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# List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

EGR early grade reading

M&E monitoring and evaluation

MoES Ministry of Education and Sports

SEL social and emotional learning

SRGBV school-related gender-based violence

UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund

USAID United States Agency for International Development

# 1. Introduction

The US Agency for International Development (USAID)/Uganda Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity (herein referred to as the Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity or Activity) is designed to support the Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), to improve early grade reading (EGR) skills and retention by strengthening reading instruction, building a positive and supportive school climate for learning, and reducing school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). The underpinning hypothesis of the Activity is

If there is a positive and supportive school climate where teachers deliver quality reading instruction and are themselves supported, where pupils are encouraged in both the academic and social development, and there is zero tolerance for violence, then pupil retention and learning outcomes will be improved.

Between March and June 2016, the Activity conducted baseline studies for the purpose of testing this hypothesis. Result 1 of the Activity focuses on improved delivery of EGR instruction, while Result 2 focuses on improving the quality of the school climate and eliminating violence in schools. To establish a baseline for Result 1, the Activity carried out Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRAs) for Grade 1 and Grade 2 pupils. For Result 2, the baseline included Grade 3 and Grade 5 pupils’ experience of SRGBV; pupils’ perception of the school climate; and pupil, school staff, and parent attitudes about gender norms. The EGR study was conducted in March 2016, while the SRGBV assessment and related mediating factors of school climate and gender attitude was conducted between April and June 2016.

At the time of the Baseline Report in September 2016 (RTI International), findings from the Result 2 study were not yet fully available. The purpose of this addendum is to report on the Result 2 findings, thus completing the 2016 Baseline Report, which focused primarily on Result 1. In this addendum there are selected summaries of information that are also provided in the 2016 Baseline Report but refer the reader to the 2016 Baseline Study Report for more detailed information on these topics, as needed.

# 2. Background and Context

## 2.1 The Challenge

Ugandan children of all ages experience violence in school and while traveling to and from school, including bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual harassment and assault. According to a 2012 study conducted by the Uganda MoES in collaboration with United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 75.6% of pupils were caned by teachers, who claimed that this punishment was needed to push pupils to make good marks in school. Other forms of corporal punishment identified in the 2012 study included hard labor, such as digging and collecting water, with 82% of children having experience this form of discipline. The study also found that emotional abuse from teachers was reported by 46% of the pupils surveyed. More recent findings from Devries (2015), indicated that 90% of Uganda primary school pupils in the study experienced some form of corporal punishment. Harsh forms of discipline, either emotional, physical, or labor related, are common in Uganda and elsewhere around the world, despite of laws against it. In fact, prevalence data from Gershoff (2008) suggests that out of the 29 countries where corporal punishment is banned, children in these countries still experience corporal punishment, from 13% of children in Kazakhstan to 97% in Cameroon; Ugandan children also still experience corporal punishment, even though it was banned in 2006.

Eighty percent (80%) of the children surveyed in the 2012 MoES study had either heard about or witnessed children being bullied—46% reported personally experiencing bullying. Sexual violence is also widespread in Uganda. Further, according to the 2012 MoES study, 77.7% of children in primary schools in Uganda (i.e., Grade 1 to Grade 7 classes) reported that they had experienced some form of sexual harassment or assault while they were in school; 51% of these children were between the ages of 10 and 13. The reported acts of sexual violence included sexual comments and gestures (24%), inappropriate marriage proposals (18%), fondling and touching in a sexual way (25%), forced viewing of sexual pictures or videos (29%), and defilement (8%) (MoES and UNICEF, 2012). The majority of pupils (67%) reported male teachers as the perpetrators of direct sexual abuse.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Findings from the Activity’s formative study on SRGBV (RTI International and World Vision, 2016) and elsewhere (Parkes, J., 2015; Leach, Dunne, & Salvi, 2014; MSI, 2008) highlight the role of entrenched gender norms and stereotypes, as well as the imbalanced power relations that reinforce and maintain the status quo related to violence against children in schools. Corporal punishment is considered to be a necessary practice to ensure that pupils excel in school, while bullying is considered a normal part of school life that should be expected and accepted by pupils, parents, and school staff. Conversely, sexual harassment and assault is considered a taboo subject, perpetuated by the different behavioral expectations of men and women, as well as the imbalance of power, which enables such violence to take place with impunity.

All forms of SRGBV—bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual harassment and assault—have negative impacts on children, including physical and emotional trauma, chronic school absenteeism and dropout, and lowered learning outcomes (Leach et al., 2014; MSI, 2008; Kibriya, Tkach, Ahn, Valdez Gonzalez, Xu, & Zhang, 2016; Psaki, Mensch, & Soler-Hampejsek 2017; and United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative, 2015). During the 2015 Uganda formative study on SRGBV by RTI and World Vision (2016), the large majority of pupils interviewed (85%) did not report cases of violence they had witnessed or personally experienced; among those who did, 90% were not satisfied with the way their case was handled. Children who face physical trauma or other physical consequences (e.g., HIV or pregnancy), emotional distress, or impeded academic progress as a result of SRGBV are all too often left to their own resources to cope. Pupils do not ask for help because they are afraid of being blamed, discriminated against, and ostracized by their peers and family, or they are fearful of retaliation by the perpetrator and continued victimization. Therefore, violence continues unchecked and the acts of SRGBV are too often not considered “violent” at all; the acts of bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual harassment are “the norm.”

Eliminating violence against children in schools requires the simultaneous address of a variety of interconnected mediating factors of SRGBV. These include, but are not limited to

* child protection policy and legislation,
* characteristics of school life/school climate and tolerance of violence against children in school and community,
* gender norms and stereotypes,
* dynamics of power relations that exist in the school and community,
* pupil’s sense of agency to avoid and challenge the violence they face every day and to report and seek assistance when they experience violence, and
* informal and formal structures for reporting and responding to violence.

Other mediating factors include individual and systemic risks. Children living in poverty and children who have a disability, are orphaned, or belong to a minority ethnic group or race are at a higher risk of being a victim of violence. Furthermore, violence in the home and community, including domestic violence or political violence and other forms of conflict, is associated with higher levels of violence in schools. Thus, holistic approaches that integrate school and community programs are needed to build positive and supportive schools that are free from violence.

## 2.2 The Response

In 2015 the MoES released the National Strategy and Action Plan on Violence Against Children in Schools and the National Guideline on Reporting, Tracking, Referral, and Response to Violence Against Children. The Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity supports the MoES in achieving the goals of the National Strategy and Action Plan through the Journeys program and through social behavior change communication initiatives to eliminate corporal punishment. The Journeys program takes a holistic approach in its support of the MoES by working with all school staff, all pupils, and as many community members as possible in the school communities participating in the Activity, with the goal to build a positive and supportive school community climate for learning that is free from violence. To achieve the goal of establishing a school climate that is nurturing and supportive of children’s social and emotional development, as well their academic development, the Journeys program serves to shift the cultural norms of the school and community toward more gender equality and more balanced power relations between teachers and pupils, older and younger pupils, men and women, etc. In this nurturing and supportive school climate, the pupil’s voice is received positively and taken seriously.

The Journeys approach also includes teacher-facilitated pupil groups, referred to as Uganda Kids Unite teams, that are specifically designed to build children’s social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies. The underlying premise of the Journeys for Pupils design is that strengthened SEL competencies—when combined with targeted thematic learning activities on school climate and violence prevention—will lead to a strong sense of individual and collective agency among the pupils to build a positive school and prevent violence against children in schools. Through reflection, peer discussions, and interactive games, pupils learn ways to navigate their world every day, maintain an awareness of violence, and seek assistance from a trusted adult when they witness or experience violence perpetrated against them.

In 2017, with support from the Activity, the MoES established the Journeys program as the primary instrument for addressing violence against children in Uganda’s primary schools and distributed a circular that made it mandatory for Ugandan primary schools to implement Journeys.

The intended overall outcomes or indicators of the Journeys program, as well as the combined interventions with primary school staff, pupils, and community members, are as follows:

1. Reduced prevalence of bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual harassment and assault in primary schools in Uganda;
2. Improved characteristics of the school culture to be more positive and inclusive; and
3. Progressive gender attitudes of school staff, pupils, and parents that are centered around equality.

The reported findings in this addendum provide a representative profile of these three measurements prior to the introduction of the Journeys program in Uganda.

# 3. Methodology

The design of the Result 2 baseline is consistent with what was reported in the 2016 Baseline Report, which is described in detail in Section 2, pages 24–38 of the 2016 Report. In this section, we summarize the aspects of the methodology for Result 2, providing additional information on the Result 2 instruments. The original Research Questions for Result 2 are re-stated below (Question #1). The additional research questions, Research Questions 2–5, represent the descriptive research questions, which are the focus of the findings presented in this report.

## 3.1 Research Questions

Impact Study Question

1. Are there differences between pupil perceptions of the school climate, pupil attitudes about gender equality, and the extent of pupil experience of the different forms of SRGBV between the treatment and control groups?

Additional Study Questions: Descriptive Findings

1. How do pupils perceive characteristics of school life in Uganda?
2. What is the nature of pupil, school staff, and parent attitudes on various gender norms and power dynamics in the school and family and do these differ for pupils, school staff, and parents?
3. What are the past-term and past-week prevalence rates for bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual violence in Uganda, disaggregated by sex?
4. What is the extent of pupils’ experience of bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual violence in Uganda’s primary schools and does this differ according to sex and grade?

## 3.2 Overview of Sampling and Data Collection

This section provides a summary of the sampling design and data collection for Result 2. Please review Section 2.2, pages 25–38, of the 2016 Baseline Report for a detailed description of the sampling procedures and data collection.

The study population included Grade 3 and Grade 5 pupils, teaching and non-teaching school staff, and parents/guardians in the treatment and control school-communities participating in the Activity. The Result 2 component of the baseline was carried out in 24 randomly selected schools per treatment (Treatment 1, Treatment 2, and Treatment 3 [i.e., the control]). Schools in each group covered the three language groups in these districts: Luganda, Runyankore-Rukiga, and Runyoro-Rutooro. Altogether, 215 schools participated in the Result 2 baseline study: 72 in Treatment 1, 71 in Treatment 2, and 72 in Treatment 3, the control.

A total of 4,835 pupils (2,411 boys and 2,424 girls) were sampled using a combination of random and purposive methods. ***Table 1*** provides an overview of the sample of pupils, staff, and parents, disaggregated by sex.

Table 1. Result 2 Baseline Sample

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Schools | Grade 3 Pupils | | Grade 5 Pupils | | School Staff | | Parents/ Guardians | |
|  |  | **Male** | **Female** | **Male** | **Female** | **Male** | **Female** | **Male** | **Female** |
| Treatment 1 Schools | 72 | 419 | 395 | 393 | 389 | 198 | 225 | 337 | 382 |
| Treatment 2 Schools | 71 | 414 | 422 | 405 | 419 | 199 | 218 | 345 | 375 |
| Control Schools | 72 | 397 | 402 | 383 | 397 | 213 | 204 | 344 | 368 |
| **Total** | **215** | **1,230** | **1,219** | **1,181** | **1,205** | **610** | **647** | **1,026** | **1,125** |

To establish a small sample of pupils who are among the subpopulations of orphans and children with disabilities, four pupils from either of these subpopulations were purposefully selected in each school (i.e., two from each grade, Grade 3 and Grade 5). A two-stage approach was taken to identify pupils in these subpopulations. First, during the consenting process, parents and guardians of pupils in the original sample population indicated if their child was an orphan or had a disability. If there were no pupils in the original sample that fell into either of these categories, the class teacher would be asked to generate a list of orphans and children with disabilities and this list would be used for a second round of sampling to select pupils from these populations to replace a pupil from the initial sample. Any selected orphan or pupil with a disability during this second round of sampling would replace the last pupil of the corresponding sex who did not fall within these two categories in the sample.

The sample of pupils in these subpopulations are provided in ***Table 2***. It is important to note that the reader should not consider the sample of orphans and children with disabilities in this study to be representative. These sub-samples are not representative of orphans or pupils with disabilities in the baseline sample population and are not representative of the population of orphans and pupils with disabilities in Uganda. Although survey findings comparing pupils who are orphans with those who are not orphans and pupils who have a disability with pupils who do not have a disability are reported in this report, these findings should be considered with caution because of the non-representational sample of pupils in the subpopulations. This is a limitation of the study.

Table 2. Sample of Orphans and Children with Disabilities

| Sex | **Children with Disabilities\*** | | Total by Sex |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Disability | No Disability |
| Number (Percent) | Number (Percent) | Number (Percent) |
| Males | 82 (56.6) | 2,325 (49.6) | 145 (100) |
| Females | 63 (43.4) | 2,359 (50.4) | 4,684 (100) |
| Total by Subpopulation | 145 (3.0) | 4,684 (97.0) | 4,829 (100) |
| **Orphans** | | | |
| Males | 334 (48.3) | 2,077 (50.2) | 2,411 (49.9) |
| Females | 358 (51.7) | 2,064 (49.8) | 2,422 (50.1) |
| Total by Subpopulation | 692 (14.3) | 4,141 (85.7) | 4,833 (100) |

\*The breakdown of disabilities reported, include mobility impairment (32.64%), visual impairment (25.69%), hearing impairment (22.22%), cognitive impairment (11.81%), and speech impairment (7.64%).

