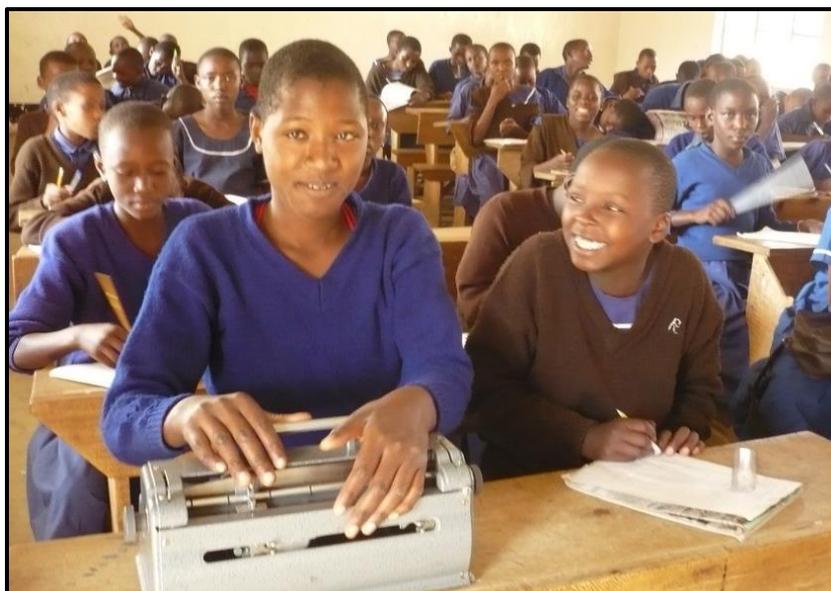




REDUCING VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS



**A step-by-step guide for setting up a
School Safety System to reduce violence in schools**

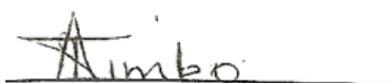


Acknowledgements

This guide for Reducing Violence in Schools has been revised as part of the Girls' Learning and Disability Inclusion (GLADI) project, led by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), with technical support from UNICEF and Mott MacDonald, and with funding provided by the UK Government. Thank you to all those who participated in the original development of the guide:

- Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs
- Ministry of Health and Sanitation
- National Commission for Children, Legal Aid Board
- Family Support Unit of the Sierra Leone Police
- Sierra Leone Teachers Union
- National Council of Head Teachers
- Teaching Service Commission
- The National Youth Commission of Sierra Leone
- Council of Tribal Heads
- Action Aid Sierra Leone
- Community Action to Restore Lives
- CAUSE Canada
- Council of Churches in Sierra Leone
- Community Initiative for Rural Development
- Forum for African Women Educationalists
- OXFAM-IBIS
- Plan International Sierra Leone
- Street Child
- Girl Child Network
- Community participants who participated in the validation of this document
- Schools in Freetown, Western Area Rural and Kambia district where the guide was tested

This guide is specifically for use by the school community, as outlined in Unit 1 "Aims of this guide", and will go a long way towards equipping school heads, teachers, boards of governors, parents, social workers, community members and students to confront school-based violence and the challenges that it presents, thereby enabling vulnerable students, particularly adolescent girls and students with special needs, to participate meaningfully in their own learning and to complete school.



Alpha Osman Timbo
Honourable Minister of Education
Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education

Abbreviations

BoG	Board of Governors
CTA	Community Teachers Association
DEO	District Education Office
DIO	District Inclusion Officer
FSU	Family Support Unit
MBSSE	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
MoSWGCA	Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs
PHU	Peripheral Health Unit
SRGBV	School-related gender-based violence
SSC	School Safety Committee
SSO	School Support Officer
SN	Special Needs
TLC	Teacher Learning Circle

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Unit 1: About this guide for Reducing Violence in Schools

Aims of this Guide

The purpose of this guide for Reducing Violence in School is to provide guidance on how to prevent, report and respond to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). Such violence can have a significant impact on students' ability to participate in and complete school, particularly adolescent girls and students with special needs.

Who is this Guide for?

At a minimum, this guide should be read by *all* heads of schools (principals, vice principals), *all* teachers working in junior and senior secondary schools and the chairperson of schools' Board of Governors (BoG). In addition to this, other BoG members, the Community Teachers Association and the student body should also be familiar with this guide. There are ideas on how to further disseminate messages to these groups throughout this guide.

How to use this Guide

This guide has been designed to be clear, concise and informative, and does not require training or a master trainer. However, this guide should be read by heads of schools, teachers and the BoG Chairperson¹ *together* so that they can discuss, share ideas and get clarifications. This type of reading group, in which heads, teachers and the BoG chair read the guide together, is called a Teacher Learning Circle (TLC) and the following steps outline how to organise a TLC at your school.

1) The Principal should consult all teachers to decide on a day and time to meet once a week for one hour. This can be before school starts, during lunch (teachers should be able to eat during the session) or after school. The principal should take a vote amongst teachers on which day/time is most suitable and then write this TLC session into the teaching timetable².



2) If the staff is large conduct more than one TLC a week. The principal should still facilitate one of the TLC sessions but can delegate facilitator responsibilities for the other sessions that week³. All TLC sessions should be written into the timetable.

3) The TLC should be able to complete 1-2 units within an hour (units vary in length); however, the group can stay longer if it wishes.

¹ If the BoG chairperson does not live near the school and cannot easily meet, they should ask a member of the BoG who does live near the school to substitute for them.

² Meeting once a week for one hour is the suggested schedule for TLCs; however, principals and teachers have the flexibility to develop a different schedule to suit their needs as long as the nine units of this guide are covered over the course of 2-3 months. For example, TLCs could be held at weekends or 2-hour sessions could be held bi-weekly – as long as the majority of teachers agree with the schedule.

³ For example, if a school has JSS in the morning and SSS in the afternoon, principals can schedule a TLC session for JSS teachers when they are finished teaching in the afternoon and a TLC session for SSS teachers in the morning before they start teaching.

- 4) **The TLC should be conducted in a quiet room** without disturbances.
- 5) Participants should arrange desks **so that everyone can see each other.**
- 6) Participants should **bring a pen or pencil to write in the guide.**
- 7) All participants must put their **phones on silent mode before the TLC starts.**
- 8) **The heads of school should ensure that all teachers attend.** Principals should make clear that TLC sessions are important meetings that teachers should not miss and that they take priority over any other meetings/activities. Should a teacher miss a TLC for unforeseen circumstances, the principal should ensure that they read the missed units on their own before the next TLC.
- 9) **When/if new teachers enter the school, heads should organise a new TLC** so that new teachers can also be trained on the guide.

How to conduct a Teacher Learning Circle (TLC)

- 1) **The Principal is the facilitator of the TLC and should circulate an attendance sheet at the beginning of each session.** The principal should encourage participants not to be late. The penalty for being more than 10 minutes late is not being registered for attendance.
- 2) **At the beginning, the Principal should also remind participants of the TLC ground rules:**
 - a. All participants should feel free to ask questions
 - b. Participants should be respectful and supportive of each other
 - c. Everyone should participate equally in discussion – no one person should dominate
 - d. A person can have the floor for no more than 3 minutes during discussion
 - e. If a discussion/debate starts to run beyond 10 minutes, the principal can wrap up the discussion and ask the group to move on
 - f. The TLC should not exceed the allocated hour unless agreed upon by teachers
- 3) **The principal should then choose a teacher to start reading aloud. The teacher should read the first paragraph of the new unit while everyone else reads along silently.**
- 4) **After the teacher finishes the first paragraph, the teacher to his/her right should then read the next paragraph. Continue this process until the group finishes the unit.**
- 5) **While reading, all participants should:**
 - a. Underline any sentences or ideas that they think are important, interesting or new
 - b. Put a question mark (?) next to anything they don't agree with
 - c. Circle any words or ideas that need clarification

These issues will be discussed during the reflection time at the end of each unit. Principals should take notes during these discussions and feed back any questions/problems during monitoring visits.

- 6) **If there are any questions for which the group needs further clarification, the principal should write these down** and then refer them to the School Support Officer (SSO) or District Inclusion Officer (DIO) when they next visit the school.

Monitoring and attendance

Attendance at the TLCs is mandatory and the following protocols should be implemented:

- 1) The principal should review/monitor the weekly attendance of teachers. If participants demonstrate inconsistent attendance or excessive lateness, the principal should follow up⁴.
- 2) At the end of each term, the principal should announce and congratulate the teachers with the *best attendance records*.
- 3) School Support Officers and District Inclusion Officers will frequently visit schools to monitor and check that weekly TLCs are taking place.

Documents to be monitored by SSO/DIO

The Principal/Vice Principal should prepare the following documents for monitoring purposes:

- 1) **Schedule of meeting times, days and units covered**
- 2) **Copies of the signed attendance sheet from the TLC sessions**
- 3) **Names of teachers absent and confirmation by the Principal that the absent teachers have read the missed units on their own time**
- 4) **Notes and/or questions that came up during the TLC discussions**

Certification for completing this Guide

Once heads of school, teachers and the BoG Chairperson have successfully completed all the guide units, they will be eligible to do an assessment for certification via their District Inclusion officer (DIO).

The DIO will visit schools and set up individual assessments with all staff interested in receiving a certificate for completing the guide for Reducing Violence in Schools.



The assessment for certification will consist of:

- 1) **One to two questions on key themes from each of the units in the guide**
- 2) **A case study question regarding to how to respond to a particular incident of violence**
- 3) **A review of the participant's attendance record (if their attendance has been below 80% they must provide an explanation as to why and how they have made up for missed sessions).**

Participants who achieve a satisfactory score on the assessment will receive a '*Certificate in Preventing and Responding to School Related Gender Based Violence*'. Staff members who contribute additional time and effort to being on the School Safety Committee will receive a second '*Certificate for Participation in the School Safety Committee*'. This second certificate will be based on members' performance and attendance at committee meetings.

If staff members are unsuccessful in their assessment, they can re-apply for a meeting with the DIO the following year. Successful teachers will only be able to receive a certificate once, except for those

⁴ Principals should also follow up if the BoG member is having attendance issues

who serve on the School Safety Committee, as they will be awarded a certificate for each year they successfully serve.

Unit 2: Understanding School-Related Gender-Based Violence

School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) is defined as physical, psychological or sexual violence against students occurring in and around schools (which can also include the home). It can be committed by teachers, community members, parents, relatives and fellow students. Some examples of SRGBV include:

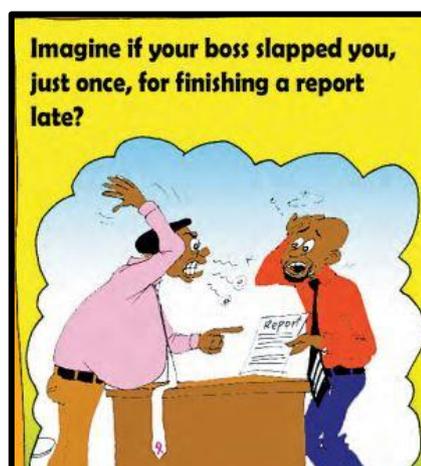
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE:	PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE:	SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caning • Hitting, slapping, punching • Shaking, choking • Pinching • Being placed in painful body postures • Excessive exercise drills or labour as punishment • Preventing use of the toilet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abusive, aggressive or threatening language • Humiliating students by calling them stupid, lazy or other negative names • Bullying, teasing or ridiculing • Verbal harassment • Emotional manipulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering high grades, food, lifts, school fees in exchange for sex • Groping, indecent touching • Unwanted recurrence of staring, following, texting, phoning • Sexually explicit language • Exposing private body parts • Actual/attempted rape • Early marriage or forced marriage • Genital cutting (FGM)

Both, girls and boys can experience SRGBV although they might be affected differently. For example, boys are more likely to experience *physical* violence, like caning and hitting. Students with special needs often experience significant *psychological* violence, like bullying and teasing. Girls are more likely to experience *sexual* violence and harassment. And in some cases, adults, especially female teachers, also experience sexual violence.

Why is SRGBV wrong?

The most common form of *physical* violence against students is caning, which can have very negative effects (think back to how you felt when you were caned as a child). For example:

- 1) It causes physical, psychological and emotional harm.
- 2) It makes students dislike or fear their teachers, which reduces their capacity to learn and demotivates them.
- 3) Students do not learn the 'wrongfulness' of bad behaviour but learn to avoid punishments instead.
- 4) Girls' fear of caning prevents them from participating in class. This leads to an incorrect assumption that girls are shy or less clever.



