without support from civil society and donors. The pilot demonstrated how a Whole School Approach could be embedded within the functioning of schools, in a low resourced setting.

The interventions led by FAWEZI built on and strengthened existing structures and mechanisms at school level and created an enabling environment for district education offices to support and monitor. FAWEZI was able to share and use the findings from the baseline study to adapt its activities and built ownership of the pilot among the school community. This led school staff and learners to spontaneously lead on activities without financial support from FAWEZI. The findings on the drivers of violence showed that work with schools and the education sector on violence prevention must be accompanied by work on challenging gender-based discrimination and harmful social norms both inside and outside the education sector.

Based on the findings of the pilot, the report makes the following recommendations for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers.

Programme recommendations

Design the minimum standard activities at school level with teachers, school leaders, ancillary staff and learners and build on their assessment of existing levers, strengths and gaps.

Work with district education officials and school leadership from the outset to mainstream reporting and response to gender-based violence in routine school monitoring activities.

Integrate the eight domains and standards into on-going school planning and budgeting so that it is seen as integral and does not create additional administrative work for staff.

Ensure teachers are trained on how to manage incidents in a confidential, gender-sensitive and survivor-centred way, free from bias and discrimination, so that learners feel safe and supported in reporting.

Work with parents, community organizations, women's organizations to break the silence around gender-based violence so that teachers and learners recognize and speak up about violence when it occurs.

Research recommendations

Test the implementation of the domains and minimum standards of a Whole School Approach in low- and middle-income settings and how these can be integrated in ongoing functioning of schools and education departments.

Build evidence of the effectiveness of Whole School Approaches, which aim to shift gender attitudes and norms and reduce prevalence of violence over time.

More and better programme evaluations and research on effective strategies and interventions that shift harmful gender attitudes and behaviour in and through education.

Policy recommendations

Allocate resources on ongoing, school-based in-service (and pre-service) training of teachers and educational staff (including guidance and counselling teachers, where relevant) so that they receive reflective, transformative training on gender norms, gender-based violence and gender-responsive teaching and learning.

Support ministries of education to work with gender units, and a wide range of stakeholders to integrate domains of a Whole School Approach in education sector plans, budgets and activities.

Support district and sub-national education departments to monitor reporting, response and accountability around gender-based violence at school level.

Acknowledgements

About the Global Working Group to End School-Related Gender-Based Violence to End School: The Global Working Group was created in 2014 to respond to SRGBV by raising awareness and finding solutions to ensure schools are safe, gender-sensitive and inclusive environments, where children of all genders can learn to unleash their full potential. The Global Working Group is a coalition of members representing more than 50 organizations, including humanitarian actors, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, academic institutions, education unions and regional and national offices.

About FAWE-Zimbabwe: FAWEZI is an affiliate in Zimbabwe of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE). FAWEZI has over 500 women and men members, drawn from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Development. FAWEZI has an MoU with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and convenes the Education Coalition of Zimbabwe (ECOZI).

About Miske Witt & Associates International (MWAI): MWAI is a women-owned business that provides support in teacher training, standards and curriculum development, policy analysis, research and institutional learning and systems building and strengthening to more than 20 partners in over 40 countries. MWAI supported the evaluation of the Girls Education Challenge funded IGATE initiative in Zimbabwe. MWAI has an extensive network of highly qualified, multilingual experts based around the world, with its headquarters in Shoreview, Minnesota and an office in Lilongwe, Malawi.

Endnotes

1   UNGEI (July 2020). Strengthening efforts to prevent and respond to school-related gender-based violence as schools reopen

2   UNESCO (2019). Behind the Numbers: Ending School Violence and Bullying.

3   United Nations (2020). Policy brief: The impact of COVID-19 on women.

4   MWAI and FAWE were selected through a competitive process

5   UNGEI (July 2020). Strengthening efforts to prevent and respond to school-related gender-based violence as schools reopen.

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15 Together for Girls (2021). Fact Sheet on SRGBV: Zimbabwe. Retrieved from 2021-01-22-SRGBV-Fact-Sheet-ZIMBABWE-Digital.pdf (togetherforgirls.org)

16 Zimbabwe Ministry of Health and Child Care. Young Adult Survey of Zimbabwe: A Violence Against Children Survey, 2017. 2nd Edition. Harare, Zimbabwe: Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, 2019.

17 TUSEME - TUSEME (Let us Speak out) process is an empowerment model based on theatre for development (TFD) techniques. Theatre for development is a community-based process of theatre production that involves research, analysis and finding solutions to social and developmental problems. TUSEME process should involve the participation of every stakeholder. TUSEME aims to empower girls to make them participate effectively in resolving challenges hindering their academic and social development. Even though TUSEME targets girls' empowerment, boys also participate equally and issues relating to boys empowerment are also be addressed.

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