## 3.3 Measures

The measures for this study were adapted for use in the Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity baseline from the Conceptual Framework for Measuring School-Related Gender-Based Violence (RTI International, 2016a). The adaptation of the Framework’s survey instruments involved three stages: (1) pre-pilot adaptation and translation, (2) adaptations informed from a period of cognitive interviewing, and (3) final revisions based on psychometric analyses of pilot data. The data analyses and findings presented in this document were based on the revised and final surveys. A detailed account of the adaptation of the set of Result 2 survey instruments can be found in the 2016 SRGBV Pilot Report (RTI International).

The Result 2 survey instruments are (1) Survey of Pupil Perceptions of School Climate, (2) Survey of Gender Attitudes and Beliefs, and (3) Survey of Pupil Experiences of SRGBV.

### 3.3.1 Survey of Pupil Perceptions of School Climate

In the Survey of Pupil Perceptions of School Climate, pupils are asked about statements describing different dimensions of school life and must answer according to their perception of whether it is true or not for their school. Pupils are asked to agree or disagree with statements, such as “**In this school**, teachers treat boys and girls equally.” Or, “**In this school**, violence is a problem.”

Each of the 35 survey items were scored as reflecting a positive or negative perception of the school. For example, if a pupil agreed with the statement “In this school, teachers treat boys and girls equally,” this was scored as a positive response (a value of “1”) because treating pupils equally in the classroom is a characteristic of a positive school climate. On the other hand, if a pupil agreed to the statement *“*In this school, violence is a problem,” this was scored as a negative response (a value of “0”) because when violence is perceived as a problem this reflects a negative characteristic of the school climate.

A total positive school climate index was calculated for each pupil, based on the sum of responses that reflected a positive characteristic of the school. The Survey of Pupil Perceptions of School Climate yielded an acceptable internal consistency reliability quotient of 0.76 (Cronbach’s Alpha).

### 3.3.2 Survey of Gender Attitudes and Beliefs

The Survey of Gender Attitudes and Beliefs for the subpopulations of pupils, school staff, and parents were identical so that valid comparisons could be made across these subpopulations. In the survey, respondents are asked to agree or disagree with statements that represent a variety of gender stereotypes, norms, and expressions of power relations in schools and homes. Examples include, “It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school” and “It is acceptable for a woman to disagree with her husband.”

Each of the survey items were scored as a positive (a value = 1) or negative response (a value = 0). For example, if a respondent agreed with the statement, “It is acceptable for a woman to disagree with her husband” this would be considered a positive response, reflecting the respondent’s sense that women and men should have an equal voice in the home. On the other hand, if a respondent agreed with the statement,“It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school” this would be scored as a negative response as it does not reflect equality because it favors boys over girls.

Unlike the other surveys in this study, the reliability of the attitude survey fell below 0.50, which is considered unacceptable. Therefore, composite findings and group comparisons for this scale should be considered with caution. Since the baseline study, the Activity team has been working to improve the survey for future studies.

### 3.3.3 Survey of Pupil Experiences of SRGBV

#### Introduction

The Survey of Pupil Experiences of SRGBV assesses the extent that a pupil experiences the three different forms of SRGBV: (1) bullying, (2) corporal punishment, and (3) sexual harassment and assault. This survey is divided into four subscales: Bullying Subscale, Corporal Punishment Subscale, Grade 3 Sexual Harassment and Assault Subscale, and Grade 5 Sexual Harassment and Assault Subscale. As mentioned earlier, the final revisions to this survey and the other surveys were informed by a series of cognitive interviews and psychometric analysis. The cognitive interviews were particularly helpful for informing the final pupil experiences survey. Although the nine questions on the Bullying Subscale and the seven questions on the Corporal Punishment Subscale were understood by and maintained for both Grade 3 and Grade 5 pupils of this study, not all 14 sexual harassment and assault questions were understood by both Grade 3 and Grade 5 pupils. For example, Grade 3 pupils did not understand certain words and phrases, such as “sexual comments” or “rumors,” and the question referring to “sexual acts other than kissing” was not appropriate for this age group. The set of items on the Grade 3 sexual harassment scale was, therefore, reduced to seven questions, while the final Grade 5 sexual harassment scale had 14 questions.

#### Building Rapport

|  |
| --- |
| Mary and Rachel are good friends because they live in the same village. Rachel is one year younger than Mary and just started Grade 4. At first, Rachel liked her new class and told her friend Mary how happy she was to be in Grade 4. Now, Rachel does not like school very much. Every day after school when the two friends walk home together, Rachel tells Mary how mean the girls in her class are. Students in Rachel’s class sometimes call her mean names, such as “stupid” and “ugly.” Sometimes, children on the playground grab at her book pack. Today, Rachel told Mary that the other girls will not let her play with them at break. She said to Mary, “If I try to play with them, they just ignore me.” Rachel cried when she told her friend Mary this. |

The subject of violence against children is a sensitive topic and it can be difficult for a child to respond to a survey that asks him or her to recollect and report on violent experiences. Thus, the rapport between the survey administrator and the pupil is critical to establishing an environment in which the pupil feels safe about telling the truth and confident that the information will not be shared. Therefore, a period of rapport building is provided for each of the SRGBV subscales. For each subscale (i.e., Bullying, Corporal Punishment, and Sexual Harassment and Assault), an icebreaker story is read to the pupil and a brief informal discussion about the topic takes survey questions are administered (see the text box for an example of an icebreaker story, for the bullying subscale). This has proven extremely helpful in assisting the pupils to understand, in advance, what the questions are about and to enhance their comfort during the session.

#### Description of the Survey

After the rapport building session, pupils are asked to consider different acts of the particular form of violence being surveyed (e.g., bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual harassment and assault) and to report how many times they experienced this during the term. (Note, the data was collected at the end of the term and therefore the final prevalence data reflects the prevalence for one full term). The pupils respond by choosing one of four responses represented on a response card, as shown in ***Figure 1***.

Figure 1. Response Card Used in Pupil Survey of Experiences of SRGBV

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Never |  | Once |  | A Few Times |  | Many Times |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

For example, in the Bullying Subscale, a pupil is instructed as follows: “I will ask you about different things that happen to pupils in school or traveling to and from school. Please listen carefully and tell me how many times these things happened to you during the past school term. Here is the first one: ‘Made fun of you and teased you*.*’Please tell me or indicate by pointing if this ‘Never’ happened during the past school term, if it happened ‘Once’, if it happened ‘A few times’, or if it happened ‘Many times.’”

#### Calculation of SRGBV Indices

A separate index was derived for each of the four scales. These were calculated for each pupil, based on their responses to each item. The four responses were assigned the following values: Never = 0, Once = 1, A few times = 2, and Many times = 3. The maximum score for each scale varied according to the number of questions in each scale. The maximum index score for the nine items within the Bullying Subscale is 27 (i.e., a maximum score of 3 for each item multiplied by 9 items = 27); the maximum index score for the Corporal Punishment Subscale, which has seven items, is 21 (i.e., a maximum score of 3 for each item multiplied by 7 items = 21); the maximum index score for the Grade 3 Sexual Harassment and Assault Scale, which has seven items, is 21 (i.e., a maximum score of 3 for each item multiplied by 7 items = 21); and the maximum index score for the Grade 5 Sexual Harassment and Assault Scale, which has 14 items, is 42 (i.e., a maximum score of 3 for each item multiplied by 14 items = 42).

### 3.3.4 Reliability of the SRGBV Indices

The internal consistency reliability coefficients were acceptable for all four of the SRGBV subscales, ranging from an alpha coefficient of 0.79 to 0.89. The specific reliability index for each of the SRGBV subscales are given below.

* Bullying Subscale: 0.79
* Corporal Punishment Subscale: 0.76
* Grade 3 Sexual Harassment and Assault Subscale: 0.83
* Grade 5 Sexual Harassment and Assault Subscale: 0.89

# 4. Findings

## 4.1 Perception of School Climate

Schools tend to reflect the values and cultural norms of the social contexts in which they are a part of. These differential values and norms may foster dimensions of a school culture that support pupil growth, such as equally encouraging girls and boys to attend school and no tolerance for any form of violence against children, or may foster dimensions of a school culture that seriously limit pupil growth, such as environments where corporal punishment is the norm and where some children are favored more than others.

Findings from research over the past two decades have associated certain aspects of a positive school climate with improved learning outcomes and attendance; reduced violence prevalence; and several positive social and emotional outcomes for pupils, such as improved self-esteem, motivation to learn, and overall wellbeing (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D’Alessandro, 2013). The Journeys program is designed to foster school staff, pupil, and community members’ active involvement in establishing a more caring, supportive, and inclusive culture for learning.

Unfortunately, schools all over the world are often characterized by a school culture that is not positive or supportive and there is often a high prevalence of SRGBV. Vulnerable children, such as those living in poverty, children of ethnic minorities, and children with disabilities may be discriminated against and ostracized. Both pupils’ perception of being safe, both physically and emotionally, and the actual experience of violence have been shown to mediate learning outcomes (RTI International, 2016a; Kibriya et al., 2016; Psaki et al., 2017).

Findings from the Survey on Pupil Perceptions of School Climate presented in this addendum provide a snapshot of the school culture in Ugandan primary schools that are participating in the Activity, according to the pupils’ perceptions. In Section 4.1.1, we present findings for group mean comparisons on the school climate index for boys versus girls and Grade 3 versus Grade 5. Section 4.1.2 presents findings on selected individual items of the School Climate Survey, organized according to certain dimensions of school life.

### 4.1.1 Mean School Climate Index by Sex and Grade

The group means for the school climate index are presented by sex and grade in ***Table 3***. On average, boys and girls had a school climate index of approximately 25, which suggests that pupils gave a positive response to 71% of the survey items, on average. Although there were no significant differences between boys and girls on the school climate index, item analyses revealed that the relative proportion of pupils who agreed or disagreed was dependent on the sex of the pupils. For example, girls were more likely to perceive that violence was a problem in schools than boys; 64.7% of the girls agreed to this compared to 57.0% of the boys (Chi-square = 28.7, p =.000). Girls were also more likely than boys to agree with the statement, “Pupils are sometimes afraid to go to school for fear of punishment” (57% for girls compared to 52% for boys; Chi-Square = 4.95, p = .028). Boys were more likely to agree with the statement, “Teachers treat girls and boys equally,” than girls (89% for boys compared to 86% for girls; Chi-Square = 13.4, p = .000). Boys were also more likely than girls to agree with the statement, “Boys feel safe at school”(92% for boys compared to 88% for girls; Chi-Square = 8.8, p = .003).

Based on the school climate index, Grade 5 pupils had slightly more positive perceptions of school climate than Grade 3 pupils—this difference was statistically significant (p = .001).

Grade 5 pupils were more likely than Grade 3 pupils to *agree* with the following statements:

* Teachers treat girls and boys equally.
* Teachers and school officials immediately take action when pupils report violence.

Grade 5 pupils were more likely than Grade 3 pupils to *disagree* with the following statements:

* Teachers rarely help pupils individually with their class work.
* Pupils from different tribes do not get along.
* Sometimes teachers are unkind to children who are disabled.
* Teachers do not give orphans a chance to participate in class.
* Teachers do not give poor pupils a chance to participate in class.
* Pupils are punished too much for little things.
* Pupils often worry that other pupils might be mean to them.

Table 3. Group Comparisons for School Climate by Sex and Grade\*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Mean (N)** | **Standard Deviation (StdDev)** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| **Sex** | | | | | |
| Male | 24.8 (1,709) | 4.9 | 24.6–25.0 | 1.7 | . 198 |
| Female | 24.6 (1,444) | 4.8 | 24.7–24.8 |
| **Grade\*\*** | | | | | |
| Grade 3 | 24.4 (1,557) | 4.8 | 24.2–24.6 | 10.6 | .001 |
| Grade 5 | 25.0 (1,596) | 5.0 | 24.7–25.2 |

\*Note: The School Climate Index is based on a total positive score out of 35 questions.   
\*\* Grade 5 pupils had more positive perceptions than Grade 3 pupils (p = .001)

### 4.1.2 Item Analysis of Survey of Pupil Perception of School Climate

#### Safety and Child Protection Structures

One of the key dimensions of school climate investigated was school safety and the school structures that are available to provide pupils protection and support. In this section we report findings on pupils’ perceptions of how safe they feel at their school and the availability of school structures that protect them and provide safety nets.

The individual bars on these graphs represent the percentage of pupils who gave a response reflecting a positive perception of the school climate in contrast to the proportion of pupils who gave a response reflecting a negative perception of the school climate for each of the selected statements; they do not represent agreement or disagreement with the statement. For example, in the statements seen in **Figure 2**, a positive response would be to ***disagree*** with the statement, “Violence is a problem,” or the statement, “Pupils do not feel safe traveling to and from school.” However, in the first statement in **Figure 2**, the gender positive response would be to ***agree*** with the statement, “Girls feel safe at school.”

#### Perceptions of Safety

A safe environment for learning, where children are cared for and protected from violence, leads to improved retention and learning outcomes. In this section we provide findings about how pupils perceive the safety of their schools, with our findings presented in ***Figure 2***.