- 5) Caning low-achieving boys leads to further classroom rebellion (which leads to further beatings) or truancy/dropping out (to avoid more beatings).
- 6) Caning students with special needs for not completing their work is unfair punishment for something that is not their fault. This can also lead to truancy and dropping out.

The most common form of *psychological* violence against students in schools is the use of abusive, humiliating or ridiculing language. Teachers often use abusive language *instead* of caning, but the negative effects on students (as listed) are the same. Students with special needs are often subject to teasing or ridiculing language (from students, teachers, people in the community), particularly if they look or act differently from others.

The most common form of *sexual* violence against students is ‘sex for grades’ or ‘sex for gifts’, in which a relationship (often leading to sex) is prompted by the offering of higher grades, school fees, motorcycle lifts, food, gifts, etc. Some adolescent girls may accidentally consent to such relationships because they appreciate the gifts and do not realise that sex is later expected of them. Unfortunately, because men have much more power in these relationships due to their age, position or money (particularly compared to poor, young and vulnerable girls), they can force girls to have sex against their will - which is rape and a criminal offence. This also leads to high levels of teenage pregnancy.

Another common form of sexual violence against *all* females (including students and teachers) is sexual harassment. **Sexual harassment is treatment that involves *unwanted* verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.** *Unwanted* is a critical word because a victim may consent to certain conduct not because she wants to, but because she feels pressure to do so (like in transactional sex situations). Some examples of sexual harassment were given at the beginning of this unit and below are additional examples.

Examples of sexual harassment:

1. Unwanted nicknames such as, ‘sweetie’, ‘baby’, ‘girlfriend’, ‘prostitute’, etc.
2. Remarks of a sexual nature about a person’s clothing or body
3. Unnecessary and unwanted touching, pinching, massaging, dancing, hugging or brushing up against a person’s body
4. Sexually suggestive stares, sounds or gestures such as winking, licking lips, whistling or sucking noises
5. Sexually explicit jokes, pictures, cartoons or pornography
6. Unwanted recurrence of phoning, texting, emailing, comments on social media, following, gift giving, proposing or asking for a date
7. Unwanted sexual propositions (including those occurring in situations that begin as reciprocal attractions, but later cease to be mutual)
8. Spying on someone that is engaged in intimate behaviours, such as undressing, bathing or any activity that is considered to be private
9. Spreading rumors about a person’s sexual activity, sexuality or speculations about previous sexual experience

Sexual harassment makes a student’s or teacher’s life very uncomfortable – imagine if you (or your daughter, sister or mother) had to experience any of these examples of sexual harassment.

Unfortunately, perpetrators of sexual harassment can be anyone - a superior, a fellow student, a colleague, a relative or a community member.

Finally, other significant forms of sexual violence that affect adolescent girls are early marriage (ie., marriage before the age of 18), forced marriage (ie., a marriage that a person did not choose) and genital cutting (also known as 'female genital mutilation' or FGM). Parents and communities do not often see these as forms of sexual violence due to deeply embedded social norms and cultural traditions. However, all three can have negative impacts on student learning are against Sierra Leonean law (see below).

In summary:

- **SRGBV violates children's fundamental human rights and is a form of discrimination.** Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence, including in their school lives.
- **Experiencing SRGBV can impact children's well-being, their physical and emotional health,** as well as harming their personal development.
- SRGBV interferes with the education of many young people. **It often leads to lower academic achievement and school drop-outs.**

Policies in Sierra Leone prohibit SRGBV in schools:

- **Sierra Leone signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990.** This Convention obliges the Sierra Leonean government to take all legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect children from *all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.*
- **The Child Rights Act (2007)** in Sierra Leone also states that it is the parents' responsibility to protect a child from *neglect, discrimination, violence, abuse, exposure to physical and moral hazards and oppression.*
- **The Sierra Leone Code of Conduct for Teachers and Other Education Personnel (2009)** states that teachers must *establish and maintain zero tolerance for all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse, physical and humiliating forms of punishment, psychological abuse, and child labour.*

REFLECTION: In your TLC, discuss your answers to the following questions:

- 1) Which parts of this unit did you find important, interesting or new?
- 2) Which parts of this unit did you find unclear or disagree with?

If there are many of you, discuss in pairs first and then feed back to the group.

Unit 3: How to set up a School Safety System for SRGBV

This unit provides general guidance on how to set up a system for preventing and responding to SRGBV at school. The following Unit 4 provides specific strategies that schools and teachers can use to reduce physical, psychological and sexual violence.

General guidance on how to prevent and respond to SRGBV

1. **Heads of school should establish a 'zero-tolerance' rule against violence** which should state the following:

This school has a zero-tolerance rule against any forms of violence:		
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE:	PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE:	SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Caning</i> • <i>Hitting, slapping, punching</i> • <i>Shaking, choking</i> • <i>Pinching</i> • <i>Being placed in painful body postures</i> • <i>Excessive exercise drills or labour as punishment</i> • <i>Preventing use of the toilet</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Abusive, aggressive or threatening language</i> • <i>Humiliating students by calling them stupid, lazy or other negative names</i> • <i>Bullying, teasing or ridiculing</i> • <i>Verbal harassment</i> • <i>Emotional manipulation</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Offering high grades, food, lifts, school fees in exchange for sex</i> • <i>Groping, indecent touching</i> • <i>Unwanted recurrence of staring, following, texting, phoning</i> • <i>Sexually explicit language</i> • <i>Exposing private body parts</i> • <i>Actual/attempted rape</i> • <i>Early or forced marriage</i> • <i>Genital cutting (FGM)</i>
<p>If students experience any of the above, report it to a school mentor or write a note for the School Suggestion Box</p>		

2. **Principals should disseminate this zero-tolerance rule to all teachers, students, parents and community members.** This can be done at assemblies, at BoG/CTA meetings and through murals that are painted on school walls⁵. The diagram above could be used as the basis for a school mural.
3. **Heads of school should have teachers annually read and sign a form stating that they adhere to the Sierra Leone Code of Conduct for Teachers and Other Education Personnel** (especially the following section 2.2.3). All teachers should be given a photocopy of the Code of Conduct. If teachers do not adhere to it, principals should hold offenders to account. This text can be made into a mural to be painted on the school wall as well.

⁵ The GLADI programme will support schools with murals and brochures for students.

Teacher Code of Conduct

2.2.3 Teachers and other education personnel shall:

1. promote safe and conducive learning environment
2. ensure that learners are treated with dignity and respect and their rights fully protected
3. establish and maintain zero tolerance for all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse, physical and humiliating forms of punishment, psychological abuse, and child labour
4. eliminate all forms of discrimination at all times
5. employ positive methods of corrective discipline
6. actively promote the concept of 'the best interest of the child' in every event
7. participate in co-curricular activities for the benefit of the learners
8. encourage learners to develop as active, responsible and efficient individuals
9. promote an atmosphere of trust
10. exercise due care, diligence and confidentiality in all matters affecting the welfare of the learners

4. **Heads of school should establish two ways in which students can report violence:** 1) through female and male school mentors or 2) through a suggestion box

5. **Nominate a female and male School Mentor:** Being a mentor is a significant position because they are the first port of call if a student wants to report a case of SRGBV. Mentors should be patient, kind, trustworthy and good with students (more detail on mentors' roles and responsibilities are in units 6 and 7). Most JSSs have already nominated a male and female teacher to be mentors at their school; if any of your mentors have since left, please replace them.⁶ SSSs have not yet nominated one female and one male teacher to be mentors for their schools⁷ - please nominate a female and male member of staff to be mentors for your school now.

6. **Establish a School Suggestion Box:** These boxes aim to provide students with a safe and anonymous way to report any problems they experience, such as violence. Most JSSs already have a suggestion box – SSSs should aim to build or acquire one as soon as possible. The suggestion box should have a slit for notes and lock to keep the notes safe. **The suggestion box should not be placed in front of the principal's or vice**



principal's office. The aim of the suggestion box is to provide students with an *anonymous* way to report problems. If the box is in front of the principal's or VP's office, students may not feel comfortable placing a note in the box for fear of being seen. Please place the suggestion box in a private location on the school grounds where students won't be seen using it.

7. **Heads of school should establish a School Safety Committee⁸** to respond to reports of violence that may come via a mentor or the suggestion box. School Safety Committees (SSC) should be

⁶ Most JSSs also appointed peer mentors last academic year. It is not necessary to appoint new peer mentors at this point. New roles will be established with the revised Girls' and Boys clubs.

⁷ In the absence of a female teacher in school, a trusted female activist or nurse from the community should be appointed

⁸ The school safety committee should be a separate committee from the disciplinary committee.

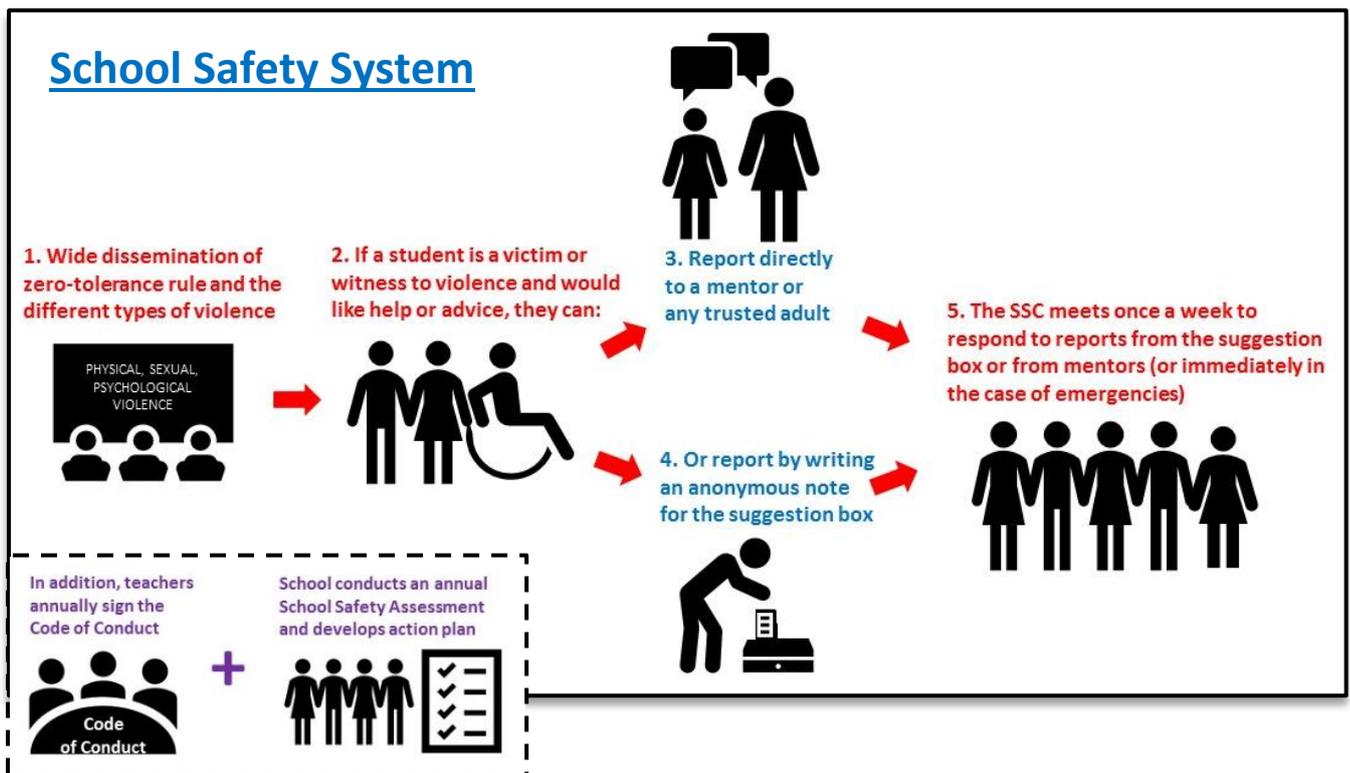
comprised of the principal, vice principal, female mentor, male mentor and guidance counsellor⁹. SSCs should meet once a week with the primary goal of reviewing notes submitted to the suggestion box and taking necessary action to address issues. The roles and responsibilities for the SSC are discussed on pages 24-29 of this guide.



