What is it?
For many children in low-income countries, schools are danger zones and places to be feared. Policy makers, funders and implementers lack accurate information regarding the prevalence of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) and the way it manifests in the lives of children. RTI funded a study in March 2018 in Uganda that tested a new model of SRGBV data collection—the ACASI method—that shows promise in generating more accurate data.

How does it work?
In contrast to the conventional face-to-face interview method, ACASI "removes" the data collector from the interview and presents survey questions in an audio format through earphones; the interviewee responds by selecting her or his choice through the computer device without interaction with a data collector. In RTI’s study, exploratory analysis showed that students using the ACASI technology reported, on average, experiencing two more acts of SRGBV than students who participated in the face-to-face method. Additionally, students reported feeling comfortable using the tablet and expressed a preference of using ACASI over face-to-face due to the increased privacy the technology afforded.

What’s next?
Given these promising results, further research on using the ACASI method for assessing SRGBV and related topics is warranted. The finding that children in the tested population (Grades 5 and 7) are able to understand and complete the SRGBV survey using the ACASI technology would suggest that this methodology could be applied to other surveys of a sensitive nature and with children of this age group, children in multilingual contexts and illiterate populations. Fine-tuning of the ACASI interface is expected if funding allows.

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