Even though most pupils think that girls and boys in their school feel safe (89% and 88%, respectively), half of the pupils reported that there were places at school or nearby where they were not safe to go alone. About half of the pupils (48%) reported that pupils were safe when traveling to and from school and over one-third of the pupils (39%) perceived violence to be a problem at their school. Thus, there are some contradictions in these findings. Although pupils think boys and girls generally “feel” safe, the majority of pupils recognize that their schools present situation(s) that could be unsafe for them.

Figure 2. Perceptions about Pupil Safety at School

#### Perceptions of School Structures that Protect Children

When a school culture models caring for others and is responsive when children seek assistance, pupils feel protected and learn the importance of respecting and caring for others. These aspects of school life have been shown to support children’s retention and learning (Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissberg, 2017). ***Figure 3*** presents findings on pupils’ perceptions of how the school models positive social skills, including protection related to violence.

Most pupils reported that in their school, pupils were taught that they “should care about how others feel.” A large majority of pupils also reported that in their school pupils usually report incidences of physical violence and that teachers and school officials do take action when violence is reported or witnessed. However, 43% of pupils expressed that in their school, pupils are afraid to report incidents of sexual harassment and sexual violence. Only 40% of the pupils reported that there are peer support groups.

Figure 3. Pupil Perceptions on Child Protection

#### Pupil Relations

Positive pupil relations are an important aspect of school life. Schools that promote positive pupil relations among all pupils and schools that have a low to no tolerance of bullying help foster pupils’ sense of belonging and safety and also help build positive social skills. Research has shown that bullying negatively impacts pupil learning outcomes (Kibriya et al., 2016). ***Figure 4*** presents findings on pupil perceptions about pupil relations in their school.

As shown in ***Figure 4***, bullying in schools is perceived to be an issue by the pupils in this study—55% of pupils agreed with the statement, “Pupils often threaten and call other pupils names,” and a large percentage (45%) reported that pupils in their school “Often worry that their peers will be mean to them.” While the majority of pupils agreed that in their school pupils treat orphans and very poor children the same as other pupils (83% and 81%, respectively), the findings for children with disabilities were not as positive. One-third of the pupils said that pupils in their school “Treat children with disabilities unkindly,” and 39% of the pupils reported that in their school “Pupils from different tribes do not get along.”

Figure 4. Perceptions about Pupil Relations

#### Teacher-Pupil Relations

Pupil perceptions about how teachers treat pupils are presented in ***Figure 5.*** Almost all the pupils (98%) reported that, at their school, teachers like their pupils and 89% indicated that teachers treat girls and boys equally. A large proportion of pupils (85%) also reported that teachers in their school treat pupils from different tribes the same. However, about one-third of pupils perceived that the teachers in their school treat orphans and children with disabilities unkindly. Slightly over a quarter of the pupils also reported that the teachers in their school do not give very poor pupils a chance to participate in class. Finally, 45% of the pupils indicated that teachers rarely helped pupils individually with their class work. Thus, according to pupil reports, all pupils are not treated equally in primary schools in Uganda, with the most vulnerable children—orphans, children living in poverty, and children with disabilities—receiving unequal treatment by teachers. Pupils also perceived that the pupils in their school treated children with disabilities unkindly, but not orphans and or children from different tribes (***Figure 4***).

Figure 5. Perceptions about Pupil Relations

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#### School Rules

Successful application of positive discipline, an important quality of a positive school climate, partly depends on the pupils’ understanding of and respect for the school rules. Schools that engage pupils in establishing the rules are in a better position to apply positive disciplinary approaches and foster pupils’ development of self-management and self-discipline. **Figure 6** presents findings related to the pupil perceptions about the knowledge of and perceived fairness of rules at their school.

Most pupils felt that pupils knew and followed the rules and thought that the rules in their school were fair. However, their responses became less positive when asked about the consequences of breaking the rules; 24% of the children disagreed with the statement, “The consequences of breaking the rules were fair.”

Figure 6. Perceptions about School Rules

#### Disciplinary Practices

Survey questions also sought to understand pupil perceptions of the use of punishment in their school (***Figure 7****).* Although the findings presented in the previous section suggest that the majority of pupils agree that their school rules are known and fair, pupils are less positive when it comes to their perceptions about discipline in their school. Almost half of the pupils reported that in their school, corporal punishment is common (47%), pupils are punished too much for little things (48%), and pupils are sometimes afraid to go to school for fear of punishment (44%).

Figure 7. Perceptions of Disciplinary Practices

## 4.2 Survey of Gender Attitudes

Past research on gendered violence in schools has focused on various acts of violence with little attention to addressing the social complexities that produce and maintain the perpetration of violence against children in schools, including the prevailing gender norms and power relations that exist in the social institutions of school and community. Where gender inequality is the norm, well before entering school, boys often learn the importance of expressing their masculinity through dominant and aggressive behavior and girls learn that their role is to be passive and submissive. The power imbalances in the hierarchical institutions of community, school, and religion are often reinforced and exacerbated in schools by the power of authority invested in teachers and the low status of children (Parkes, 2015; Parkes & Heslop, 2011).

The design of the Result 2 intervention under the Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity, particularly the Journeys program, works with school staff, community members, and pupils to shift the norms toward attitudes that are more equal towards all genders and more balanced power relations. Findings from the Survey of Gender Attitudes provide a snapshot of these gender attitudes from pupils, school staff, and parents.

### 4.2.1 Findings for Pupils on the Gender Attitude Survey

#### Group Comparisons for Pupils: Sex and Grade

As described earlier in this document, Section 3.3, a Gender Attitude Index was calculated for study participants, including pupils, school staff, and parents. To calculate the index, the responses promoting equality, referred to as a “positive response”, were added up across all 12 survey items for each participant. The mean Gender Attitude Index was calculated for each subpopulation (pupils, school staff, and parents) and compared across these subpopulations, between boy and girl pupils, and between Grade 3 and Grade 5 pupils.

Overall, the Gender Attitude Index, a composite positive attitude score, did not differ between boys and girls nor between Grade 3 and Grade 5 pupils. However, cross-tabulations of responses to each item (agree/disagree) by sex (male/female) and grade (Grade 3/Grade 5) did identify certain gender attitude questions in which responses were different according to sex or grade according to Chi-square analyses. For example, girls were more likely than boys to have a gender positive response or *disagree* with the statement, “It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school” and Grade 5 pupils were more likely than Grade 3 pupils to *disagree* with this statement. Boys were more likely than girls to have a “gender positive’ response or *disagree* with the statement, “A mother should tolerate violence from the father in order to keep the family together” and Grade 5 pupils were more likely than Grade 3 pupils to have a positive response or *disagree* with this statement.

Grade 5 pupils were more likely than Grade 3 pupils to have a gender positive response and *disagree* with the statement, “Only men should work for pay outside of the home.” However, Grade 3 pupils were more likely than Grade 5 pupils to have a gender positive response and *agree* with the statement, “It is acceptable for a woman to disagree with her husband.”

The group mean comparisons on the Gender Attitude Index for sex and grade is given below in ***Table 4***.

Table 4. Group Mean Comparisons for Gender Attitude Index by Sex and Grade for Pupils\*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| **Sex** | | | | | |
| Male | 6.07 (2,062) | 1.62 | 6.00–6.14 | 1.73 | . 189 |
| Female | 6.14 (2,088) | 1.60 | 6.07–6.21 |
| **Grade** | | | | | |
| Grade 3 | 6.08 (2,125) | 1.55 | 6.01–6.15 | 1.00 | .316 |
| Grade 5 | 6.13 (2,025) | 1.66 | 6.06–6.20 |

\*Note: The Gender Attitude Index is based on a total positive score out of 12 statements.

#### Item Analyses for Pupils

***Figure 8*** and ***Figure 9*** present pupil responses to a small selection of gender attitude statements.

The individual bars on these graphs represent the percentage of pupils that gave a gender positive or gender negative response to the attitude statements listed; they do not represent agreement or disagreement with the statement. For example, in the first statement seen in ***Figure 8*** a gender positive response would be to ***disagree*** with the statement, “It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school.” However, in the second statement in ***Figure 8***, the gender positive response would be to ***agree*** with the statement, “Girls should continue in school if they get married.”

***Figure 8*** presents findings for gender beliefs related to the education setting. The most concerning of these findings was the high number of pupils who agreed that it was more important for boys than girls to do well in school. Although more boys agreed with this statement than girls (82% versus 56%), the majority of *both* boys and girls agreed that it was more important for boys than girls to do well in school. It is also concerning that more than 50% of the pupils disagreed with the statement that girls should continue in school after marriage.

Figure 8. Gender Beliefs Related to School

Error! Reference source not found. presents findings for gender beliefs related to gender roles and power relations that are observed in the home. Once again, the reader should note that the graphs reflect a gender positive or gender negative response; they do not reflect whether or not a pupil agrees or disagrees with a statement. Regardless of the statement asked on the survey, the percentage of pupils whose responses reflected agreement with conventional gender stereotypes in the home was high. For all but one of the statements below, more than half of the pupils (i.e., from 59% to 75%) gave a response that align with inequality between men and women or justification of violence against women in the home. Even then, it is notable and concerning that even though more pupils disagreed than agreed with the statement, “There are times when a man needs to beat his wife,” 31% or 1,499/4,835 pupils agreed with this statement.

Figure 9. Gender Roles and Power Relations in the Home

### 4.2.2 Subpopulation Comparisons on the Gender Attitude Survey

As discussed in the introduction, one of the goals of the Journeys program is to shift the attitudes of school staff, pupils, and parents toward attitudes that promote equality and to help staff, pupils, and parents understand the way that unequal power relations in the home and community can lead to violence against children in school. Thus, the baseline included measures of the gender attitudes in each of these three populations. This section presents the results of group mean comparisons for the Gender Attitude Index across pupils, staff, and parents using analysis of variance. The section also presents findings for selected item cross-tabulations (i.e., item responses, agree/disagree, by subpopulation) using Chi-square analysis.

### 4.2.3 Group Mean Comparisons on the Gender Attitude Index: Pupils, School Staff, and Parents

***Table 5*** provides the group mean comparisons on the Gender Attitude Index (i.e., the total positive score) across the three subpopulations. The ANOVA results presented in ***Table 5*** show that there were significant differences on the Gender Attitude Index between the groups (p = 0.000). All pairs of subpopulation groups (i.e., staff versus parents, pupils versus pupils, etc.) also differed significantly in a follow-up analysis (p = .000). Overall, the school staff were more favorable in their gender attitudes than both pupils and parents, while the parents were more favorable than the pupils.

Table 5. Group Comparisons for Gender Attitude Index across Pupil, Staff, and Parent Groups\*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sex** | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| Pupils | 6.11 (4,150) | 1.61 | 6.06–6.16 | 723.72 | .000 |
| Staff | 8.37 (804) | 1.68 | 8.25–8.49 |
| Parents | 7.12 (1,528) | 1.75 | 7.03–7.21 |

\*Note: The Gender Attitude Index is based on a total positive score out of 12 questions.

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 10. Mean Percent Positive Responses |
|  |

***Figure 10*** gives a graphic representation of the group mean comparisons presented in ***Table 5***; rather than the group means for total positive score or Gender Attitude Index, ***Figure 10*** presents the group mean percent of positive responses. For example, rather than calculating the total number of positive responses across the 12 items, the percentage of positive responses was calculated for each respondent and then the group means were derived from these percentages for each subpopulation.

### 4.2.4 Cross Tabulations of Gender Attitudes by Subpopulations

The following series of figures present the findings for selected gender attitude statements using cross-tabulations and Chi-square analyses. Each figure presents the percentage of respondents in each subpopulation that agreed and disagreed with the statement. In all of these figures, the dark blue bars represent a positive gender response and the light blue bars represent a negative gender response. As seen in ***Figure 11*** through ***Figure 15***, the responses from pupils were aligned with the prevailing gender norms of their communities, norms which reinforce inequalities between men and women and injustice or violence toward girls and women. The main takeaway from these findings is that children’s beliefs regarding the expected roles and relationships between men and women are formed at a young age, based on what they learn from their parents and/or teachers; either from what they observe or what they are taught. As a result, these norms are perpetuated across generations. Considering these findings, it is not difficult to understand how the beliefs of pupils, formed by what they have learned from important adults in their lives, can influence their experiences of school and their hopes to realize the futures they dream of; these school experiences, hopes, and dreams are likely to be different for girls versus boys because of these beliefs.

***Figure 11*** shows that a large majority of pupils (69%, grey arrow) believe that it is more important for boys than girls to do well in school, which mirror that of parents (blue circle). Note that even though fewer staff agreed with this statement, it is alarming that 31% of the staff interviewed (red arrow) (372 staff out of 1,192) hold this belief.

Figure 11. It Is More Important for Boys Than Girls to Do Well in School

Subpopulations were similar in their responses to the statement, “It is acceptable for a woman to disagree with her husband” (see ***Figure 12***).More than half of the individuals in each group disagreed with this statement. This finding has considerable implications for a child’s sense of their right to have a voice, especially girls, and reinforces the gender stereotype that girls should remain quiet and submissive. The circled responses for staff and parents represent how the beliefs of significant adults in a child’s life serve to shape their beliefs at a young age.