- 8. Conduct a School Safety Self-Assessment:** These self-assessments should be conducted by the School Safety Committee on an annual basis with members of the BoG and CTA. This assessment includes a mapping of safe and unsafe spaces by students and will also form the basis for an action plan to improve the school's safety. More information on this activity is in Unit 9, page 31.

Overall School Safety System to prevent and respond to SRGBV

This unit has provided guidance on how to set up a system for preventing, reporting and responding to SRGBV at school. The diagram below illustrates this system (and can also be the basis for a mural in the school). Heads of school, with assistance from *all* teachers, should discuss which parts of this system are not happening on a regular basis, and what needs to happen in order to make this system work.



In addition to this, the following section outlines the roles and responsibilities for *all* school stakeholders regarding this School Safety System.

⁹ The School Safety Committee can also include the BoG chair if deemed appropriate

Roles and Responsibilities for the School Safety System

Below is a table that outlines some of the key roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders to ensure that the school safety system is functional. The list is not exhaustive and other responsibilities will likely come up, but if everyone contributes the below actions at a minimum, it will certainly improve the safety of the school.

Heads of schools (principals, vice principals) should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a Zero-Tolerance Policy against violence in and around school and ensure offenders of violence are held accountable. 2. Ensure all teachers read and sign the Code of Conduct for Teachers on an annual basis. Ensure that those who don't adhere are held accountable. 3. Ensure a female/male mentor are appointed and a suggestion box is in place. 4. Establish a school safety committee (SSC) and ensure members meet once a week. 5. Check the school suggestion box daily with a mentor – if there are cases that cannot wait for the weekly SSC meeting, the principal should call an emergency meeting. 6. Attend all SSC meetings and support with internal/external responses to violence. 7. Facilitate the Teacher Learning Circles on this guide for Reducing Violence Schools. 8. Ensure continuous and regular sensitisation of BoG, CTA, teachers and students on the reporting and referral mechanisms for SRGBV. 9. Together with the SSC, the BoG and CTA chairpersons, conduct an annual school safety self-assessment to identify areas that need to be addressed. 10. Ensure a school safety action plan is developed (based on the self-assessment) and implemented in collaboration with the BoG and CTA.
The School Safety Committee should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet once a week to review reports from mentors and the suggestion box¹⁰ 2. In case of an emergency, the school safety committee must meet immediately to respond to a report made. 3. The SSC must discuss reports received and decide if the issues may be resolved at the school level or whether it needs to be referred. School level responses should follow protocols outlined on pages 25-26. 4. If referred, the SSC must follow all protocol outlined on pages 27-28. 5. Log all discussions reported by mentors and all notes submitted to the suggestion box. 6. Together with the Principal, the BoG and CTA chairpersons, conduct an annual school safety self-assessment to identify areas that need to be addressed.
Mentors and all teachers should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish classroom rules for students based on the Zero-Tolerance policy. 2. Adhere to the Teacher Code of Conduct and Zero-Tolerance policy. 3. Attend all Teacher Learning Circles on this guide for Reducing Violence in Schools. 4. Use alternative strategies to caning (see Unit 4). Develop and share more strategies. 5. Provide continuous sensitisation of students on the different types of SRGBV, the guide for Reducing Violence in School and how to report violence. 6. Volunteer to support students with a mapping of safe and unsafe areas in the school to feed into the school safety self-assessment. 7. Mentors should check the school suggestion box with the principal on a daily basis, attend all School Safety Committee meetings, and support with internal/external responses to reports of violence and provide counselling to victims. 8. Mentors should provide oversight and support to the Girls' and Boys' clubs, which equip children with knowledge and skills regarding SRGBV. 9. Mentors should oversee the painting of murals and dissemination of summary sheets on aspects of the school safety system.

¹⁰ Attendance should be recorded at the SSC meetings to record who was present. Those members who are absent for more than 25% of meetings will not be eligible for a 'Certificate for Participation and Contribution to the School Safety Committee'

Students should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adhere to the Zero-Tolerance policy against violence in school. 2. Volunteer and conduct a mapping of safe and unsafe areas in their school to feed into the school safety assessment. 3. Volunteer to paint murals and disseminate summary sheets on aspects of the school safety system. 4. Report any violence in the school or community for themselves or on behalf of others. 5. Make suggestions to improve the safety of students, particularly girls and students with special needs in schools. 6. Participate in girls' and boys' clubs to learn skills on how to prevent and respond to SRGBV, amongst other topics.
Board of Governors and Community Teachers Association should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure a safe school environment, facilities (including accessibility for children with special needs) as well as access routes. 2. Monitor and ensure that all teachers/students adhere to the Zero-Tolerance Policy against violence in and around school. 3. Ensure school authorities or parents/guardians do not compromise reported cases. 4. Liaise between school and community on safety issues. 5. Participate in the annual school safety self-assessment. The findings should then be presented to the wider BoG and CTA. 6. Contribute to the development of the school safety action plan, which is based on the mapping of safe/unsafe areas by students and the school self-assessment. 7. Monitor the implementation of the school safety action plan – at a minimum, review progress at the end of every term. 8. The BoG Chairperson should attend all Teacher Learning Circle meetings on the guide for Reducing Violence in Schools and brief other BoG members accordingly. 9. The BoG chair should monitor that the School Safety Committee meets weekly. 10. The BoG chair can also sit on the School Safety Committee if deemed appropriate.
Communities (Paramount Chiefs, Village Development Committees, parents and guardians) should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in all aspects of school policy, management (including CTA meetings) and the development of the school safety action plan. 2. Ensure provision of some financial, material and/or human resources for implementing and monitoring of school safety action plan and monitor the implementation of it. 3. Chiefs (and customary law officers) to adopt by-laws for the prevention of SRGBV and other forms of traditional and harmful practices (such as early and forced marriage) to ensure girls are in school and are safe. 4. Ensure school authorities or parents/guardians do not compromise reported cases. 5. Develop mechanisms to support vulnerable students, particularly girls and children with special needs, to be and stay in school and monitor attendance of students.
District Education Offices and Local Councils:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enforce relevant policies (e.g. Education Act 2004, Education Policy 2010, Code of Conduct for Teachers and other Education Personnel, Child Rights Act 2007, etc.). 2. Provide support with any external responses/referrals for reported cases of violence. 3. In collaboration with communities, develop and enforce by-laws for the prevention of SRGBV and related issues.

REFLECTION: In your TLC, discuss your answers to the following questions:

- 1) Which parts of this unit did you find important, interesting or new?
- 2) Which parts of this unit did you find unclear or disagree with?

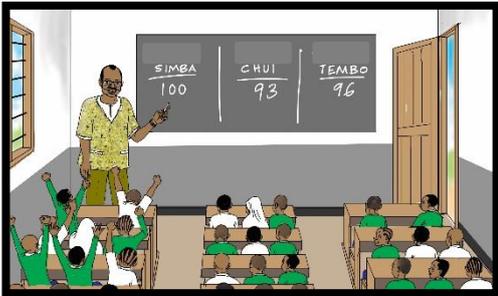
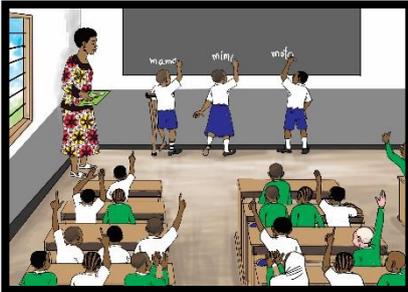
If there are many of you, discuss in pairs first and then feedback to the group.

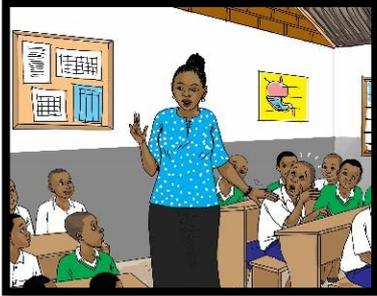
Unit 4: Strategies to Reduce Physical Violence

The last unit provided general guidance on how to set up a system for preventing and responding to SRGBV at school. This unit provides specific strategies that teachers can use to reduce physical violence in schools. The following units discuss strategies for sexual and psychological violence.

Alternative strategies to corporal punishment

To support teachers to reduce caning in class, below is a table that lists common reasons why teachers often feel forced to cane and then presents alternative strategies. Teachers should try the strategies in your class and if they work, keep using them and let others know!

Reasons for using the cane	Alternative strategies	
<p>The class is large, so it is difficult to get students to be quiet, listening and ready to learn.</p>	<p>1. The teacher can establish a game with pupils by saying: ‘If you see me waiting for the class to be quiet and listen, put up your hand’. All the pupils will start to put up their hands and the last ones (who are talking or not paying attention) will quickly be quiet and join in.</p>	
	<p>2. Divide the class into groups (if you have a large class with three rows of desks, create one group per row). Let the students name their group. Announce that each group has 100 marks at the start of the lesson and tell students that if someone from their group is caught doing an unhelpful behaviour, a point will be deducted from their group’s total. Let the students provide examples of what they think are ‘unhelpful behaviours’ (e.g. when a student isn’t quiet, talks during the lesson, or does work for another class). Deduct points while you are teaching and at the end of the lesson, announce who is the winning group.</p>	
	<p>3. Students will pay more attention to your lesson if you make it active and interesting. Try to use competitions to teach lessons – students will pay attention if they are able to compete. Also make sure to pick those students who are not paying attention to be involved in the competition.</p>	

Reasons for using the cane	Alternative strategies
<p>When I'm teaching there are always students talking, especially in the back of class.</p>	 <p>1. Walk around class while you are teaching and then stop at the student(s) who are talking. Then stand next to them and put your hand on their shoulder while you continue to teach (if you cannot or do not want to touch the student, just stand close so that they know you are there). This will make the student conscious that you know what they are doing and they will stop talking. If they start talking again after this technique, temporarily switch their seats with those students in the front row.</p> <p>2. Students respond very well to positive reinforcement. Take 15 minutes to ask students what they think are good behaviours and agree as a class on these (being ready to listen, not doing homework for another class, not talking in class, etc.). Tell them that if they have achieved all of these behaviours in a day, they have a chance to become 'Student of the Day', which means that the next day you will announce the winning student and write their name on the board and give them a privilege. You could agree the privilege with the students beforehand, like being the first to leave for lunch or to go home. When choosing the Student of the Day, try to choose students who need more encouragement. If you make students feel special for behaving well they will keep doing it.</p>
<p>There are too many students in class so it is not possible to form groups quickly and quietly.</p>	<p>Take 15 minutes out of a lesson to establish a routine to form groups. Put the students into a grouping that is required (for example, groups for sharing a book or ability levels), try to ensure equal numbers of girls and boys if possible/appropriate, advise where the group should sit in the room, and assign a group leader (remember to have just as many female leaders as male leaders!). Tell the group that they are now a team and can choose a team name.</p> <p>Tell the students that when you announce that it is 'group time', they have to organise themselves into these teams (the leader is in charge). Tell them it is a race to see which team gets organised first. After the teams are formed, announce the winner, write their name on the board and have the class clap for them.</p> 

Reasons for using the cane	Alternative strategies
<p>A student was caught cheating, stealing, or doing something bad. What is the best way to discipline them?</p>	<p>For serious discipline problems, you can try a strategy called 'detention'. First, talk to the student and ask them if they think what they did was wrong. Make sure they understand why it was a bad choice and make sure there aren't any other problems at home that might have caused them to behave that way. Second, tell them that they will not be able to go out for lunch breaks for a certain number of days (determine the number of days based on what they did). Do let the student get food but have them eat in the classroom and write a story or essay on why their behaviour was wrong. Depending on how many days you have them stay in class, you can also have them write essays on how they will prevent the same behaviour in the future. Notify the child's parents about the detention strategy and what the child did to warrant it.</p>
<p>There are students who come to school late, dirty or without books. How can I prevent this from happening again?</p>	<div data-bbox="464 819 863 1115" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>If pupils come late or unprepared to class, first ask them why. If there is a serious problem, try to counsel them. If they do not have a good reason, tell them that they have two more warnings until they have 'detention' (which means that they will not be able to take their lunch break). If they do this for the third time, try the detention strategy.</p>
<p>There are students who don't do as well as they could on exams. How can I ensure that they will study hard and perform well?</p>	<p>As discussed previously, students respond well to positive reinforcement. In addition to having a 'Student of the Day' for good behaviour, you can also create awards for 'Best Performing Students' and 'Most Improved Students' to motivate students to study. Aim to have awards for the top three girls and top three boys for each category (depending on the size of your class). Prior to upcoming exams, let students know about these awards and explain that if they are winners, their names will be announced at assembly and they will be given a special privilege for a week (like being the first to leave class for lunch break or to go home). When choosing the 'Most Improved Student' winners, try to focus on those who need more encouragement. If you make students feel special for trying they will keep doing it. For students who still do not improve, rather than cane, take time to see if they have a learning difficulty or a problem at home.</p>

REFLECTION: In your TLC, discuss your answers to the following questions:

- 1) Which parts of this unit did you find important, interesting or new?
- 2) Which parts of this unit did you find unclear or disagree with?
- 3) Do you have any examples of alternative strategies that you can share?