Figure 12.It Is Acceptable for a Woman to Disagree with Her Husband

Pupils were more likely to agree with the statement, “Only men should work for pay outside the home” than school staff or parents (see ***Figure 13***). This response pattern is somewhat different from what we have seen in ***Figure 11*** and ***Figure 12***, where the response patterns were similar for pupils, parents, and teachers. We know that children of this age group (8–11 years) approach survey items based on their personal experience, which may explain the pupils’ response to the statement, “Only men should work for pay outside the home.” The higher proportion of pupils agreeing with this statement may simply be a reflection of what the majority of pupils observe in the home, unlike the responses of school staff and parents, not a reflection of what the pupil believes; i.e., not a fully formed attitude.

Figure 13. Only Men Should Work for Pay outside of the Home

***Figure 14*** demonstrates the tolerance that society has for violence against women in the home and how these beliefs and observed behaviors shape the beliefs and attitudes of children. It is easy to understand how certain cultural norms—in this case the social norm that violence is acceptable under certain conditions—can lead to and perpetuate violence against children in school. In school, violence against children is often justified because of certain conditions. For example, corporal punishment is justified because the pupil did poorly on an exam. Subjecting a girl to sexual harassment and assault is often justified by stating that the girl was “asking for it.” These unjust beliefs and the conditions they are associated with can be taken as an excuse for the perpetrator to commit these acts.

Figure 14. A Mother Should Tolerate Violence from the Father in Order to Keep the Family Together

***Figure 15*** shows the responses to the statement, “It is wrong for older boys and men to make sexual comments to girls when they are walking to and from school.” For all three groups, more respondents agreed than disagreed with this statement. This is a positive finding. However, it is disturbing that about one-third of the pupils and parents and one-fourth of the school staff did not feel that it was a problem for older boys and men to make sexual comments to girls when they are traveling to and from school (i.e., 31% or 729 out of 2,328 Grade 5 pupils,[[2]](#footnote-3) 32% or 676 out of 2,137 parents, and 25% or 312 out of 1,239 staff). When sexual harassment is viewed as acceptable and not an act of violence, girls will also learn to accept this rather than challenge or report the behavior when they experience it. In fact, as seen in ***Figure 14*** and ***Figure 15***,a high proportion and a large number of children have aligned their thinking with a norm that justifies verbal and physical violence against girls and women.

Figure 15. It Is Wrong for Older Boys and Men to Make Sexual Comments to Girls When They Are Walking to and from School

## 4.3 Experience of School-Related Gender-Based Violence

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| --- |
| School-Related Gender-Based Violence  SRGBV includes physical, sexual, or psychological violence or abuse that is based on gendered stereotypes or that targets pupils on the basis of their sex, sexuality, or gender identities. SRGBV and abuse reinforce gender roles and perpetuate gender inequalities. It includes rape, unwanted sexual touching, unwanted sexual comments, corporal punishment, bullying, and other forms of non-sexual intimidation or abuse, such as verbal harassment or exploitative labor in schools. Unequal power relations between adults and children and men and women contribute to this violence, which can take place in the school, on school grounds, going to and from school, in school dormitories, in cyberspace, or through cell phone technology, and may be perpetrated by teachers, pupils, or community members. Both girls and boys can be victims, as well as perpetrators.  RTI International, 2016b |

Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states that it is a fundamental right of children to receive an education in an environment that is free from violence. When the school environment is positive—when it is safe and nurturing for children, and when instruction is effective, and teachers are also supported—children’s potential for cognitive and social and emotional development is maximized. However, the school experiences of children are not always positive and the school environment is not always safe.

The Survey of Pupil Experiences of SRGBV was designed to gather information on the nature and extent of pupils’ SRGBV experiences. The survey is made up of four subscales: (1) bullying and other forms of non-sexual intimidation, (2) corporal punishment, (3) Grade 3 sexual harassment and assault, and (4) Grade 5 sexual harassment and assault.[[3]](#footnote-4) For each act of violence, children were asked, “How many times did this happen to you this past term?” Children pointed to prompt cards to indicate their response choice from the following: never, once, a few times, and many

times; a score was assigned for each item corresponding to their response. A complete description of this survey instrument; the four subscales; and how to calculate the bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual harassment and assault subscale indices is given in Section 3 of this report.

Findings on the past-term and past-week prevalence of bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual harassment and assault are presented in Section 4.1. The extent of pupils’ experience of these forms of violence, based on composite subscale scores, are presented in Section 4.1. In this section we provide group mean comparisons for sex and grade for bullying and corporal punishment. Because there were separate sexual harassment and assault subscales for Grade 3 and Grade 5, only group comparisons for sex, not grade, could be analyzed for sexual harassment and assault.

### 4.3.1 Prevalence Rates

#### Past-Term and Past-Week Prevalence: Bullying, Corporal Punishment, and Sexual Violence

***Table 6*** presents the findings for past-term and past-week prevalence rates by sex for bullying, corporal punishment, Grade 3 sexual harassment and assault, and Grade 5 sexual harassment and assault. The different acts from each form of SRGBV are further explored in ***Figure 16*** (bullying), ***Figure 17*** (corporal punishment), and ***Figure 18*** (sexual violence).

The prevalence rates for all forms of SRGBV were high for Grade 3 and Grade 5 boys and girls. Most pupils (between 85% to 95%) in this sample reported having experienced some form of bullying and some form of corporal punishment in the school term. The past-week prevalence of bullying and corporal punishment reminds us that many children face these forms of violence frequently, as often as every week. About one-third of primary school pupils reported experiencing some form of bullying (41%) and some form of corporal punishment (32%) in the past week. The prevalence rates for bullying and corporal punishment are somewhat higher than findings in the 2012 MoES/UNICEF study but are consistent with the 2015 findings by Devries et al.

The prevalence of corporal punishment remains high despite the longstanding ban of corporal punishment in Uganda, as well as new legislation in 2016,[[4]](#footnote-5) which makes corporal punishment and other forms of violence against children a violation of the law.

Past-term and past-week prevalence rates for sexual harassment were alarmingly high considering the ages of children in the baseline sample and were noteworthy and concerning for both boys and girls—past-term prevalence rates ranged from 38% for Grade 3 boys to 53% for Grade 5 girls. Furthermore, almost one-fifth of the pupils had experienced some form of sexual harassment or assault in the past week.

Therefore, many pupils, as young as 8 years of age, face the possibility of being a victim of some form of violence at school or while traveling to and from school and may not have the social support to talk about their fears or seek assistance when witnessing or experiencing violence. This is stressful and when it is chronic, can be toxic. Chronic toxic stress, in the absence of avenues for support from a trusted adult, interferes with children’s ability to concentrate on their studies, impedes executive function, and will, ultimately, negatively impact their school performance (Harvard University Center on the Developing Child, n.d.).

Table 6. Prevalence of SRGBV: Grade 3 and Grade 5 Pupils\*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Acts of Violence | **Girls** | | **Boys** | | **All Pupils** | |
| This Term | Past Week | This Term | Past Week | This Term | Past Week |
| Bullying | 96.3 | 39.6 | 94.9 | 42.2 | 95.6 | 40.9 |
| Corporal punishment | 87.2 | 29.7 | 89.4 | 33.4 | 88.3 | 31.5 |
| Grade 3 Sexual harassment and assault\*\* | 44.5 | 19.4 | 37.9 | 17.2 | 41.2 | 18.3 |
| Grade 5 Sexual harassment and assault\*\* | 52.9 | 18.1 | 47.7 | 16.4 | 50.1 | 17.3 |

\*Prevalence of different forms of SRGBV in this table combined both psychological and physical forms of violence.

|  |
| --- |
| Definition and Types of Bullying  Bullying is defined as any non-sexual form of intimidation that is perpetrated with intention to harm, either physically or psychologically. The act of bullying is grounded in the power differential that exists between the perpetrator and the victim. Excluding corporal punishment, acts of physical bullying range from severe acts of physical violence, such as beatings, to less harsh acts of violence, such as pulling at someone’s clothes or hair or grabbing a pupils’ belongings. Acts of psychological bullying include name calling, public humiliation, and other forms of teasing, excluding sexual harassment. Intentional exclusion of a peer from social circles (sometimes referred to as “relational bullying”) and theft are also forms of bullying, as is intimidating pupils via text messaging or on social media sites, referred to as cyberbullying. Bullying and other non-sexual forms of intimidation can be perpetrated by peers, teachers, other school staff, and persons encountered on the way to and from school.  RTI International, 2016b |

\*\*Girls had higher prevalence of sexual violence for both P3 and P5

#### Different Types of Bullying

Children experience all kinds of bullying, verbal and physical, as well as acts, such as being left out of your group of friends, i.e., “relational bullying” (Olweus & Limber, 2010). Petty theft that is principled in intimidation, especially if it is repetitive, is also considered a form of bullying (Ncontsa & Shuma, 2013; Roman & Murillow, 2011). Experiencing bullying may be detrimental to children’s learning and their social, emotional, and physical development (Kibriya, Zu, & Zhang, 2015; Fleming and Jacobsen, 2010; Roman and Murillo, 2011). The conceptualization of bullying presented in the text box was developed through 2016 USAID-commissioned work to develop a conceptual and measurement framework for SRGBV (see text box).

The nine items on the Bullying Subscale were divided into different categories to highlight prevalence differences based on a more specific group of bullying acts. In Uganda, we covered most types of bullying that were described in the conceptualization given above, with the exception of cyberbullying, which we learned, from cognitive interviewing, that primary school children in Uganda were not familiar with this.

1. Verbal Bullying

* Make fun of you and tease you
* Say mean things to you or call you names
* Threaten to hurt you or your family but did not do it
* Forced you to do something you did not want to do, such as joining a group in making fun of or hurting another pupil
* Tell lies about you or spread rumors or stories to other pupils or a teacher that were not true

1. Physical Bullying

* Physically hurt you on purpose by pushing you down, kicking you, or hitting you with a hand, clenched fist, object, or weapon

1. Stealing or Damaging Belongings

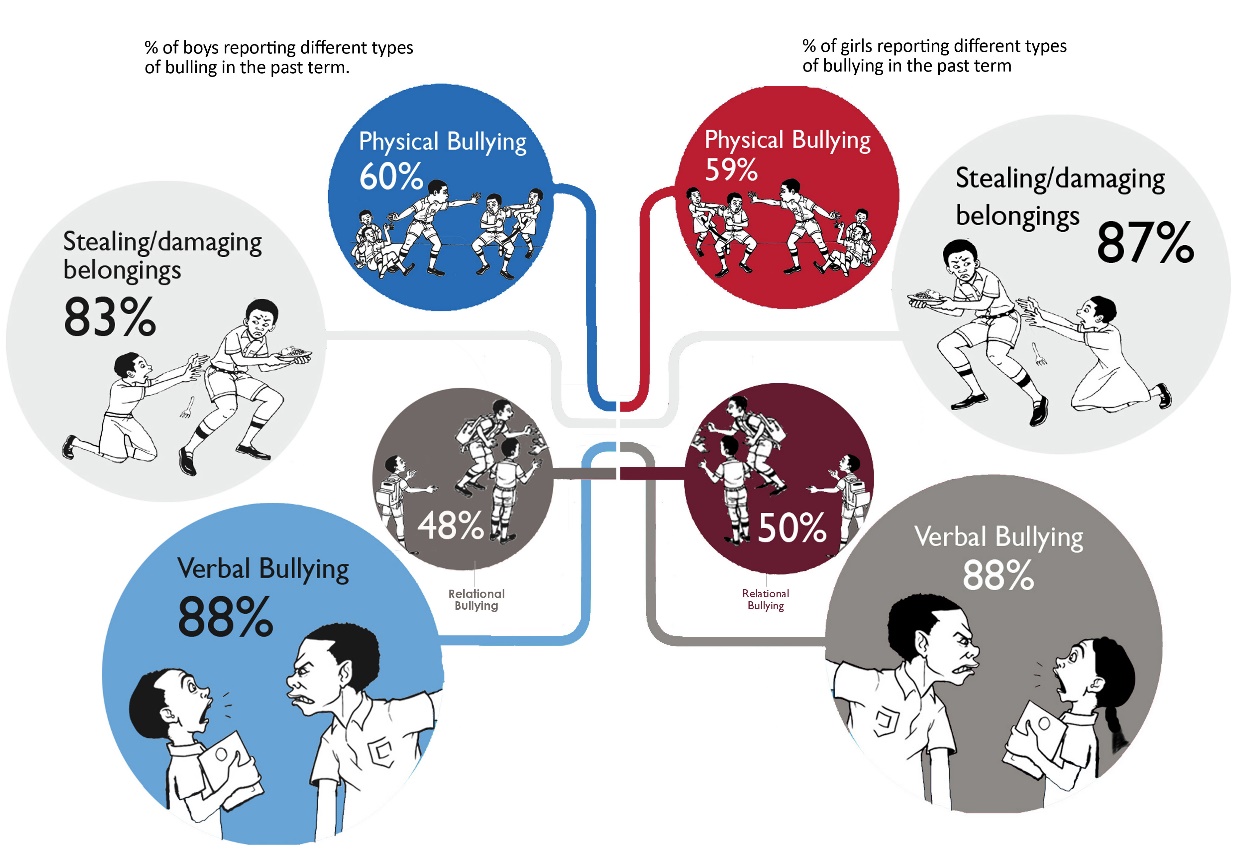
* Stole something from you
* Broke or ruined something of yours on purpose

1. Relational Bullying

* Left you out of your group of friends or during games or activities.

**Figure 16** presents the prevalence rates of these four different types of bullying. Group comparisons between boys and girls were conducted through chi-square analyses based on cross tabulations of “reported any experience of the type of violence in question (i.e., verbal bullying, ‘did experience’ or ‘did not’) by sex (male or female). Verbal bullying and petty theft were the most prevalent types of bullying—83% to 88% of the pupils reported one or more experiences of this type of bullying in the past term. Even so, approximately half the pupils reported experiences of physical bullying and relational bullying. Girls experienced a higher prevalence on bullying related to theft or destruction of property than boys (p = .000).

Figure 16. Past-Term Prevalence of Different Types of Bullying



|  |
| --- |
| Corporal Punishment  Corporal punishment is rooted in the power given to authority. It is perpetrated differently against boys and girls and is, thereby, a gendered practice. Perpetrators are teachers or other school officials who use this punishment on pupils. Corporal punishment is a form of physical or psychological violence that involves the deliberate infliction of physical pain or humiliation to discipline or reform a pupil or to deter attitudes or behaviors deemed unacceptable or inappropriate. This may involve physical violence, such as striking a pupil with an object like a cane, stick, slung book, or piece of chalk; directly striking a pupil; boxing/pulling a pupil’s ears; or forcing a pupil to adopt uncomfortable positions or humiliating postures for long periods of time. Public humiliation or exploitative labor, such as lifting heavy packages or cooking or cleaning perpetrated as a form of discipline is also considered corporal punishment*.*  RTI International, 2016b |

More girls experienced stealing and damaging of their belongings than boys (p = .000).

#### Different Types of Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment in school is usually associated with using a cane or a paddle to discipline or improve the behavior of children, e.g., improve their school performance or deter unacceptable social behavior, such as speaking to peers during lessons or otherwise disrupting the class. Tardiness, forgetting homework, or failing to wear the school uniform are also common reasons for caning or “beating” a pupil (i.e., beating is a common term used by children in Uganda when referring to being punished physically). However, corporal punishment is much more than the physical act. Any act of violence that inflicts psychological or physical pain on a child is considered corporal punishment and is against the law in Uganda via the Child Act Amendment (see footnote 4). Like bullying, corporal punishment has been associated with lower academic performance, school dropout, and emotional distress (Simatwa, 2012; Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, 2009; Dunne, 2007; Jyoti & Neetu, 2013; MSI, 2008).The following provides a categorization of the seven items on the Corporal Punishment Subscale, which is aligned with the definition in the text box.

1. Verbal

* Shouted things at you in front of your classmates that humiliated you

1. Physical

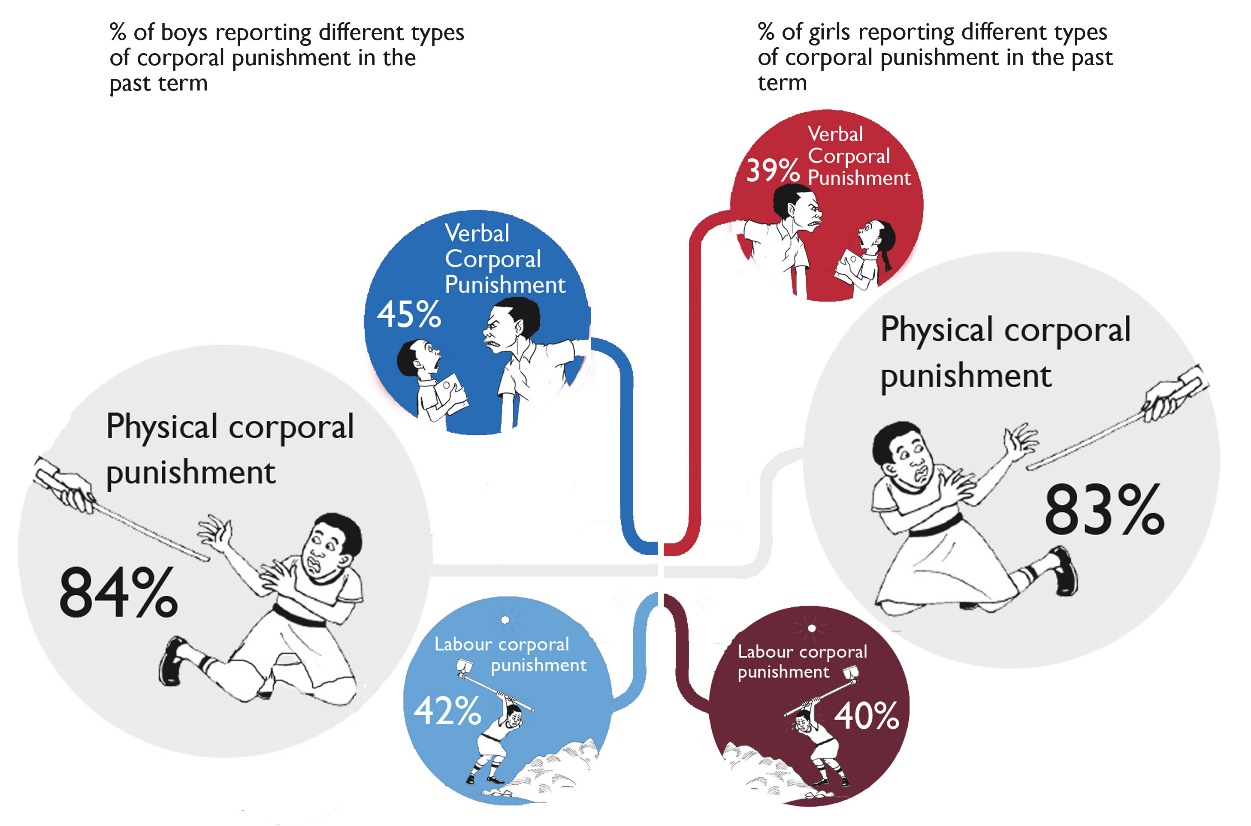
* Hit you with a hand or closed fist on any part of your body, including your head, face, hand, chest, or leg
* Hit you with any type of object, such as a cane, stick, belt, or book
* Pulled or twisted your ear
* Made you stand or kneel in a way that hurt or for a long period of time

1. Labor

* Made you work at the school as punishment
* Made you work at the teacher's house as punishment

*Error! Reference source not found.* presents the prevalence rates of the three different types of corporal punishment based on the breakdown of items given above. The comparison of prevalence rates for boys and girls were compared using chi-square analyses based on cross tabulations of reported experience of the type of violence in question (i.e., verbal punishment) by sex. Physical types of corporal punishment, i.e., harsh punishment that can bring physical harm to a pupil, was the most prevalent, about twice as prevalent than the use of verbal punishment or labor. Yet, verbal abuse, humiliation, and subjecting pupils to labor as a form of discipline were common, with approximately 40% of the pupils experiencing these types of discipline. More boys than girls reported experiences of being shouted at and humiliated in front of the class by their teachers (p = .000).

Figure 17. Past-Term Prevalence of Different Types of Corporal Punishment



More boys than girls experienced verbal acts of corporal punishment (p = .000).

|  |
| --- |
| Sexual Harassment and Assault  Sexual harassment and assault involve physical or psychological acts of violence or abuse by an adult or another child through any form of forced or unwanted sexual activity where there is no consent, consent is not possible, or power and/or intimidation is used to coerce a sexual act. Transactional sex (i.e., sex that is given in exchange for something, such as transportation, air time for a cell phone, or for a better mark in a class) is an example of sexual violence and abuse in which consent may be given, but the power differential given by age, authority, and gender and/or intimidation is used to coerce the sexual act. Sexual violence and abuse includes unwanted touching of any kind or rape, including the use of children in commercial sexual exploitation or in audio and visual images. Regardless of the legal age of consent, sexual activity between teachers or other school personnel and pupils is considered to be sexual violence and abuse. Sexual violence can be perpetrated verbally, through any repetitive, unwanted sexual attention, such as requests for sexual favors, teasing or taunting about dress or personal appearance, or if the pupils are forced to watch pornography or listen to sexually explicit language.  RTI International, 2016b |

#### Different Types of Sexual Violence

Sexual harassment and assault are usually associated with violent acts perpetrated against girls and women and, before this past decade, little attention and research on sexual violence focused on pre-adolescent children or sexual violence taking place in or around the primary school setting. Since the 2012 MoES and UNCIEF study, it has become clear that children in primary school do experience a wide variety of violent sexual acts. The findings from this study underscore the fact that children, both boys and girls, are subjected to sexual harassment and assault at or around school at a very young age. Sexual violence includes any sexually driven forms of intimidation and can be either psychological or physical, including, but not limited to, sexual acts that are forced on a pupil or coerced. A detailed conceptualization of sexual harassment and assault is presented in the text box.

In developing the Sexual Harassment and Assault Subscale, we conducted a series of cognitive interviews to test the children’s understanding of the various acts of violence mentioned and the related terminology (presented in the local language). We learned that Grade 3 pupils did not understand words (translated to the local language), such as “sexual gesture,” “sexual comment,” or “sexual rumors.”

Therefore, for the Grade 3 subscale, the M&E team removed items that used these terms and also removed items related to acts of sexual violence that were better suited for older children (e.g., items pertaining to transactional sex). These adaptations resulted in a 7-item subscale for Grade 3 and a 14-item subscale for Grade 5. To understand the relative prevalence of different types of sexual violence covered in the Grade 3 and Grade 5 Sexual Violence Subscales, we broke the items in these subscales into three different categories: verbal harassment (Grade 5 subscale only), body exposure (Grade 3 and Grade 5), and physical assault (selected items for Grade 3 and Grade 5). These are described below. It is important to note that the distribution of items across Grade 3 and Grade 5. Not all items were administered to all pupils, some were only administered to Grade 5 pupils.

1. Verbal (Grade 5)

* Make sexual comments about you, your body, or your clothes
* Made sexual gestures at you or looked at you in a sexual way
* Make love proposals to you that upset you
* Show you or give you sexual pictures or show you sexual videos
* Spread sexual rumors and lies about you

1. Body Exposure (Grade 3 and Grade 5)

* Spy on you when you were not fully dressed, such as when you were changing clothes or in the toilet at your school
* Has anyone at school or when going to and from school ever forced you to look at their buttocks, breasts, or private parts and you did not want them to?

1. Physical (Grade 3)

* Pull at your clothing to see your underwear or your body
* Force you to kiss them and you didn't want them to
* Touch, grab, or pinch your butt, breast, or private parts
* Try to get you to touch their private parts, but you didn't do it
* Force you to touch their private parts

1. Physical (Grade 5)

* Pull at your clothing to see your underwear or your body
* Force you to kiss them and you didn't want them to
* Touch, grab, or pinch your butt, breast, or private parts
* Try to get you to touch their private parts, but you didn't do it
* Force you to touch their private parts
* Try to get you to do something sexual with them other than kissing
* Force you to do something sexual with them other than kissing