If there are many of you, discuss first in pairs and then feedback to the group.

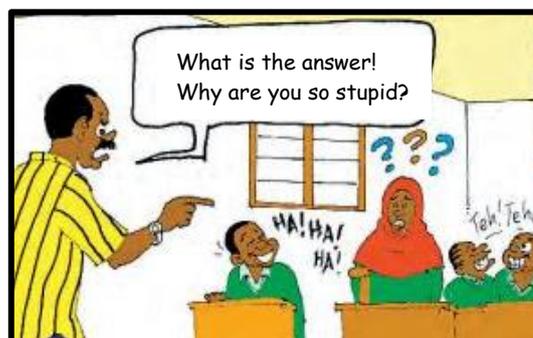
Unit 5: Strategies to Reduce Psychological and Sexual Violence

The previous unit provided specific strategies on how to reduce physical violence in school, such as caning. This unit will discuss specific strategies on how to reduce the most common forms of psychological and sexual violence in and around schools.

Reducing psychological violence against students

As discussed in Unit 2, **the most common form of psychological violence against students in schools is the use of abusive, humiliating or ridiculing language.**

Such language can have an extremely negative effect on students. For example, it makes students dislike or fear their teachers, which reduces their capacity to learn, demotivates them and some cases, makes them drop out. Imagine if your manager spoke to you in an abusive, humiliating or ridiculing way – how would that make you feel? Do you think that would make you try harder? Probably not.



There are steps that teachers can take to reduce the use of abusive language:

- 1) **Pause before speaking or yelling.** Take a deep breath.
- 2) **Identify the problem.** Think about why you're angry or frustrated.
- 3) **Consider the consequences of your actions.** Will your students dislike you and fear you? How would you feel if your boss used the same abusive language to you? Would you feel motivated to change or work hard?
- 4) **Consider other strategies before using abusive language.** If you have a discipline problem with a student, see if any of the strategies in Unit 4 could provide a solution. If you're frustrated with a student not giving an answer, consider that there may be a problem at home that you aren't aware of. Be kind, thank the student for trying, and try to speak to him/her after class.

Teachers have also been known to target girls with abusive and humiliating language based on judgements about them having boyfriends or being teenage mothers. Teachers *should not* make judgemental comments because they are humiliating and can be considered psychological violence. Such comments are not helpful and will not deter young women from engaging in risky behaviour. If anything, it will make female students not respect or listen to their teachers.

In addition to this, students with learning or intellectual difficulties are often subject to abusive language because they cannot give a correct answer, they cannot concentrate, or they cannot complete their work. It can be difficult to identify students with learning or intellectual difficulties because these impairments not obvious like physical impairments. However, rather than get frustrated with students who may have difficulties in class, teachers should be sympathetic and patient towards them, and try to pair them up with a 'buddy' who can provide support.

Students with more obvious difficulties, particularly those that make them look or act differently from others, are often subject to harsh teasing or ridiculing language (from students, teachers, people in the community). **Heads of school and teachers should prevent this and all types of bullying and teasing by setting ground rules for the school and in classrooms.**

How to set ground rules and prevent psychological violence:

1. State that *all* students should treat each other with respect
2. Always refer to the zero-tolerance rule against violence in school
3. Specifically state rules in class that prevent teasing, bullying or using ridiculing language
4. Encourage students to contribute additional ground rules as well

Reducing sexual violence against students

As discussed in Unit 2, the most common form of *sexual* violence against students is ‘**sex for grades**’ or ‘**sex for gifts**’, in which a relationship (often leading to sex) is prompted by the offering of higher grades, school fees, motorcycle lifts, food, gifts, etc. Another common form of sexual violence is **sexual harassment**, which is treatment that involves *unwanted* verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In order to reduce both types of sexual violence, heads of school should state that teachers engaging in sexual violence will be terminated (and not allowed to transfer to another school). Heads should also reiterate the following from **The Code of Conduct for Teachers and Other Education Personnel:**

2.2.3 Teachers and other education personnel shall:

- Establish and maintain zero tolerance for all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse, physical and humiliating forms of punishment, psychological abuse, and child labour
- Actively promote the concept of ‘the best interest of the child’ in every event

Given these mandates, sex for grades is most certainly against the Teacher Code of Conduct, particularly because it is not in the best interest of the child. As discussed in Unit 2, **some adolescent girls accidentally accept gifts, motorbike lifts or grades offered by community members or teachers, and do not realise that sex is later expected of them.** Unfortunately, because men have much more power in these relationships due to their age, position or money (particularly compared to poor, young and vulnerable girls), they can force girls to have sex against their will, often because they think it is owed to them. **But forcing someone to have sex is rape and a criminal offence. Having sex with a girl under the age of 18 is also a criminal offence.** Heads of school, BoGs and CTAs should ensure that teachers and community members understand that sex for grades and sex for gifts is illegal.

In addition to this, the Teacher Code of Conduct also mandates that sexual harassment is prohibited. Unit 2 provided examples of sexual harassment and these examples should be disseminated widely amongst students, teachers and community members. Students and teachers should understand that **there are two main tests to determine if a behaviour can be considered sexual harassment:**

- 1) **Is the behaviour of a sexual nature?**
- 2) **Is it unwanted or unwelcomed by the victim?**

If a student or teacher believes that they are experiencing unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature they should first, where possible, make it clear to the harasser that the behaviour is unwelcome, that it is offensive and that it should immediately cease. If a victim is not comfortable approaching the harasser on her own, or if she has asked the harasser to stop but the offensive behaviour continues, the following unit outlines the reporting systems for resolving the problem.

Finally, other significant forms of sexual violence discussed in Unit 2 were early marriage (ie., marriage before the age of 18), forced marriage (ie., a marriage that a person did not choose) and genital cutting (also known as 'female genital mutilation' or FGM). Parents do not often see these as forms of sexual violence due to deeply embedded social norms and cultural traditions. However, BoGs, CTAs and teachers should try to sensitise parents and communities against them because they negatively impact learning and are against the law. Below are some reasons why parents believe in these activities, and some arguments that can be used to convince them otherwise.

	Reasons why parents believe in it	Arguments to convince parents that it is wrong and should be discouraged
Early and forced marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is believed that bride price will provide income for the family It is believed that early marriage prevents a daughter from having 'unsuitable' relationships It is believed that early marriage aligns with cultural or religious norms It is believed that forced marriage is how to deal with the consequences of pregnancy out of wedlock It is believed that arranging marriage is the duty of the parents and that girls should not have a choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sierra Leone 2007 Child Rights Act prohibits any kind of early marriage for girls or boys under the age of 18 – it is a criminal act that is against the law. Even if a girl is over 18, it is illegal to force her into a marriage under any circumstance. After the war, 'forced marriage' was prosecuted as a 'crime against humanity' in Sierra Leone's post-conflict Special Court. If a daughter can complete her education and marry when older, she will be able to get a job and contribute to the family's income in a more substantial and consistent way than through bride price. Even if a girl is accidentally pregnant, she should continue her education so that she can get a job and support her family and her child. Again, forcing her to marry is illegal. If a daughter marries young, she is likely to experience mistreatment, violence, abuse and forced sex by an older husband. Use positive examples of families from the community who did <i>not</i> force a marriage or marry their daughter early and show the benefits that came from that.
Genital cutting (FGM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is believed to add to the esteem of women and make a woman complete It serves as a source of livelihood for the head of the society It is believed to give women a sense of respect and belonging in the society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many chiefdoms have bi-laws that ban genital cutting for any child before the age of 18 – it is a criminal act that is against the law. The genital cutting ceremony is very costly to do – parents should not pay so much money for something that is against the law and could get them into trouble. The effects of cutting are severe pain, excessive bleeding, difficulty passing urine and infections. It can also cause immediate death from haemorrhage, infections, death in childbirth, increased risk of birth complications, and infertility. Use positive examples of families from the community who did <i>not</i> do genital cutting and show that the women are very much respected and of high esteem without it.

REFLECTION: In your TLC, discuss your answers to the following questions:

- 1) Which parts of this unit did you find important, interesting or new?
- 2) Which parts of this unit did you find unclear or disagree with?

If there are many of you, discuss first in pairs and then feedback to the group.

Unit 6: How Students Should Report SRGBV



Despite the prevention measures discussed in Units 4 and 5, cases of SRGBV will still occur. If students are sensitised to all the different types of violence and are also encouraged to report it, it is highly likely that the number of reports of SRGBV will go up. This is good, because reporting *all* cases is the first step towards reducing violence in schools.

If you recall from Unit 3, there were two main ways that students can report violence. These two ways should be widely disseminated to all students, either via assembly and/or through murals on the wall. Use the diagram to the left as the basis for a mural.

Reporting violence to a mentor or trusted adult

Students should be able to approach any trusted adult to seek help or advice regarding violence that occurs at school or in the community. Female and male mentors have been nominated because they have good relationships with students, but a student may also feel comfortable to make a report to a teacher, the heads of school, a parent, neighbour, etc. No matter who the student talks to, adults should do the following:

- 1. Take the student to a private location in the school where they feel comfortable to make the report. Any empty room or office is fine.**
 - Ensure that nobody can overhear the conversation.
 - Have writing materials available for making notes.
 - Ask the student if it is okay for you to talk about their case only to those people who will be able to help (like to guide). Assure them the case will remain confidential amongst those who need to be involved.
- 2. Ask the student to describe what happened or what they would like to report and make notes while the student is speaking.**
 - Listen to the entire report from the student and do not try to seek help while the report is being given.
 - Do not ask leading questions but do probe so that you have sufficient detail and understanding.
 - Do not blame the student.

- Once the student has finished their report, summarize the key points to ensure you captured the information provided correctly.

3. Assure the student that you will speak to the School Safety Committee about next steps to get them help.

- Remind the student that they gave you permission to speak about their case to others, like the guide, who will be able to help. Assure the student the case will remain confidential amongst those who need to be involved.
- Ensure that they will be protected from any further violence or abuse.



Reporting violence through the Suggestion Box

If students feel uncomfortable speaking to an adult initially, they have the option to report anonymously by writing a note for the suggestion box. Please follow the below steps to ensure this reporting mechanism is successful:

1. Use a wooden box that has a small opening for inserting a folded piece of paper.

- The box must have a padlock with two keys.
- One key must be kept with the principal and one with the female school mentor.

2. Identify a secure, private location on the school grounds for the box in consultation with students. The location should be easily accessible, but somewhere people won't notice if someone is dropping a note in the box. **The box should *not* be placed somewhere students can be easily seen, like in front of the principal's office.**

3. Provide students the following Suggestion Box orientation at assemblies¹¹:

The School Suggestion Box provides students with a way to make suggestions to improve the school, as well as an *anonymous* way to report problems that require help (students can also report on behalf of someone else). Problems can include things like bullying, teasing, harassment or corporal punishment. Students can also get help if they experience serious problems in their home or community, such as physical or sexual abuse, rape, or forced marriage. The School Safety Committee will open the box and read the notes once a week in order to provide immediate help, advice and follow up on *all* issues. The Principal and female mentor will also check the box daily to monitor for emergencies. If there is a case that requires immediate attention, the School Safety Committee will hold an emergency meeting.

4. Make sure that the box is opened daily by the principal and female mentor (to monitor notes for emergencies) and once a week by the School Safety Committee, to review the notes and respond. Principals should always remind students that the SSC meets once a week and are following up on reports.

¹¹ Students will also be sensitised to violence and reporting methods through GLADI Girls' and Boys' Club activities.