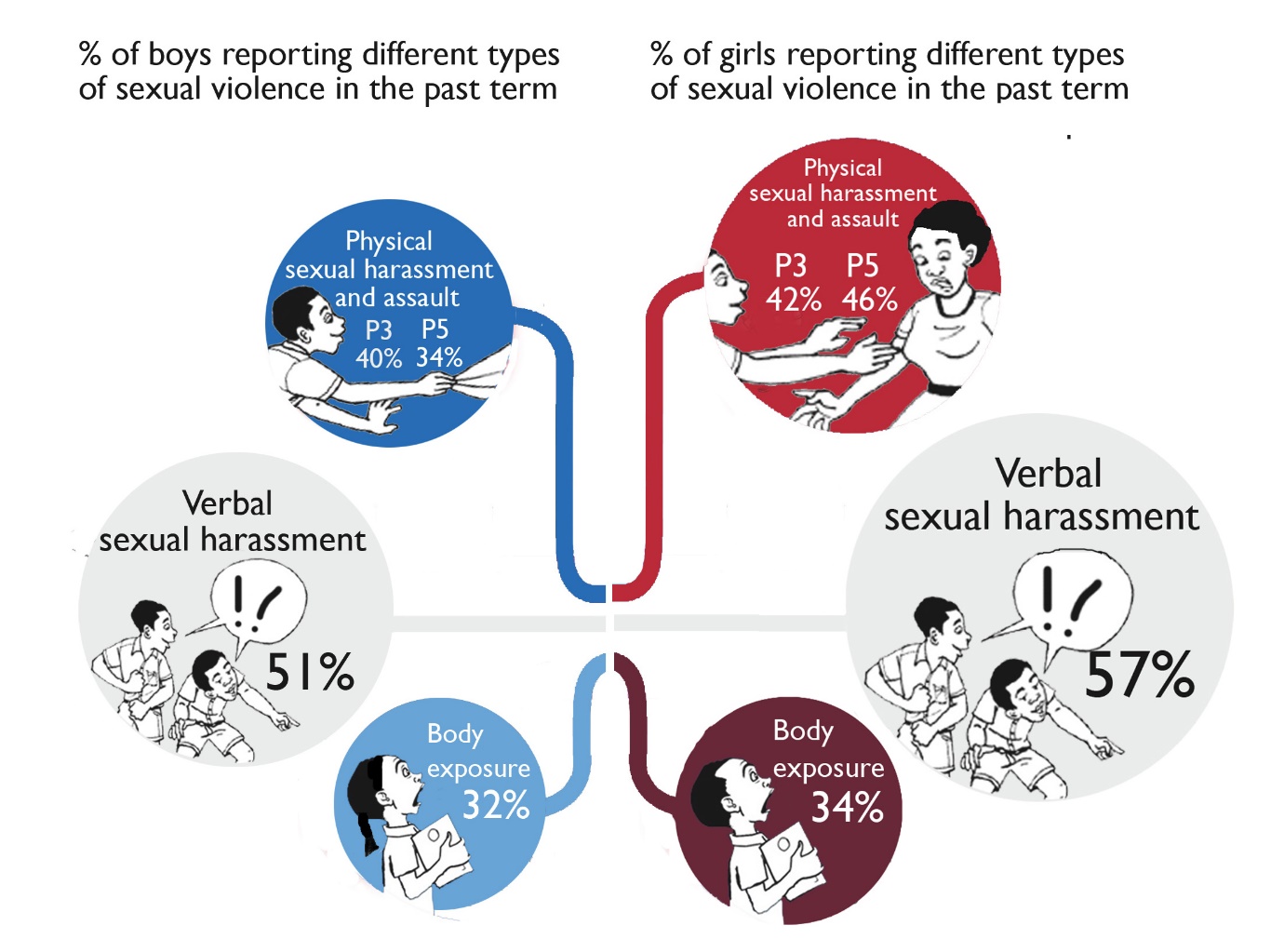
***Figure 18*** provides the prevalence rates for the four types of sexual harassment and assault for girls and boys. Boys and girls both experience all types of sexual violence, including physical violence, such as experiencing someone pulling at their clothing or “bad touching” (i.e., pupils use the words “bad touching” when referring to a person touching, grabbing, or pinching their buttocks, breasts, or private parts). All of these subtypes of sexual violence were experienced at high rates, especially considering the age and grade of the pupils. About one-third of the pupils reported being spied on or being forced to look at nudity through personal exposure or pictures.

Approximately 40% of the pupils reported experiencing some form of physical sexual violence during the past term (see list of survey items depicting physical sexual violence for Grade 3 and Grade 5 above) and half or more of the Grade 5 pupils experienced some form of verbal harassment. The majority of physical sexual acts that girls and boys reported experiencing in the term were experiences of someone pulling at their clothing; forcing a kiss against their will; grabbing, pinching, or otherwise touching their buttocks, breast, or private parts; or forcing them to touch their private areas.

Only Grade 5 pupils were asked about acts of sexual violence that could be characterized as some form of physical assault. It is a serious concern that 390 or 6.4% of Grade 5 pupils surveyed reported that someone had *tried* to engage in a sexual act with them other than kissing even though they did not do it (150, 6.6%, of Grade 5 boys and 231, 9.5%, of Grade 5 girls) and 310 or 6.6% of Grade 5 pupils experienced someone who forced them to do something sexual other than kissing (134, 5.6%, of Grade 5 boys and 176, 7.3%, of Grade 5 girls). These acts of sexual violence represent attempts at or actual forced sexual acts, such as rape or sodomy, and are pointed out to underscore the seriousness of sexual crimes that are being perpetrated against primary school pupils, boys and girls alike.

The prevalence of body exposure and physical sexual harassment for Grade 3 pupils were similar for boys and girls (note that verbal harassment was not surveyed in Grade 3). The situation was different for Grade 5. In Grade 5, girls experienced more verbal harassment and physical sexual violence than boys. There was no difference between boys and girls at any grade in their reported experience of being spied on or being exposed to the breasts, buttocks or private parts of a perpetrator.

Figure 18. Past-Term Prevalence of Different Types of Sexual Violence



Grade 5 girls experienced more verbal sexual harassment than Grade 5 boys (p = .000).  
\*\*Grade 5 girls experienced more physical sexual violence than Grade 5 boys (p = .002).

### 4.3.2 Extent of SRGBV Experience: Bullying, Corporal Punishment, and Sexual Harassment and Assault

Beyond prevalence data, the Survey of Pupil Experiences of SRGBV was designed to provide information on the extent to which pupils had experienced different SRGBV acts in the past term. As mentioned earlier in Section 3.3, pupils indicated how many times they had experienced the act in the past term by choosing from the following four choices (by pointing to a card prompt): never = 0, once = 1, a few times = 2, and many times = 3. Each response was assigned the appropriate numerical value and total scores or indices for each form of sexual violence were calculated for each of the four subscales (i.e., bullying, corporal punishment, Grade 3 sexual violence, and Grade 5 sexual violence) by summing the score for each subscale item.

Different subscales yield different maximum possible scores, depending on the number of items in the subscale. The Bullying Subscale is made up of nine items with a maximum score of three for each item. The highest possible bullying index score is, therefore, 27. The Corporal Punishment Subscale has seven items; therefore, the highest possible corporal punishment index is 21. The Grade 3 Sexual Violence Subscale had seven items; therefore, the highest possible sexual violence index for Grade 3 is 21. Finally, the Grade 5 Sexual Violence Subscale had 14 items; therefore, the highest possible sexual violence index for Grade 5 is 42. The higher the individual score, the more incidents of violence the pupil experienced in the school term.

Unlike the prevalence findings, which estimates the proportion of the target population that experienced one incident of a particular form of SRGBV in the given time frame (i.e., school term or past week), the SRGBV subscale indices are based on how *frequently* pupils experienced a variety of specific acts of violence. These data are compiled to provide a SRGBV Index score based on the sum of scores across the surveyed acts of violence for each subscale: bullying, corporal punishment, Grade 3 sexual violence, and Grade 5 sexual violence. Therefore, the findings presented in the sections below provide information on the *extent* of violence experienced for each form of SRGBV.

#### Extent of Bullying: Group Mean Comparisons for Sex and Grade

***Table 7*** presents the group means for the bullying index and group mean comparisons for sex and grade, based on a two-way univariate analysis of variance. Overall, most pupils reported experiencing multiple acts of bullying in the past term, with 1,029 pupils (21.4%) obtaining a bullying index score between 8 and 11. This suggests that almost one-fourth of the pupils experienced many of the surveyed nine acts of bullying “once” or experienced a smaller number of bullying acts “a few times” or “many times”. The bullying index scores ranged from 0–21; thus, some children reported never experiencing any acts of corporal punishment, while others reported experiencing all seven different acts of corporal punishment “many times.” Of the 4,793 pupils who completed this survey, only 220 pupils (4.6%) obtained a bullying index of 0, which means that they reported “never” experiencing bullying in the term. Yet, 490 pupils (10.2%) obtained an index of 18 or more. This suggests that these pupils experienced most of the nine acts of bullying at least “a few times” and some acts of bullying “many times” in the term.

The mean bullying index for boys and girls did not vary as a product of grade (i.e., there was no interaction between sex and grade). Furthermore, boys and girls experienced bullying at the same levels, with an average bullying index equal to 9.6 for both boys and girls. However, levels of bullying experience did differ by grade. Grade 3 pupils, whether boys or girls, experienced more bullying than Grade 5 pupils and these differences were significant (p = .000). This finding reinforces the premise that bullying is motivated by the power relations between two persons. In a culture where older children are perceived to be more powerful and often given authority over younger children, it logically follows that younger children would be more likely than older children to be the target of bullying.

Table 7. Mean Comparisons on the Bullying Index by Sex and Grade\*

|  | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sex** | | | | | |
| Male | 9.6 (2,396) | 5.98 | 9.4–9.8 | .002 | .965 |
| Female | 9.6 (2,397) | 5.78 | 9.3–9.8 |
| **Grade\*\*** | | | | | |
| Grade 3 | 10.4 (2,424) | 5.84 | 10.2–10.6 | 99.1 | .000 |
| Grade 5 | 8.7 (2,369) | 5.79 | 8.5–9.0 |

\*The bullying index is based on a total possible score of 27 (9 bullying items × a maximum score of 3 for each item = a total or index of 27).  
\*\* Grade 3 pupils reported more bullying experiences than Grade 5 pupils (p = .000).

#### Extent of Corporal Punishment: Group Mean Comparisons for Sex and Grade

***Table 8*** presents the group mean comparisons for the corporal punishment index for sex and grade, based on a two-way univariate analysis of variance. Overall, most pupils reported experiencing multiple acts of corporal punishment in the past term, with 1,164 pupils (24.3%) obtaining a corporal punishment index score between 4 and 6. This suggests that almost one-fourth of the pupils experienced many of the seven acts of corporal punishment at least “once” or experienced a smaller number of acts “a few times” or “many times”. The corporal punishment index scores ranged from 0–21; thus, some children reported never experiencing any acts of corporal punishment, while others reported experiencing all seven acts of corporal punishment “many times.” Of the 4,799 pupils completing this survey, 589 (12.3%) received a score of 0; therefore, these pupils reported that they never experienced corporal punishment during this term. In comparison, 176 (3.7%) of the pupils obtained a score equal to or greater than 14, which means that these pupils experienced most acts of corporal punishment at least a “few times” in the term and some of acts “many times.”

Similar to the findings for bullying, the corporal punishment index scores for boys and girls did not vary as a product of grade (i.e., there was no interaction between sex and grade). However, there were significant main effects for both sex and grade. Although prevalence of corporal punishment was high for both boys and girls (see ***Table 6***), when considering the relative frequency of corporal punishment experienced, as measured by the corporal punishment index, it was determined that boys experienced corporal punishment more frequently than girls (F = 18.2, p = .000); this was true for both Grade 3 and Grade 5. Furthermore, Grade 3 pupils, regardless of sex, experienced corporal punishment more frequently than Grade 5 pupils—these differences were significant (F = 56.1, p =.000).

Table 8. Group Mean Comparisons on the Corporal Punishment Index by Sex and Grade\*

|  | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sex** | | | | | |
| Male | 5.0 (2,395) | 4.13 | 4.8–5.1 | 18.2 | .000 |
| Female | 4.5 (2,404) | 3.85 | 4.3–4.7 |
| **Grade\*\*** | | | | | |
| Grade 3 | 5.2 (2,422) | 4.11 | 5.0–5.3 | 56.1 | .000 |
| Grade 5 | 4.3 (2,377) | 3.83 | 4.2–4.5 |

\* The corporal punishment index is based on a total possible score of 21 (7 items × a maximum score of 3 for each item = a total or index of 21).  
\*\* Grade 3 pupils reported more experiences of bullying that Grade 5 pupils (p = .000).

#### Extent of Sexual Harassment and Assault: Group Mean Comparisons for Sex and Grade

Unlike the Bullying and Corporal Punishment Subscales, in which both Grade 3 and Grade 5 pupils participated, there were separate sexual violence subscales for Grade 3 and Grade 5. Only 7 of the 14 acts of sexual violence on the Grade 5 Sexual Violence Subscale were included on the Grade 3 Subscale (see Section 4.3).

The prevalence data for sexual violence was high; this is discussed in the section on violence prevalence, Section 4.3. As mentioned in Section 4.3, approximately 40% of the pupils in Grade 3 reported experiencing at least one act of sexual violence in the school term, while approximately 50% of Grade 5 pupils reported experiencing at least one act of sexual violence in the term. Unlike the prevalence findings, the Grade 3 Sexual Violence Index and the Grade 5 Sexual Violence Index allow for an analysis of the *extent* of sexual violence experienced.

Even though 40% to 50% of all Grade 3 and Grade 5 pupils, respectively, experienced at least one act of sexual violence in the school term, analysis of the sexual violence index scores suggest that, for most children, the frequency that these acts were experienced was not extensive. On average, Grade 3 pupils (boys and girls combined) had a Sexual Violence Index score equal to 2.0. This suggests that most Grade 3 pupils either experienced two different acts of sexual violence (out of the possible seven) only one time or experienced one act of sexual violence “a few times.” The average Grade 5 Sexual Violence Index (boys and girls combined) was equal to 4.0. This suggests that Grade 5 pupils either experienced four different acts of sexual violence once or experienced a smaller number of acts of sexual violence “a few times.”

Despite this finding, which may seem to be encouraging, there were far too many pupils in both grades who reported frequently experiencing sexual violence. Approximately 8% of the 4,766 Grade 3 pupils who participated in this survey (i.e., 400 pupils or 8.4%) had scores of seven or higher, suggesting that in the school term, they experienced many of the seven acts of sexual violence at least once or experienced some acts repetitively. Approximately 8% of 2,321 Grade 5 pupils completing this survey (196 pupils or 8.4%) had scores of 14 or higher, suggesting that in the school term, these Grade 5 pupils experienced many of the 14 acts of sexual violence at least once or experienced some acts repetitively.