Addressing reports through the School Safety Committee

1. As discussed in Unit 3, the school must establish a school safety committee¹². **The SSC must be comprised of five to eight representatives** including heads of schools, female and male mentors, guidance counsellors, and up to three senior teachers or BoG/CTA members.

2. **If possible, at least three SSC members should be female¹³.**

3. **The school safety committee must meet once a week to review reports from mentors and the suggestion box¹⁴.** The Principal and female mentor will also check the box daily to monitor for emergencies. If there is a case that requires immediate attention, the School Safety Committee should immediately hold an emergency meeting.

4. **The SSC must discuss reports received and decide if the issues may be resolved at the school level or whether it needs to be referred.** Further information on how to resolve cases will be discussed in the next unit.

5. **The SSC should start an SRGBV Emergency Fund.** This fund can be made up of fines paid by perpetrators (see 'punitive measures' on page 28) and can support victims who may need money for transport to or fees at medical facilities or the FSU. Fines paid into this fund should be carefully logged and kept in a locked safe place. The BoG should monitor the security of this fund.

6. **The SSC must log all reports from mentors and notes submitted to the suggestion box.** All reports and notes, as well as the response to them, should be logged (see Unit 8 for further information on logging cases). Students may also submit notes that do not regard violence – these cases their responses should be logged as well.



REFLECTION: In your TLC, discuss your answers to the following questions:

- 1) Which parts of this unit did you find important, interesting or new?
- 2) Which parts of this unit did you find unclear or disagree with?

If there are many of you, discuss first in pairs and then feedback to the group.

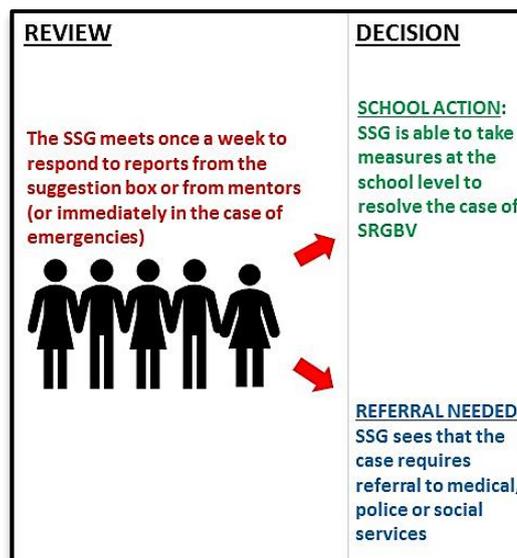
¹² The school safety committee should be a separate committee from the disciplinary committee.

¹³ If no female teachers are available in the school, female representatives from the community can be included in the committee.

¹⁴ Attendance should be recorded at the SSC meetings to record who was present. Those members who are absent for more than 25% of meetings will not be eligible for a 'Certificate for Participation and Contribution to the School Safety Committee'

Unit 7: How School Safety Committees should respond to SRGBV

As discussed in the previous unit, the School Safety Committee must review reports received through mentors and the suggestion box. Through these discussions, the SSC will decide if the issues can be resolved at the school level or whether the incident must be referred to district education, medical, police or social services. This unit discusses what should be done in both of these cases.



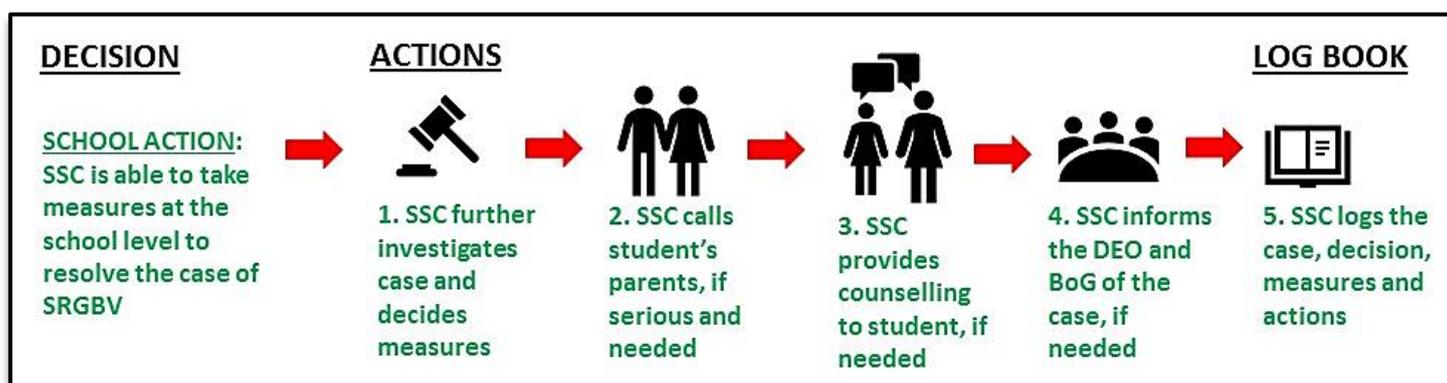
Reports that can be addressed at school level

Depending on severity, below are types of SRGBV that can be potentially addressed at school level:

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE:	PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE:	SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caning • Pinching • Being placed in painful body postures • Excessive exercise drills or labour as punishment • Preventing use of the toilet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abusive, aggressive or threatening language • Humiliating students by calling them stupid or lazy • Bullying, teasing or ridiculing • Verbal harassment • Emotional manipulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groping, indecent touching • Unwanted recurrence of staring, following, texting, phoning • Sexually explicit language, advances, harassment

After the SSC reviews the case of violence and decides that it was *not* severe enough to cause bodily harm or did not involve a criminal act, the following actions should be taken to resolve the case at the school level:

School-level response to non-severe cases of violence



1. If the school safety committee decides that the case can be resolved at the school level, **the SSC should discuss whether further investigation is needed** (due to lack of information/detail, need for clarification, etc.).
2. **The SSC should decide who will be responsible for further investigation.** Since suggestion box notes are anonymous, the SSC may not know which student they need to talk to. The SSC should try to determine from the note if it is a girl or boy who is the victim of SRGBV. If it is a girl, then the female mentor should speak to the girls in each class separately from the boys and tell them that whoever wrote the note can come to her for further guidance and support. If the victim is male, the male mentor should speak to the boys in every class and do the same.
3. **Upon being sufficiently informed about the case, the SSC must decide on punitive measures against the offender.** Below are some examples of punitive measures that a school can take. The SSC should discuss which is most appropriate (or suggest another measure) and take a vote on whether it should be applied. As discussed previously, one punitive measure is to have adult perpetrators pay a fine into an SRGBV Emergency Fund. This fund would support victims who may need money for transport to or fees at medical facilities or the FSU. Fines paid into this fund should be carefully logged and kept in a locked safe place, and be monitored by the BoG, if needed.

Punitive measures for offenders of violence at the school-level

Teachers	Students	Community Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal or written warning that if repeated, they will be terminated from post • Formal apology letter to victim • Writing an essay on what they did and why it was wrong • Counselling • Loss of guide for Reducing Violence in Schools certificate • Public apology • Naming and shaming • Paying a fine to the SRGBV emergency fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal or written warning that if repeated, they will be expelled from school • Formal apology letter • Completing school or community service • Writing an essay on what they did and why it was wrong • Counselling • 'Detention' strategy (see Unit 4, p 19) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal warning or written warning that if repeated, they will be reported to the local authorities • Briefing on Unit 2 (on SRGBV and its impacts) by the SSC • Formal apology letter to victim • Public apology • Naming and shaming • Counselling • Paying a fine to the SRGBV emergency fund

4. **The school must inform the parents/guardians** of the victim about the incident if it would be helpful or is necessary.
5. **School mentors and/or guidance counsellor must provide counselling to victim** if needed.
6. **The school must inform the DEO and BoG** of the case and measures taken, if necessary.
7. Incidents must be resolved no more than 14 days after the report is made.

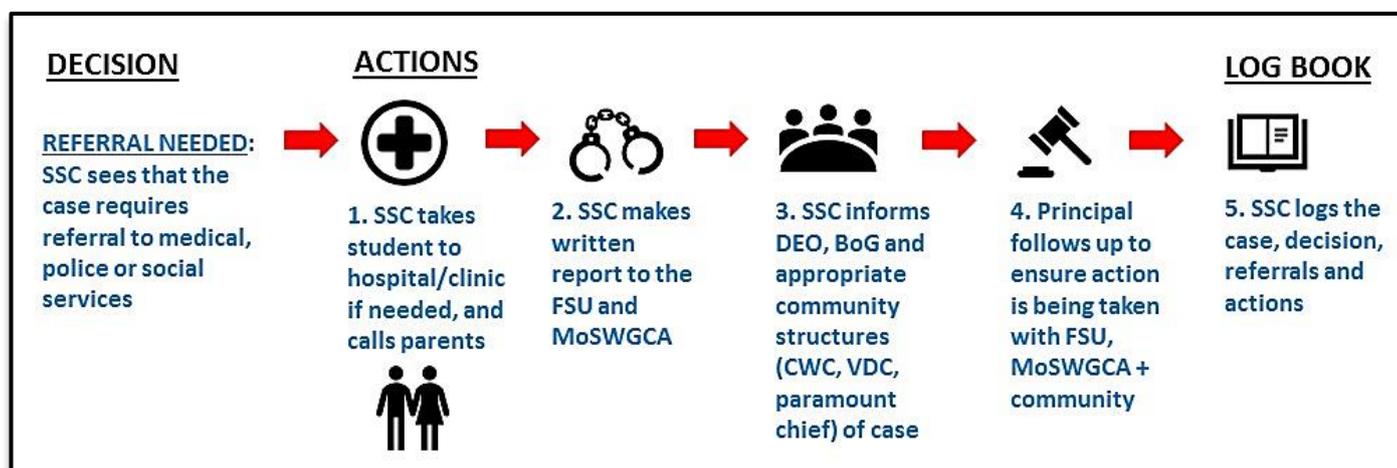
Serious Reports that require referral

Below are the types of SRGBV that often require external intervention, **usually because the act has caused bodily harm and/or is a criminal act:**

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE:	SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe caning • Hitting, slapping, punching • Shaking, choking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering high grades, food, lifts, school fees, in exchange for sex • Exposing private body parts • Actual/attempted rape • Early marriage or forced marriage • Genital cutting (FGM)

After the SSC reviews the incident of violence and decides that it requires further support and intervention from external organisations, the following actions must be taken:

Response to violence that requires referrals



1. **Before any serious cases are reported, heads of schools should establish a contact list of district or local focal points from whom they can seek support for severe cases of SRGBV. This should include contact numbers for the closest focal points for:** Police Family Support Unit (FSU), medical facilities, child welfare committee (CWC) or other child protection services, district officer for the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs (MSWGCA), any relevant NGOs (such as Rainbo – see box below) and the school’s DIO. These focal points’ contact numbers should be posted in a visible place for the SSC, teachers, students and community members to use.

2. **If there is an emergency and a victim requires urgent medical attention, he or she should be taken for treatment to a medical facility.** The SSC must inform the parents/guardians of the incident and the need for medical attention. In cases of aggravated GBV (ie., attempted or actual rape) the first point of referral is often the FSU as they will refer victims to hospitals that can

Rainbo Centres provide *free* medical and psychosocial support to survivors of physical and sexual assault (and can support with FSU reports). Rainbo Centres are located in government hospitals in **Freetown** (+232 76668052), **Kenema** (+232 76716157), **Kono** (+232 76919501), **Makeni** (Midwifery School) (+232 75151930) and **Bo** (+232 75916291). For more information please visit, www.rainboinitiative.sl.

provide treatment and medical certificates used for police investigations. Victims will be examined by a medical doctor with consultation fees in some areas ranging from 30,000-80,000 Leones¹⁵. At PHUs, no medical certificate is provided and so this evidence would be lacking if the case reached court. However, if you are in Freetown, Kenema, Kono, Makeni or Bo, there are Rainbo Centres that provide free medical care for victims of physical or sexual assault (see yellow box). The Rainbo Centres then liaise with the FSU to report the assault and provide a medical certificate on behalf of the victim. In areas that do not have Rainbo Centres, the SSC should use their best judgement about whether the victim requires medical attention first before going to the FSU.

3. **If the victim does not require medical attention, but the type of SRGBV still requires external intervention due to bodily harm and/or a criminal act, the SSC should decide if further investigation is needed.** If so, the SSC should try to determine from the suggestion box note if it is a girl or boy who is the victim. If it is a girl, then the female mentor should speak to the girls in each class separately from the boys and tell them that whoever wrote the note should come to her for further guidance and support. If the victim is male, the male mentor should speak to the boys in every class and do the same.
4. Once further investigation and/or medical attention has been completed, **the SSC needs to write up a factual account of the abuse, including details of the victim, perpetrator and what actually happened.** This account should be provided to the FSU and district officer of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA).¹⁶
5. **School mentors and/or guidance counsellor must provide counselling to victim** if needed.
6. The school must also **inform the BoG, the District Education Office (DEO) and any appropriate community structures (such as the Child Welfare Committee, Village Development Committee, paramount chief)** about the incident and actions taken.
7. If a report has been given to the FSU **the head of school or school mentor must follow-up within 48 hours to ensure action is being taken** and/or initiated at either community or district level and the case should be resolved within one month.
8. **The SSC can recommend disciplinary action at the school level while investigations are taking place.** In the event that the alleged perpetrator is a teacher or student, immediate suspension from school during the investigation by BoG is appropriate. If a conviction is made, the perpetrator should be terminated or expelled permanently from the school. Convicted community members should not be able to come within a 3 km radius of the school.
9. **If for any reason a conviction is *not* made, the SSC should review the evidence and if they feel the perpetrator *should* be terminated or expelled (particularly to prevent repeated cases), they should make this recommendation to the DEO.** In addition to immediate termination or expulsion, the SSC should discuss any additional punitive measure that are appropriate and take

¹⁵ SSCs should start an SRGBV emergency fund that is made up of fines paid by offenders from other cases of SRGBV. This emergency fund can provide support to victims who may need money for transport and fees charged at medical facilities.

¹⁶ The organisation Namati provides free legal aid for victims of violence: +232 79162527

a vote on whether they should be applied. The following table outlines some additional measures the SSC should consider.

Punitive measures for offenders of severe cases of violence

Teachers	Students	Community Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termination from the education system (no transfer to another school) • Formal apology letter • Public apology • Paying a fine to the SRGBV emergency fund • Counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expulsion from school • Formal apology letter • Completing community service • Counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot come within a 3 km radius of the school (monitored by staff + BoG) • Formal apology letter • Public apology • Paying a fine to the SRGBV emergency fund • Counselling

10. For reports of early marriage, forced marriage or genital cutting that come through the school suggestion box, the female mentor should speak to the girls in each class separately from the boys and tell them that whoever wrote the note should come to her for guidance and support. If a girl is seeking help because she is aware of and scared that her family intends to arrange marriage or genital cutting for her, the SSC should first discuss actions that can keep the girl out of harm's way until the case is resolved with her parents (such as staying with a trusted female teacher). Then the SSC should have a discussion with the girl's parents. As discussed in Unit 5 (page 22), below are examples of some reasons why parents believe in early marriage, forced marriage and genital cutting, and some arguments that the SSC could use to convince them otherwise. BoGs can also use these arguments to sensitise communities to prevent future cases from happening.

	Reasons why parents believe in it	Arguments to convince parents that it is wrong
Early and forced marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is believed that bride price will provide income for the family • It is believed that early marriage prevents a daughter from having 'unsuitable' relationships • It is believed that early marriage aligns with cultural or religious norms • It is believed that forced marriage is how to deal with the consequences of pregnancy out of wedlock • It is believed that arranging marriage is the duty of the parents and that girls should not have a choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sierra Leone 2007 Child Rights Act prohibits any kind of early marriage for girls or boys under the age of 18 – it is a criminal act that is against the law. • Even if a girl is over 18, it is illegal to force her into a marriage under any circumstance. After the war, 'forced marriage' was prosecuted as a 'crime against humanity' in Sierra Leone's post-conflict Special Court. • If a daughter can complete her education and marry when older, she will be able to get a job and contribute to the family's income in a more substantial and consistent way than through bride price. • Even if a girl is accidentally pregnant, she should continue her education so that she can get a job and support her family and her child. Again, forcing her to marry is illegal. • If a daughter marries young, she is likely to experience mistreatment, violence, abuse and forced sex by an older husband. • Use positive examples of families from the community who did <i>not</i> force a marriage or marry their daughter early and show the benefits that came from that.
Genital cutting (FGM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is believed to add to the esteem of women and make a woman complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many chiefdoms have bi-laws that ban genital cutting for any child before the age of 18 – it is a criminal act that is against the law. • The genital cutting ceremony is very costly to do – parents should not pay so much money for something that is against the law and could get them into trouble.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It serves as a source of livelihood for the head of the society • It is believed to give women a sense of respect and belonging in the society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effects of cutting are severe pain, excessive bleeding, difficulty passing urine and infections. It can also cause immediate death from haemorrhage, infections, death in childbirth, increased risk of birth complications, and infertility. • Use positive examples of families from the community who did <i>not</i> do genital cutting and show that the women are very much respected and of high esteem without it.
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11. There are many sensitivities surrounding early marriage, forced marriage and genital cutting and these may be very difficult discussions to have with parents. **SSCs can also directly contact their DIOs for support and guidance on how to deal with these cases.**

12. It is important to note that there is more than one possible referral route when the victim is first reporting the incident/seeking help. Heads of schools and teachers should exercise a “common sense approach” in this regard.

REFLECTION: In your TLC, discuss your answers to the following questions:

- 1) Which parts of this unit did you find important, interesting or new?
- 2) Which parts of this unit did you find unclear or disagree with?

If there are many of you, discuss first in pairs and then feedback to the group.

Unit 8: Logging SRGBV cases

For every SRGBV case that is reported, the SSC must log every case in a confidential log book. Below is a template for schools to use for their log book.



Date	Victim code <i>(Admission no. or register code)</i>	Description of incident <i>(Date and time of incident; age and sex of victim; location where the incident took place; exactly what the victim said about incident, any witnesses, name of perpetrator)</i>	Decision <i>(School-level action or external referral)</i>	Actions <i>(Date of actions and who is responsible)</i>	Resolution <i>(Final conclusion, date, if there was punitive action and follow-up with the victim)</i>

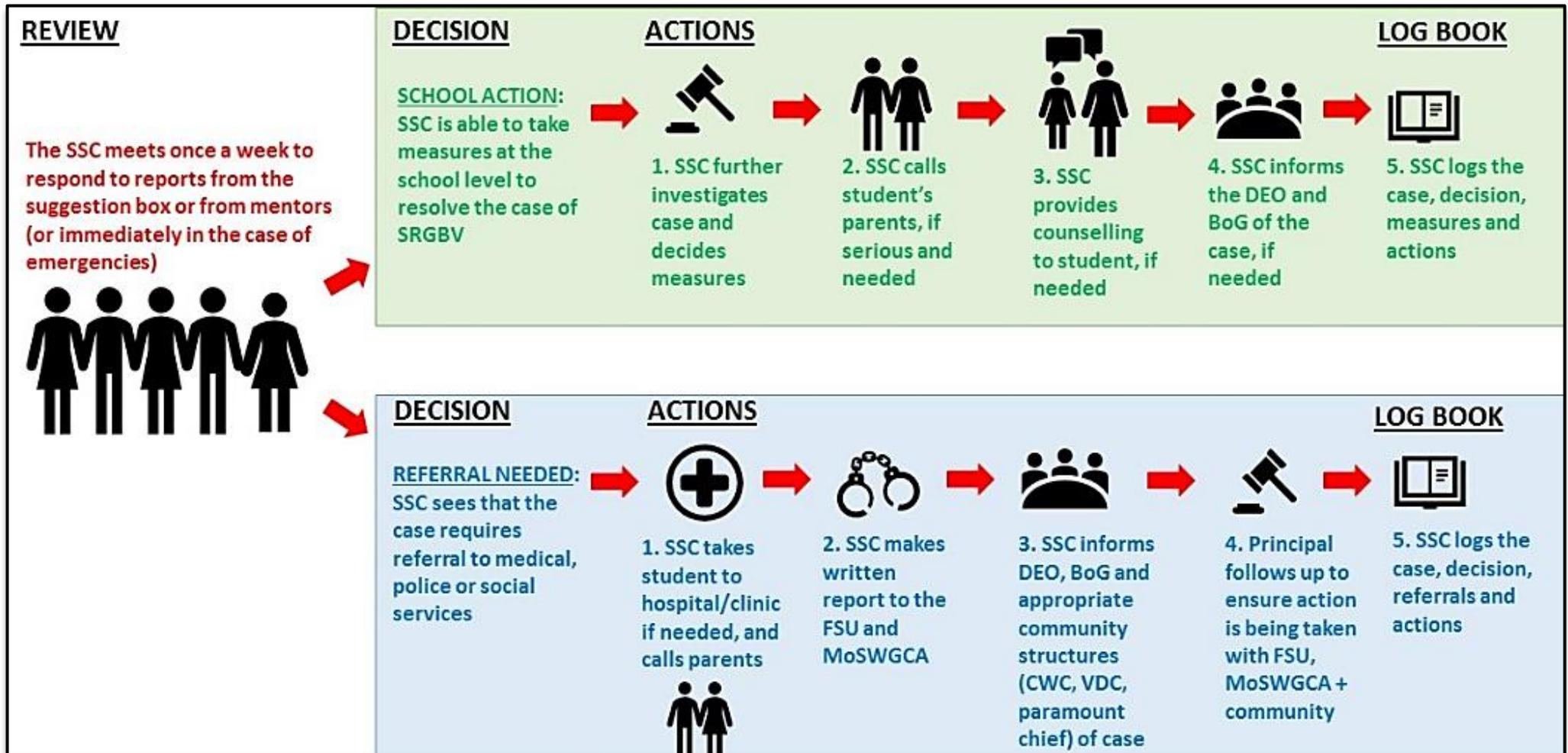
1. **Ensure that the names of the victims are coded** (e.g. by using the admission number) in order to increase confidentiality. If your school does not use admission numbers, use the classroom register to align the name of the victim in a coded way (eg., Joseph Sesay is numbered 20th on the JSS 1 register, this could be coded as J1-20. If Sally is 15th on the SSS 2 Red register, say SSS2R-15).
2. Record the **factual account of the instance** including details of the victim, perpetrator and what actually happened. Teachers ensure confidentiality and protect the information gathered about victim. The SSC should only use the information with the student's permission or in case the student is below 18, the permission of their parents/guardian.
3. **Record the SSC decision to proceed at the school level or to refer the case to external organisations.** Record all actions taken and follow-ups made until the case has been closed.
4. Include a **summary page for statistics** indicating number of cases reported, number resolved, number referred number settled, gender of victims, etc.
5. **Identify a locked area to store the school safety report log-book within the school.** Only the heads of school and school mentors should have access to the log book.

If your SSC starts an SRGBV Emergency Fund, please use the below template to track the Fund.