Turning to group comparisons, the findings presented in ***Table 9*** show that for Grade 5, boys and girls differed on the extent of sexual violence experienced—Grade 5 girls experienced sexual violence more frequently than Grade 5 boys.

Table 9. Mean Comparisons by Sex on the Grade 3 and Grade 5 Sexual Violence Indices

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| **Grade 3 Sexual Violence Index\*** | | | | | |
| **Sex** | | | | | |
| Male | 2.1 (1,209) | 3.4 | 1.9–2.3 | .396 | .529 |
| Female | 2.0 (1,193) | 3.1 | 1.8–2.2 |
| **Grade 5 Sexual Violence Index\*\*** | | | | | |
| **Sex\*\*\*** | | | | | |
| Male | 3.5 (1,148) | 5.5 | 3.2–3.9 | 14.5 | .000 |
| Female | 4.5 (1,173) | 6.1 | 3.2–3.9 |

\*The Grade 3 Sexual Violence Index is based on a total possible score of 21 (7 items × 3 max/item = 21).  
\*\*The Grade 5 Sexual Violence Index is based on a total possible score of 42 (14 × 3 max/item = 42).  
\*\*\* For Grade 5 pupils only, girls reported more experiences of sexual violence than boys (p = .000).

The Grade 5 Sexual Violence Subscale included all acts of sexual violence that were included in the Grade 3 Sexual Violence Subscale; therefore, grade comparisons were made by analyzing data from the set of seven items that made up the Grade 3 Sexual Violence Subscale and comparing the group means, based on the sum of scores across these seven items, for Grade 3 and Grade 5. These findings are presented in ***Table 10***. Based on this analysis, Grade 3 pupils were determined to experience higher levels of sexual violence than Grade 5 pupils (F = 29.4, p =.000).

Table 10. Group Mean Comparisons for Grade based on the Grade 3 Sexual Violence Subscale Index

| **Sex** | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade 3 | 2.0 (2,402) | 3.2 | 1.9–2.2 | 29.4 | .000 |
| Grade 5 | 1.6 (2,364) | 2.8 | 1.4–1.7 |

## 4.4 Findings for orphans and children with disabilities

As discussed previously, SRGBV has its roots in the structures of inequality and injustice created by longstanding gender norms and the imbalance of power that exist in the social institutions of school and community. Considering the lower status of children living in poverty, children of ethnic minorities, orphans, children with disabilities, internally displaced children who lack family supports, and other vulnerable populations, it is not surprising that children having one or more of these vulnerabilities are at greater risk of experiencing SRGBV than those who do not. Findings from the baseline study support this and also shed light on the interconnectivity of school climate, beliefs about gender stereotypes, and the experience of SRGBV in young children.

Before presenting the findings on orphans and children with disabilities, the reader is reminded that the sample selection of these subpopulations was purposeful and convenient (see Section 3 for the sample methodology). Therefore, the sample is not representative of orphans and children with disabilities in the population of schools from which the sample for this study was selected nor of Uganda overall. The reader is reminded to consider these findings with caution; however, the findings do point to important areas to study further to learn more about how vulnerable populations experience school and how the structures of inequality and injustice shape their experience in school and their risk of SRGBV.

### 4.4.1 Perceptions of school climate

***Table 11*** presents the group mean comparisons between orphans and non-orphans and children with and children without disabilities on the School Climate Index. The School Climate Index score is based on the total number of items (out of 35) in which the pupil’s response reflected a positive perception of his or her school. The findings given in ***Table 11*** and ***Figure 19*** present the ANOVA findings, comparing the group means on the School Climate Index for children who are orphans versus children who are not orphans and for children who have disabilities versus to children who do not have disabilities.

Table 11. Group Mean Comparisons on School Climate Index: Orphans versus Non-Orphans and Children with Disabilities versus Children without Disabilities

|  | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Orphans** | | | | | |
| Orphans | 24.5 (406) | 5.19 | 23.97–24.98 | .910 | .340 |
| Not Orphans | 24.7 (2,746) | 4.85 | 24.54–24.90 |
| **Disabilities** | | | | | |
| Children with a disability | 22.7 (99) | 4.49 | 21.84–23.63 | 16.38 | .000 |
| Children without a disability | 24.8 (3,048) | 4.90 | 24.58–24.93 |

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 19. Mean Comparisons for School Climate Index |
|  |

Although the School Climate Index did not significantly differ between orphans and non-orphans, on average, children with disabilities perceived school to be less positive than those without disabilities and these results were significant (p = .000).

Overall children with disabilities who participated in this study perceived schools to be less friendly and less safe, and were less trusting that the school would assist them when they need help than did children who did not have a disability. Responses to specific items on the Survey of Pupil Perceptions of School Climate provide some insight into how pupils with disabilities perceive characteristics of the school compared to their peers.

Between 10% and 20 % more children with disabilities than children without disabilities agreed with the statements presented in ***Table 12***. For all of these items—based on chi-square analyses given from cross tabulations of item responses (agree/disagree) by disability status—there was a significant difference between the relative proportion of children who agreed and disagreed with these statements across children with disabilities and without disabilities (p < 0.004). It is noteworthy that almost 20% more of the children with disabilities versus children without disabilities agreed with the statement, “Violence is a problem.” These findings can be seen in ***Table 12***. However, this is not to say that children who do not have a disability perceive their schools to be safe. On the contrary, from 40% (1,830 pupils) to 50% (2,288 pupils) of all of the children in the study sample agreed with statements suggesting that violence is a problem in their school.

Table 12. Proportion of Children With Disabilities who Agree with Selected School Climate Statements Compared to the Proportion of Children without Disabilities who Agree

| **School Climate Statements** | Percentage that Agreed with the Statement | | **p-level (Based on  Chi-square Test)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Children with Disabilities** | **Children without Disabilities** |
| Boys and girls are not very nice to each other. | 48.6% | 37.0% | p = .003 |
| Pupils treat disabled pupils unkindly. | 44.7% | 32.6% | p = .002 |
| Teachers are unkind to children who are have a disability. | 43.4% | 32.3% | p = .004 |
| Pupils are punished too much for little things. | 60.1% | 47.1% | p = .002 |
| Pupils are sometimes afraid to go to school for fear of punishment. | 55.6% | 43.3% | p = .002 |
| Violence is a problem. | 54.3% | 38.6% | p = .000 |
| Pupils often worry that other pupils might be mean to them. | 57.1% | 44.1% | p = .002 |
| Pupils often threaten and call other pupils names. | 68.1% | 54.4% | p = .001 |
| School officials do not do anything when pupils hurt other pupils. | 37.3% | 26.1% | p = .003 |

### 4.4.2 Gender Attitudes

Overall, children with and without disabilities held similar views and beliefs related to gender norms and power relations in the home and school. Children who were orphans, however, had less positive views on gender attitudes than children who were not orphans and these findings were significant (p = .000). ***Table 13*** and ***Figure 20*** present the ANOVA findings from the group mean comparisons on the Gender Attitude Index.

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 20. Mean Comparisons for Gender Attitude Index |
|  |

Orphans’ beliefs about gender stereotypes and power relations in the home and school tended to represent a more conservative and traditional viewpoint.

Orphans were more likely than non-orphans to agree with the following statements:

* Girls continue in school if they get married (62.8% versus 50.3%; p < .005)
* It is acceptable for a woman to disagree with her husband (68.5% versus 57.3%; p < .005)
* A pregnant girl should be allowed to go to school (88.7% versus 83.0%; p < .001)

Table 13. Group Mean Comparisons on Gender Attitude Index: Orphans and Children with Disabilities

|  | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Orphans** | | | | | |
| Orphans | 5.76 (570) | 1.59 | 5.63–5.89 | 30.21 | .000 |
| Not orphans | 6.16 (3,579) | 1.60 | 6.10–6.21 |
| **Disabilities** | | | | | |
| Children with a disability | 6.18 (125) | 1.70 | 5.88–6.49 | .311 | .577 |
| Children without a disability | 6.10 (4019) | 1.61 | 6.05–6.15 |

### 4.4.3 SRGBV Experiences

When there are longstanding hierarchical power structures in schools and communities, marginalized populations often have low status and are valued less, especially children. These imbalanced power relations place some children at a higher risk of experiencing SRGBV. Children living in poverty, orphans, children from minority ethnic groups or races, and children who have disabilities are known to be at a higher risk of bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual harassment and assault than children who are not in these subpopulations (Bisika, Ntata, & Konyani, 2009; Parkes, 2015).

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 21. Mean Comparisons for SRGBV Subscale Indices: Children with and without Disabilities |
| \*p < 0.05 |

Findings from the Result 2 baseline identified group differences in the extent that certain forms of SRGBV were experienced by children who have been orphaned in comparison to children who are not orphans and children with disabilities in comparison to children who do not have a disability.

#### Children with a Disability Compared to Children without a Disability

Children with disabilities experienced higher levels of sexual harassment and assault than children who did not have a disability; this was true for pupils in Grade 3 (p = .031) and Grade 5 (p = .041) (see ***Figure 21***). Although children with disabilities experienced bullying and corporal punishment at higher levels than children without disabilities, the results were not statistically significant.[[5]](#footnote-6)

***Table 14*** presents the analysis of variance results comparing the SRGBV subscale index between children who have a disability and children who do not have a disability.

Table 14. Group Mean Comparisons for SRGBV Subscale Indices: Children with and without disabilities

|  | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bullying** | | | | | |
| Children with a disability | 10.06 (144) | 5.69 | 9.14–11.01 | .978 | .323 |
| Children without a disability | 9.58 (4,643) | 5.88 | 9.41–9.75 |
| **Corporal Punishment** | | | | | |
| Children with a disability | 5.32 (145) | 5.69 | 4.55–6.08 | .311 | .577 |
| Children without a disability | 4.73 (4,648) | 5.88 | 4.62–4.85 |
| **Grade 3 Sexual Harassment and Assault\*** | | | | | |
| Children with a disability | 2.32 (143) | 3.54 | 1.74–2.91 | 4.46 | .035 |
| Children without a disability | 1.73 (4,617) | 2.99 | 1.70–1.87 |
| **Grade 5 Sexual Harassment and Assault\*** | | | | | |
| Children with a disability | 5.43 (68) | 6.63 | 3.82–7.03 | 4.18 | .041 |
| Children without a disability | 3.96 (2,248) | 5.81 | 3.72–4.20 |

\*Grade 3 and Grade 5 children with disabilities experienced sexual violence more frequently than pupils who did not have a disability (p < .05)

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 22. Mean Comparisons on Experience of Violence: Orphans and Non-orphans |
| \*p = 0.01 for bullying comparisons; p – 0.00 for corporal punishment. |

#### Orphaned Children Compared to Children who are Not Orphans

Orphans experienced higher levels of both bullying (p = .01) and corporal punishment (p = .00) than children who were not orphans. The extent of sexual violence experienced by orphaned children was not different from that of children who are not orphans (***Figure 22***).

***Table 15*** presents the analysis of variance findings comparing the SRGBV subscale index group means for orphans and non-orphans.

Table 15. Group Mean Comparisons for SRGBV Subscale Indices: Orphans and non-orphans.

| **Form of SRGBV** | **Mean (N)** | **StdDev** | **95% Confidence Interval** | **F-test** | **p-value** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bullying\*** | | | | | |
| Orphans | 10.12 (689) | 6.15 | 9.66–10.58 | 6.59 | .010 |
| Not orphans | 9.50 (4,102) | 5.83 | 9.32–9.68 |
| **Corporal Punishment\*\*** | | | | | |
| Orphans | 5.27 (691) | 4.09 | 4.96–5.57 | 13.56 | .000 |
| Not orphans | 4.66 (4,106) | 3.98 | 4.53–4.78 |
| **Grade 3 Sexual Harassment** | | | | | |
| Orphans | 1.84 (684) | 3.00 | 1.61–2.06 | .134 | .714 |
| Not orphans | 1.79 (4,080) | 3.01 | 1.70–1.89 |
| **Grade 5 Sexual Harassment** | | | | | |
| Orphans | 4.26 (349) | 6.10 | 3.62–4.90 | .751 | .386 |
| Not orphans | 3.96 (1,970) | 5.81 | 3.71–4.22 |

\*Orphans experienced bullying more frequently than pupils who are not orphans (p =.01)

\*\* Orphans experienced corporal punishment more frequently than pupils who are not orphans (p =.00)

#### SRGBV Prevalence

Prevalence data is measured differently than the subscale indices presented in the above sections. As discussed previously, the SRGBV subscale indices measure how frequently pupils have experienced various acts of violence, summed across all of the acts of violence in each SRGBV subscale (i.e., bullying, corporal punishment, or sexual violence). Prevalence data provides information on the proportion of children that experienced any of the acts of violence in the subscale just one time during the most recent school term.

***Table 16***, ***Table 17***, and ***Table 18*** provide prevalence data for each form of SRGBV and for the different violence subtypes, respectively. In each of the prevalence tables below, we present the prevalence findings for the subpopulations of children with and without disabilities and for children who are and are not orphans. For comparison purposes, we also present in these tables the prevalence data for all of the pupils in the sample as presented previously in this report, in Section 4.3.