Date	Victim code <i>(Admission number or register code)</i>	Description of offender fine or Emergency Fund disbursement <i>(If it is a payment of a fine, give the perpetrator name and rationale for the fine. If it is a payment to support a victim, give the rationale for the payment)</i>	Amount paid <i>(Amount paid into or out of the Fund)</i>	Total to date <i>(Fund total after the contribution by perpetrator or payment to victim)</i>	Storage and signature <i>(Note where the funds are being safely locked and provide signatures of the principal, mentor and a BoG member)</i>

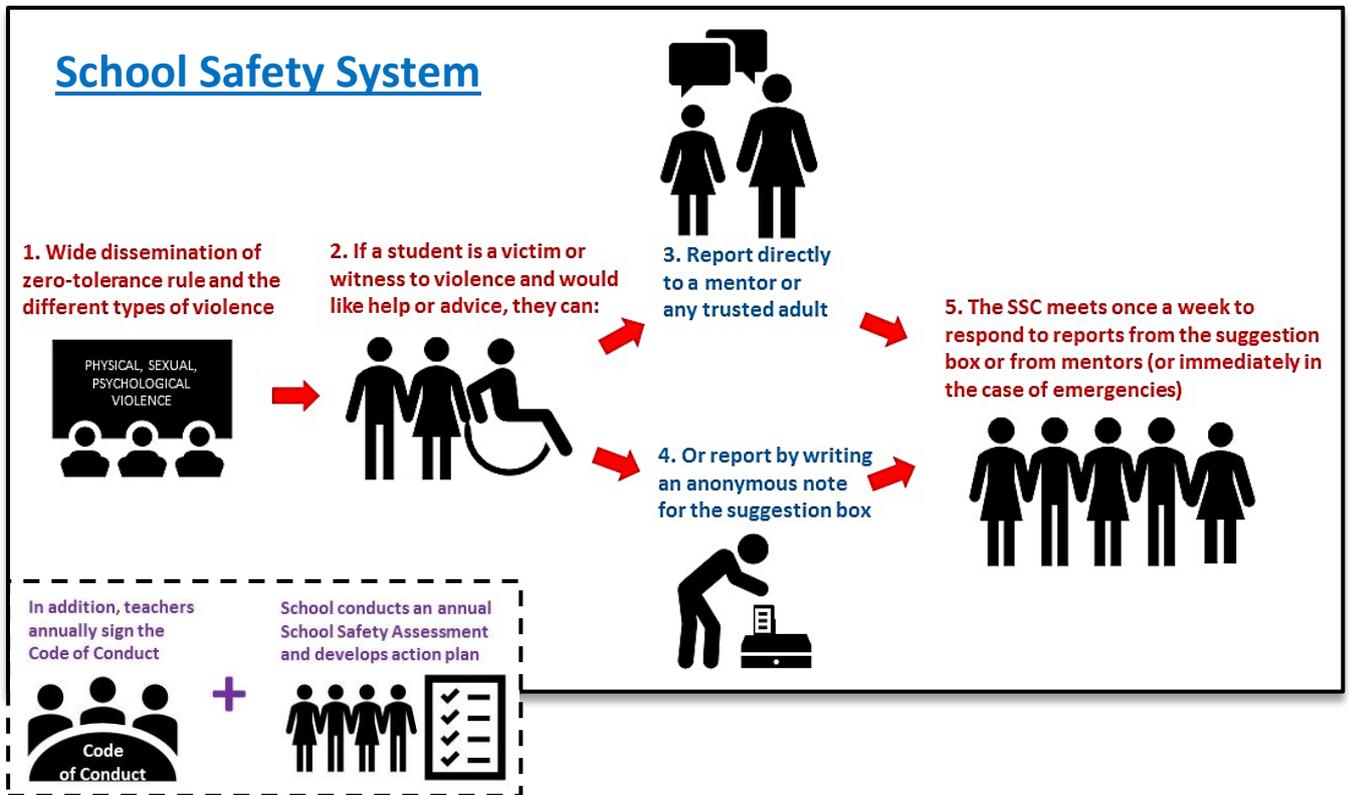
Now that we have discussed all actions that SSCs must take to resolve issues of SRGBV, please see the following figure for a summary.

Summary of the School Safety Committee Process



Given that we have completed the discussion of the SSC process, it might be helpful to also review the entire School Safety System that has been discussed in this guide, as well as all the roles and responsibilities related to it. What parts of this system has your school completed? What hasn't yet been completed? Why?

Summary of School Safety System



The following unit will further discussion the School Safety Assessment to help you assess and plan for implementing the above system.

REFLECTION: In your TLC, discuss your answers to the following questions:

- 1) Which parts of this unit did you find important, interesting or new?
- 2) Which parts of this unit did you find unclear or disagree with?

If there are many of you, discuss first in pairs and then feedback to the group.

Unit 9: Conducting a School Safety Self-Assessment

One way to assess and ensure the full implementation of a School Safety System is to conduct a school safety self-assessment with the checklist below. Please follow these steps:

1. Every year, the principal should ask two teachers and two students to complete the assessment together (the teachers do not need to be part of the School Safety Committee)
2. The four should consult students, SSC and teachers regarding questions on the checklist
3. Once completed, the four should present their assessment to SSC/BoG/CTA members
4. Everyone should prioritise five issues that they will aim to improve over the course of the year¹⁷ (improvement is moving from 'partially' to 'yes' or from 'no' to 'partially'.)

Self-Assessment Questions

SCHOOL SAFETY SELF-ASSESSMENT				
School: _____ District: _____ Academic year: _____				
Area	Question	Yes	Partially	No
1. School environment, facilities and access routes	a. Have students contributed to a mapping of areas that make them feel safe and unsafe in school? (What can be done with the unsafe areas?)			
	b. Are the students' routes to and from school safe, particularly for students with special needs? (If there are students who feel unsafe, what can be done with the community?)			
	c. Are all areas within the school compound visible?			
	d. Is the school fenced or has the school a perimeter wall?			
	e. Are bushes cleared around the school compound, toilets and recreational areas?			
	f. Are there separate, lockable toilets for boys/girls, male/female staff?			
	g. Are the toilets in close proximity to the school in an open and visible location?			
	h. Are the toilets safe and clean with adequate washing facilities?			
	i. Are the toilets female-friendly (e.g. space for changing and washing menstrual pads, with safe and hygienic disposal)?			
	j. Are there water points (e.g. well, pipe-borne water supply, etc.) within or very close proximity to the school?			
	k. Is there regular checking and maintenance of school facilities (e.g. broken lights, windows, toilets, locks, etc.)?			
2. Violence Awareness Strategies	a. Have all teachers completed training on the guide for Reducing Violence in Schools and understand SRGBV prevention, reporting and response?			
	b. Have all pupils participated in training on SRGBV prevention, reporting and response via the Girls' and Boys' Clubs?			
	c. Has the school leadership sensitised communities around the school on school safety issues (e.g. VDC/CTA meetings)?			
	d. Have all teachers completed training on the guide for Reducing Violence in Schools and understand SRGBV prevention, reporting and response?			
3. Violence Prevention	a. Is the Zero-Tolerance rule against Violence shared and in a visible place to all teachers, students and community stakeholders?			

¹⁷ For those JSSs that have done a similar prioritisation exercise with the GATE-GEC Score Cards, please try to align the priorities as much as possible.

SCHOOL SAFETY SELF-ASSESSMENT

School: _____ District: _____ Academic year: _____

Area	Question	Yes	Partially	No
Strategies	b. Is the Teacher Code of Conduct shared and in visible place to all teachers, students and community stakeholders?			
	c. Have all teachers signed a form that they have read and understood the Code of Conduct and agree to comply with it?			
	d. Are teachers using non-violent classroom management strategies learned from training?			
4. Violence Reporting Mechanisms	a. Has the school established a reporting box for students to report incidents of violence?			
	b. Is the reporting box in a private place that is easily accessible to students? (ie., NOT in front of the principal's or VP's office).			
	c. Has the school nominated/voted for one male and female teacher (or community member) to serve as trusted mentors for reporting?			
	d. Have the mentors been introduced to all teachers/students in school?			
	e. Have the mentors completed the guide for Reducing Violence in Schools training on counselling for reports of violence?			
	f. Are the two ways to report violence (mentor + suggestion box) shared and in visible place to all teachers, students and community members?			
5. Violence Response Mechanisms	a. Has the School Safety Committee been established and introduced to the teachers/students in school?			
	b. Does the school safety committee have three female representatives?			
	c. Do the members of the school safety committee know their roles and responsibilities?			
	d. If new mentors or SSC members have been assigned, have they completed a Teacher Learning Circle on the guide for Reducing Violence in Schools?			
	e. Is the reporting box opened daily by the HT and female mentor to check for emergencies?			
	f. Does the school safety committee meet once a week (or during emergencies) to respond to reports from the box or mentors?			
	g. Can the heads, mentors and teachers explain the official referral pathways for serious cases of violence?			
	h. Has the head of school established a list of local police, child protection, health, law enforcement, NGO, CBO, CSO focal points?			
	i. Are the focal points' contact information posted in a visible place for teachers', students' and community members' use?			
5. Follow up, document-tation of cases	a. Has the school put in place confidential processes for documenting incidents of violence (i.e., a log book)?			
	b. Have reported cases been documented confidentially, ensuring the safety of the victim/witness?			
	c. Have the cases been followed-up until the closure of the cases?			
	d. Please note the number/type of cases logged in the log book			

Upon completing the school safety assessment each year, five issues should be prioritised for improvement during the academic year. These five issues form the basis for the following safety action plan. **This School Safety Action Plan should be reviewed at the end of every term to ensure that all actions, persons responsible and deadlines are being followed and held to account.**

School Safety Action Plan

SCHOOL SAFETY ACTION PLAN			
School: _____ District: _____ Academic year: _____			
What are the five prioritised issues to improve from the self-assessment?			
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
Issue	Actions to be taken this year	Person(s) Responsible	Deadline
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Name and signature of principal: _____

Name and signature of chairperson BoG: _____

Name and signature of chairperson CTA: _____

Date: _____

Annex 1 – Code of Conduct for Teachers in Sierra Leone

THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR
TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION
PERSONNEL IN SIERRA LEONE

August
2009



We Teach, We Learn, We Build The
Future



FOREWORD

As I write this foreword, my mind flashes back to those wonderful and devoted teachers who taught you and me and made it possible for us to be what we are today through the Grace of God Almighty. In our school days, those teachers stood out as real role models in everything - in their commitment and devotion to duty; in their relationship with the community; and in the conduct of their overall social and professional life.

Sadly, the present is not quite like the past. Instances abound. My dream is for the profession to bring back those old and excellent standards which teachers used to assure me of a bright future; those qualities which made them role models; and which made some of my colleagues to willingly opt to serve as teachers or to go on and excel in other vocations.

The time is but appropriate that we now have a Code of Conduct for Teachers to bridge the gap between the past and the present, and bring back standards in the behavioural patterns of those charged with the responsibility to build the human base of our beloved country in accordance with the attitudinal change policy that is being preached by His Excellency the President, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma.

The Code of Conduct, I believe, will contribute in making the teaching profession once more attractive to people with the high moral standing, and who are ready to provide quality education for our children.

S.A.T. Tamu
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this Code of Conduct has to be credited to all those who have contributed, in diverse ways, to the process, including teachers.

I wish to acknowledge the immense contributions, both financial and technical, made by the sponsors of this work - United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children UK, Action Aid International, Anti Corruption Commission (ACC), International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS). My thanks and appreciation go to Janet Tucker and team at UNICEF for the coordination of the process and their invaluable inputs. The SLTU is worthy of commendation for providing their proposed draft code prepared over a decade earlier, amongst the reference materials used for this work.

The panel of writers deserves special thanks and appreciation for producing the document:

- Claudius Wilson - MEYS
- Francess Kamara - MEYS
- Dr. Beresford B. Jones - FBC
- Dr. Beresford Davies - MMCET
- Rashid Turay - MMCET
- Davidson A. Kuyateh – SLTU
- Alieu Deen-Conteh - SLTU
- Augustine G. Karim – SLTU
- Patrick B. Browne – CPSS
- Samuel M.. Koroma – NACOHT

Finally, my thanks go to the Secretariat Staff of MEYS Inspectorate, especially Mrs. Elizabeth Bangura, for their commitment to this project.

To all those morally bound by this document, we want you to understand that there is “dignity in labour;” and this will only become a reality if we perform our roles as dignified professionals. We owe this sacrifice to our pupils, the parents and our nation.

Davidson A. Kuyateh
SECRETARY GENERAL – SLTU

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1. PREAMBLE

This Code of Conduct is recognised and endorsed by the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MEYS) and complements MEYS's and other policies relating to the promotion of a safe, conducive and positive teaching and learning environment.

The mandate of the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MEYS) includes regulating, legislating, monitoring, coordinating and providing adequate resources with an enabling environment, to ensuring effective and quality performance, higher standards, transparency and accountability among teachers and members within the teaching profession, developing curricula and running schools. By virtue of these functions, MEYS becomes both a regulatory, monitoring, evaluating and coordinating body for standards in the teaching profession and the means whereby the merits and demerits of the conduct of teachers and members of the teaching profession are made known and addressed through dialogue and collaboration of all stakeholders in the governance of the school. It also defines the parameters of unethical conduct of teachers and education personnel and allows opportunities for change of attitudes through correction and consequence in accordance with the Collective Agreement and the existing laws of the land.

The Code of Conduct is not an isolated entity as it complements policies in education, the work of MEYS, terms and conditions of service for teachers, other education personnel and other official sources applicable to all members of the teaching profession. The conditions of service are directed towards the provision of appropriate punitive measures and sanctions for acts of official misdemeanour, and compensation/incentives for effective and efficient services as contained in the Collective Agreement between teachers, other education personnel and employing agencies including the government. The Code is a composite of rules and norms of behaviour to create a safe, constructive, positive learning and work environment. It is expected of every teacher and other education personnel to emulate the work culture envisioned in the Code.

The Code of Conduct sets out standards of professional behaviour for teachers and other education personnel in their relationships with learners, their colleagues, parents and the general public.

The Code of Conduct also provides principles to guide professionalism and promote a positive learning environment and the well-being of learners from pre-school to Technical/Vocational level in the following areas:

- a) monitoring and reporting mechanisms for unethical conduct in learning environments;
- b) implementation processes such as teacher training and sensitization programmes geared toward capacity building for teachers and other education personnel;
- c) the development of curriculum for the advancement of concepts of dignity, acceptable professional behaviour, best interest of the child, positive discipline, human rights principles.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION PERSONNEL

PRINCIPLE 1. Efficient and Effective Service Delivery

1.1 Teachers and other education personnel shall exemplify efficiency and effectiveness in their professional service delivery, maintain and improve standards and develop new initiatives in their teaching and learning.

1.2 Without prejudice to the generality of Principle 1.1, teachers and other education personnel shall:

- (a) report for work regularly, punctually and prepare to teach at all times;
- (b) demonstrate good management skills and abilities in the conduct of their professional work;
- (c) display competence in the subject matter and teaching methodology;
- (d) establish good relations and cooperate fully with education stakeholders responsible for the advancement of education and in the interest of the learners;
- (e) take advantage of professional development opportunities and use active and participatory or 'child friendly' teaching methods;
- (f) observe confidentiality in a manner consistent with lawful institutional requirements;
- (g) teach according to the approved syllabus; and
- (h) empower learners to develop self-esteem and academic excellence.

PRINCIPLE 2. Commitment and Attitude to the Profession

2.1 Commitment and attitude towards work

2.1.1 Teachers and other education personnel shall demonstrate commitment to work and display a positive attitude to the teaching profession, the school, children and the community and ensure a high standard of quality and excellence in their professional service delivery.

2.1.2 Without prejudice to the generality of Principle 2.1 (1), teachers and other education personnel shall:

- (a) demonstrate an understanding in their teaching, of how children learn and develop;
- (b) not engage in activities that adversely affect the quality of their teaching and profession, such as learner or parent exploitation, cultism, drug abuse, etc.;
- (c) teach and practise principles of good citizenship, peace and social responsibility;
- (d) honestly present each student's performance and examination results;
- (e) not engage in any form of corrupt practices;
- (f) be appropriately attired and presentable;
- (g) be good role models in their demonstration of dedication and honesty.

2.2 Commitment and attitude towards learners

2.2.1 Teachers and other education personnel shall, at all times, maintain a professional relationship with all learners, recognizing that all learners are equal, and foster learners' intellectual, physical, emotional, social and spiritual potentials.

2.2.2 Teachers and other education personnel shall adhere to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the Child Rights Act (CRA) and other Human Rights instruments.

2.2.3 Teachers and other education personnel shall:

- (a) promote safe and conducive learning environment;
- (b) ensure that learners are treated with dignity and respect and their rights fully protected;
- (c) establish and maintain zero tolerance for all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse, physical and humiliating forms of punishment, psychological abuse, and child labour;
- (d) eliminate all forms of discrimination at all times;
- (e) employ positive methods of corrective discipline;
- (f) actively promote the concept of 'the best interest of the child' in every event;
- (g) participate in co-curricular activities for the benefit of the learners;
- (h) encourage learners to develop as active, responsible and efficient individuals;

- (i) promote an atmosphere of trust;
- (j) exercise due care, diligence and confidentiality in all matters affecting the welfare of the learners; and
- (k) guide learners to know their responsibilities towards teachers and other education personnel.

2.3 Commitment and attitude towards parents

2.3.1 Teachers and other education personnel shall recognize and promote the right of parents to information on the welfare and progress of their children through agreed channels.

2.3.2 Teachers and other education personnel shall acknowledge different family backgrounds of children and ensuring a balanced approach in the development of the child.

2.3.3 Teachers and other education personnel shall make every effort to encourage parents to be actively involved in the education of children and support the learning process; encourage parents to visit schools, talk to them about their children's work and progress, and to actively participate in the School, Boards, and CTA/SMC activities;

2.3.4 Teachers and other education personnel shall:

- (a) encourage parents to cooperate with other parents and community members to enhance the smooth running of the school;
- (b) refrain from soliciting and accepting personal gifts or monies from parents;
- (c) support parents to be aware of children with learning difficulties and other disabilities.

2.4 Commitment and attitude towards the community

2.4.1 Teachers and other education personnel shall recognize the importance of the community in the education process, and engage them in the formulation of policy and curriculum, capacity building activities and in the improvement of the quality of the institutions and the environment.

2.4.2 Without prejudice to the generality of Principle 2.4 (1), teachers and other education personnel shall:

- (a) establish good relations with the community to enhance their active participation for the advancement of the school and the society;
- (b) encourage and work closely with the community to ensure that all children in the community access, stay in and complete school;
- (c) use their surrounding environment for much of their teaching;
- (d) endeavour to stimulate interest and active participation of the community in the achievement of the educational objectives and the ethos of the school;
- (e) sensitize the community to discourage social activities that may hinder the moral and ethical development of learners;
- (f) cultivate public trust and confidence.



A Class held under the trees

2.5 Commitment and attitude towards colleagues

2.5.1 Teachers and other education personnel actively co-operate with each other and work as a team in all respects to improve school standards and community development.

2.5.2 Without prejudice to the generality of Principle 2.5 (1), teachers and other education personnel shall:

- (a) not negatively influence professional decisions of colleagues;
- (b) not criticize colleagues in the presence of learners, except as unavoidably related to an administrative or judicial proceeding;
- (c) use official channels to report complaints and not unduly speak publicly about colleagues or the school administration that may cause public resentment or outrage;
- (d) when making a report on the professional misconduct of a colleague, do so in good faith, following the reporting channels set out in this Code;

- (e) promote team work and collegiality among colleagues, respecting their professional standing and opinions, and be prepared to offer advice and assistance particularly to those beginning their career or in training;
- (f) maintain confidentiality of information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law;
- (g) be prepared to offer guidance and counselling services to colleagues and ensure that colleagues are treated with dignity and respect and their rights fully protected;
- (h) maintain high moral standards.

2.6 Commitment and Attitude towards employing authorities

2.6.1 Teachers and other education personnel shall:

- (a) be prepared to offer guidance and counselling services to colleagues and ensure that colleagues are treated with dignity and respect and their rights fully protected;
- (b) cooperate with education authorities in the interest of the learners, education service and the community;
- (c) be knowledgeable of their legal and administrative rights and responsibilities, and respect the provisions of “The Collective Bargaining Agreement for Teachers” and the provisions concerning learners’, employers’ and employees’ rights;
- (d) carry out reasonable instructions from management personnel and have the right to question instructions through clearly defined procedures;
- (e) not frustrate the policies, decisions and actions of the school administration and MEYS;
- (f) not engage in unauthorized collection of school funds, extra lessons or illegal charges.

PRINCIPLE 3. Effective, Efficient and Proper Uses of School Resources

3.1 Teachers and other education personnel shall, in recognition of the fact that school resources are central in the overall management of the school, ensure the proper, efficient and effective management of school resources.

3.2 Without prejudice to the generality of Principle 3.1 (1), teachers and other education personnel shall:

- (a) exercise reasonable care in the use of school property, and for official purposes;
- (b) maintain appropriate and highest standards of honesty and integrity in the management of school resources;
- (c) maintain and keep proper books of account at all times for monies received or expended on behalf of the school;
- (d) keep and maintain proper record of property or funds received on behalf of the school. Such records include, but not limited to, store issue vouchers, log entry book, etc.;
- (e) maintain and keep proper record of distribution or utilization of school resources and equipment;
- (f) maintain accountability and transparency at all levels; and
- (g) refrain from collaboration with others to mismanage school funds and other resources.

PRINCIPLE 4. School Environment and Work Ethics

4.1 Teachers and other education personnel shall:

- (a) not be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco or any harmful drug on school property and during school hours;
- (b) not give tobacco, alcohol, harmful drugs to any learner or colleague, or allow them to consume any harmful substances;
- (c) have the responsibility to maintain an alcohol, smoke and drug free school environment;
- (d) take decisions in collaboration with Boards of Governors, SMCs or CTAs, on the efficacy of the school environment and work ethics; and
- (e) not engage in any unprofessional practices such as examination malpractice, favouritism, selling in classroom, bribery, corruption and soliciting gifts.

3. REPORTING CHANNELS FOR UNETHICAL CONDUCT

3.1 Context

Teachers and other education personnel may be found guilty of professional misconduct taking into account the relevant circumstances. In assessing whether there has been a breach in professional conduct, the appropriate body or authority dealing with the case should ensure that the alleged person is given due process of the law and take into account the extent to which the person has failed to maintain a good level of professional conduct and a high sense of their responsibilities. Confidentiality, safety and respect for the complainant, alleged person and witnesses must be ensured at all times.

3.2 Immediate Action

Learners, teachers, other education personnel, parents and other stakeholders are required to report verbally or in written form a breach of the principles and standards in the Code as soon as they become aware of an alleged act.

3.3 Awareness of Reporting Channels

Learners, teachers, other education personnel, parents and other stakeholders should be made aware of the relevant channels and procedures for reporting unethical conduct. Reporting a complaint in respect of breaches of this Code can be made to any of the following bodies for appropriate action.

A. Pre/Primary School

1. Guidance Counsellor/Class Teacher
2. SLTU school representative
3. Head of School/School Administration/Complaints' Committee
4. School Management Committees (SMCs), Community/Teacher Association (CTAs),
Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)/Teachers' Union
5. District Education Office/Appropriate Local Council/Local Authority/ District MSWGCA
office
6. Ministry of Education Youth and Sports/Complaints' Committee
7. Teaching Service Commission

B. Junior Secondary School

1. Guidance Counsellor/Form Teacher
2. SLTU school representative
3. Head of School/School Administration/Complaints' Committee
4. Board of Governors
5. Community/Teacher Association (CTAs), Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)/Teachers' Union
6. District Education Office/Appropriate Local Council/Local Authority/ District MSWGCA office
7. Ministry of Education Youth and Sports/Complaints' Committee
8. Teaching Service Commission

C. Senior Secondary / Technical /Vocational Institute

1. Guidance Counsellor/Form Teacher
2. SLTU school representative
3. Head of School/School Administration/Complaints' Committee
4. Board of Governors
5. Community/Teacher Association (CTAs), Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)/Teachers' Union
6. District Education Office/Local Authority/ District MSWGCA office
7. Ministry of Education Youth and Sports/Complaints' Committee
8. Teaching Service Commission

4. ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

Action will be taken in line with procedures applicable under the laws of the country, regulations under civil and criminal laws and other relevant institutional policies and procedures.

5. DEFINITIONS

“Breach” means violation of this Code of Conduct.

“Code” means information, principles and guidelines put together to regulate behaviour or conduct.

“Collective Bargaining Agreement for Teachers” means the agreed terms and conditions of service between employers and employees relating to teachers.

“Complaint” means an authorized statement (verbal or written) from a person, authorized body or agency (Boards, Associations, PTA, SMC, group of individuals) for referral to the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports or appropriate body for assertion that an education personnel has breached any of the principles and standards of. It is considered a request for investigation.

“Learner” means to any pupil, student or any person enrolled in a public or private school and other educational institution from pre-school to “tertiary education”.

“Monitoring” means appraisal of the teacher or education personnel’s conduct and performance by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and other stakeholders, through visits and contacts with personnel and his or her employer. The monitoring activities will require the monitoring personnel to submit a report to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports or other appropriate authority.

“School” includes other educational institutions.

“Teachers and other Education Personnel” means a teacher and any other person in the teaching and education profession (school or school system administrators, proprietor and other education personnel such as paraprofessionals, aides and substitute teachers, school secretaries, watchman, etc.) who may or may not hold a certificate.

“Tertiary Education” means educational programmes offered in educational institutions above secondary level.

“Unethical conduct” means any behaviour that impairs the teacher or education personnel to function professionally in his employment position or a pattern of behaviour or act that is detrimental to the health, discipline and development or moral of learners.

“MEYS” anybody (Inspectors, Deputy Directors) or group of persons (Local Council, Board of Governors etc.) acting on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

6. REFERENCES

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