In looking at the data in these tables, it is clear that the patterns of violence experienced across the different forms and subtypes of violence for children with disabilities and orphaned children was similar to those of the overall sample population.

Regarding bullying, all children experienced verbal bullying and experienced petty theft or damage to their possessions more than physical or relational bullying. For corporal punishment, all pupils experienced physical types of corporal punishment more than verbal types of punishment or labor; however, approximately 40% of the pupils still experienced verbal abuse and labor as a form of punishment. Different types of sexual harassment were also experienced in a similar pattern for children with disabilities, orphans, and the general pupil population. However, the prevalence rates for bullying and corporal punishment were higher for orphans in comparison to the children with disabilities or the overall pupil sample population. The prevalence rates for all types of sexual harassment and abuse were higher for children with disabilities in comparison to orphans and the pupil sample population.

Table 16. Past-Term Prevalence for Different Types of Bullying

|  | **Children with Disabilities** | **Orphans** | **All Pupils** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Bullying | Term Prevalence (Number out of 145) | Term Prevalence (Number out of 692) | Term Prevalence (Number out of 5184) |
| Verbal bullying | 88.3 (128) | 88.3 (611) | 87.8 (4,245) |
| Physical bullying | 64.8 (94) | 61.4 (425) | 59.2 (2,864) |
| Stealing/damaging belongings | 86.9 (126) | 84.5 (585) | 85.1 (4,115) |
| Relational bullying | 45.5 (79) | 53.3 (369)\* | 48.8 (2,360) |

\*Orphans had higher prevalence than non-orphans on relational bullying (p =.003)

Table 17. Past-Term Prevalence for Different Types of Corporal Punishment

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Children with Disabilities** | **Orphans** | **All Pupils** |
| Type of Corporal Punishment | Term Prevalence (Number out of 145) | Term Prevalence (Number out of 692) | Term Prevalence (Number out of 5184) |
| Verbal corporal punishment \* | 45.5 (66) | 47.0 (325)\* | 42.0 (2,030) |
| Physical corporal punishment | 82.1 (119) | 89.5 (619)\* | 83.6 (4,040) |
| Labor corporal punishment | 46.2 (67) | 39.0 (276) | 41.1 (1,985) |

\*Orphans had higher prevalence rates than non-orphans on verbal corporal punishment (p = .003) and higher prevalence then non-orphans on physical corporal punishment (p = .000).

Table 18. Past-Term Prevalence for Different Types of Sexual Violence

|  | **Children with Disabilities** | **Orphans** | **All Pupils** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Sexual Violence | Term Prevalence (Number/Total) | Term Prevalence (Number/Total) | Term Prevalence (Number/Total) |
| Grade 5 verbal sexual harassment | 62.3 (43/69) | 58.3 (210/360) | 53.7 (1,282) |
| Body Exposure  (Grade 3 and Grade 5) | 33.6 (56/145) | 31.6 (219/692) | 32.8 (1,585) |
| Grade 3 physical sexual harassment and assault | 46.2 (67/145)\* | 40.6 (281/692) | 41.0 (1,004) |
| Grade 5 physical sexual harassment and assault | 52.2 (36/69)\* | 41.7 (150/360) | 40.1 (956) |

\*Children with disabilities had higher prevalence rates then children without disabilities on acts of physical sexual violence for Grade 3 (p = .029) and Grade 5 (p = .032).

# Summary and Conclusions

The 2012 Government of Uganda’s groundbreaking study on child protection, safety, and security in schools provided a comprehensive snapshot of violence against children in Ugandan primary and secondary schools. The findings were disturbing; for example, 46% of children surveyed had experienced bullying, 82% had experienced some form of corporal punishment, and 78% reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment or assault. These findings led to a strong national response to fight violence against children in school (VACiS), including the development of the Uganda National Strategy and Action Plan for VACiS and the MoES Guidelines on Reporting, Tracking, Referral, and Response.

An additional response came from the USAID/Uganda Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity, in collaboration with the MoES, which designed the Journeys program. Journeys is a mandatory activity for all primary schools in Uganda and was adopted by the MoES as one of their key mechanisms for achieving the goals of the National Strategy on VACiS.

Rather than focusing solely on the acts of violence against children, Journeys was designed to ignite the will and agency of all school staff, students, and community members to build a positive and supportive school climate for learning that is free from violence. Journeys supports the Activity’s theory of change (see textbox) by working toward the following specific objectives: (1) establish schools that are positive and supportive of children; (2) shift the cultural norms toward more equality-based gender attitudes and more balanced power relations; and (3) build awareness about the acts of violence in school and how to reduce and mitigate the impact of this violence through strengthened voice and agency of staff, community members, and students.

USAID/Uganda Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity Theory of Change

If there is a positive and supportive school climate where teachers deliver quality reading instruction and are themselves supported, where pupils are encouraged in both the academic and social development, and there is zero tolerance for violence, then pupil retention and learning outcomes will be improved.

The SRGBV baseline findings provide a snapshot of the school climate in participating Ugandan primary schools; the prevailing gender attitudes and beliefs regarding power structures in the school and home; and the prevalence of all forms of SRGBV: bullying, corporal punishment, and sexual violence. These findings provide a base from which to measure progress on the expected outcomes for reducing SRGBV of the Activity, as well as test the Activity’s logic model, which links school climate and violence intolerance to pupil retention and achievement outcomes.

### Summary of Findings

Similar to the findings of the MoES’s 2012 study, prevalence of all forms of violence experienced by pupils surveyed in the Activity’s 2016 baseline study was high and disturbing. Boys and girls in the early primary grades experience all forms of violence (at high levels) as indicated by the per-term prevalence rates, which were based on the following subscale findings: bullying (95.6%), corporal punishment (88.3%), Grade 3 sexual violence (41.2%), and Grade 5 sexual violence (50.1%). With the exception of findings from the Grade 5 Sexual Violence Subscale, boys and girls experienced violence at the same levels. However, the prevalence and extent of sexual violence was higher for Grade 5 girls than Grade 5 boys.

The most common acts of bullying experienced were verbal bullying and bullying related to petty theft and more girls than boys experienced petty theft bullying acts. By far, the most common form of corporal punishment was physical punishment, such as being hit with an object, such as a cane. More boys than girls experienced verbal forms of punishment (e.g., being screamed at and humiliated by teachers).

The most common act of sexual violence experienced by children in this study was verbal sexual harassment among Grade 5 students. Notably, more Grade 5 girls experienced both verbal and physical sexual violence than Grade 5 boys.

It is widely accepted that SRGBV is, to a great degree, a product of the prevailing gender stereotypes and unequal power structures of society, which are often reinforced, even exacerbated, by the beliefs and behaviors of school management, teaching staff, and the students themselves. For example, teachers often pay little attention to sexual comments reported by girls and view it normal for boys to tease girls. When girls report this type of harassment, teachers are likely to disregard the boys’ behavior by saying, “boys will be boys.”

Further, the inequalities in status between, for example, men and women, older and younger children, and majority and minority populations, place some students at a higher risk of experiencing violence than others—this differential treatment is often regarded as normal and acceptable. A very simple example of this is when older students are named “prefects” in school and, therefore, given authority over younger students. In some instances, the older students abuse this power to bully and harm younger students; given the power of age and authority of ‘prefect’, this behavior is often not considered to be abusive nor violent and continues with impunity.

Mistreatment of marginalized populations, such as very poor students, orphans, children with disabilities, or children from minority groups is not only common in some school cultures but may not even be considered to be unequal or unjust treatment. The baseline findings provide some evidence for this as orphaned children reported experiencing higher levels of bullying and corporal punishment than did children who were not orphans (these results were statistically significant). Additionally, children with disabilities reported experiencing more incidents of sexual violence than children who did not have a disability and this was true for both Grade 3 and Grade 5 (these results were also statistically significant).

One of the goals of the Journeys intervention is to promote awareness about the gender norms and power relations that exist in the school and community and how these cultural norms are linked to inequality and violence. Journeys promotes a deepened understanding of these social phenomena and serves to inspire a shift in the norm toward attitudes of equality, more balanced power relations, and zero tolerance for VACiS.

Findings from the Survey of Gender Attitudes, administered to students, school staff, and parents, support the notion that children’s beliefs are, to a large degree, shaped by the adults around them. This could be a result of “teachings” from parents and teachers, but also a product of what children observe, i.e., the beliefs and behavior around them. The survey found that students’ beliefs related to gender stereotypes were generally aligned with that of their parents and teachers; however, the proportion of students who agreed with statements representing these gender norms tended to be higher for students than for teachers and parents. For example, even though a large majority of students and parents agreed with the statement, “It is more important for boys than girls to perform well in school” (69% and 61%, respectively), the percentage of students who agreed was higher. This trend was also seen in questions about power relations in the home. The majority of students (75%), teachers (56%), and parents (73%) agreed with the statement, “A mother should tolerate violence from the father in order to keep the family together”—note that the proportion of students agreeing with this statement was higher than that of teachers or parents. This was a consistent trend in the findings related to the Survey of Gender Attitudes.

Thus, structures of inequality and injustice in society, such as these harmful gender norms, influence the way students think about themselves, their value, their role in society, and their freedom. This can, in turn, impact how children experience school life. For example, if girls, their teachers, and parents believe that it is more important for boys than girls to do well in school, then a girl may feel less welcome and valued at school. These perceptions of personal value are likely to lower a girl’s motivation to succeed, which may, ultimately, lead to poor attendance and dropout. When girls drop out of school, it reinforces the gender norms, devalues sending girls to school, and decreases society’s value of women in the formal workforce. This cycle of inequality and injustice is carried on generation after generation.

The findings from this baseline from the Survey of Student Perceptions of School Climate suggest that school life is often characterized by certain inequalities in the way that teachers treat students and the way that pupils treat each other. Over one-third of the students reported that teachers are unkind to children with disabilities and one-third of the students reported that pupils were also unkind to their peers who have disabilities.

Even more prominent was the perceptions of violence in and around school. Approximately 50% of the students perceived their school as being unsafe and 40% (more boys than girls) suggested that violence was a problem at their school. Although the large majority of students (86%) agreed that students in their school reported incidents of physical violence, more than 40% (more girls than boys) reported that students in their school were afraid to report sexual harassment or sexual violence. Support structures for students related to violence were perceived by many students to be limited; more than 60% of the students indicated that there were no pupil groups where boys and girls could openly discuss problems. Further, more than 25% of the all pupils and over 33% of children with disabilities reported that teachers and school officials do not take any action when they hear about violence in the school.

### Conclusion

The findings from this baseline study underscore the complexity of the problem of VACiS and the inter-connectivity between the cultural norms related to gender and unbalanced power relations, characteristics of the school as experienced by students, and violence against children in and around schools. The findings suggest that chronic structures of inequality and injustice in society influence the attitudes and beliefs of students, which can in turn impact the way that school is experienced by different children; i.e., by girls versus boys and more vulnerable children versus children who are less vulnerable, such as children with disabilities. Depending on the beliefs that are influenced by the world around them, children associate themselves with more or less value and competence, as well as decide who is more or less deserving of education (see ***Figure 23***).

Figure 23. Inter-relationship between Cultural Norms and Children’s Futures



The Journeys program strives to shift the norms within the social institutions of school and community in a way that all children—girls and boys, children with and without disabilities, and children living in poverty and those whose families have higher incomes—are equally valued. Journeys serves to build awareness about the potential negative impact of the imbalanced power relations in society, such as the imbalance of power between men and women, older and younger individuals, and the wealthy and poor in society. Most importantly, the program allows participants to learn how these imbalanced power relations can lead to violence against children, including structural violence that denies children equal access to education. Journeys inspires school staff and community members to take individual and collective action to build a school climate that is positive, encouraging, caring, and supportive of children and their learning experience.

Simultaneously, Journeys for students is designed to build a students’ sense of self and promote their deliberation and discussions about the gender norms in their schools and communities, as well as their experience with school life. By allowing students an opportunity for social and emotional growth, the program may serve to deter the influence of longstanding and harmful social norms by supporting the agency of students to make their own decisions and to champion against any violence that may come their way, including the structural violence of denying certain students their right to an education and a future.

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1. Acts of sexual abuse in the 2012 MoES/UNICEF study included “sexual contact with a child, such as sexual touching and fondling, kissing, and penetrative sex or defilement, as well as engaging a child in other sexual behavior that she or he does not comprehend or give consent to, such as indecent exposure of sexual objects, engaging in sex in front of a child, encouraging children to engage in prostitution, or sharing pornography with a child.” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. This item on the Gender Attitude Survey was only administered to Grade 5 pupils. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. During the adaptation of the SRGBV subscales, specifically, during the cognitive interviews with students, the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) team learned that there were a number of survey items that were not understood by Grade 3 students but were understood by Grade 5 students. Therefore, the sexual harassment subscale was broken down into two different subscales. The Grade 3 sexual harassment subscale consisted of seven items and the Grade 5 sexual harassment subscale consisted of 14 items. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Specifically, the Government of Uganda’s Amendment to the Children’s Act, Section 106A. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Note that the small number of children with disabilities in this sample reduced statistical power and sensitivity for depicting group mean differences on bullying and corporal punishment, if indeed, they do exist. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)