The Journeys Approach to End School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) and Build Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies

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Summary

- Parents entrust that the local primary school is a place where their children will gain knowledge and learn useful skills. However, schools are also places where children grow and develop emotionally and socially—not just academically. The institutional environment of a school shapes social and emotional development, whether intentionally designed to do so or not. Schools reflect the social and cultural contexts of the society in which they exist, but each school has the opportunity to create an environment specific to itself as a social venue. One key question is, will that environment be supportive of children’s development or detrimental to it?

- Journeys addresses the social and emotional dimensions of children’s development at school in two ways. First, it offers a nurturing, as well as an emotional, environment in which they exist, but each school must also be willing and able to welcome a child’s voice when he/she speaks out against violence.

- The literature supports an integrated approach to SEL and SRGBV. The Journeys Approach to End SRGBV and Build SEL Competencies is an innovation that adds SEL components as part of the curriculum. The literature is the basis for program development and must be supplemented by evidence from program implementation.

- The theory of change for Journeys is based on a positive and safe school climate, which enables teachers and students to believe that they can make a difference and that their contributions are valued.

- The Journey toward Building a Positive and Supportive School Climate includes:
  1. Understanding students
  2. Leading schoolwide initiatives
  3. Reflecting on school social climate

- This process helps to create a welcoming environment that supports children in their development.

Background

Violence against P3 and P5 children in schools during the past term in Uganda

- 95.6% reported bullying
- 88.3% reported corporal punishment
- 41.2% reported sexual abuse for P3
- 50.1% reported sexual abuse for P5

Link to Education in Emergencies

- Teachers’ own needs and personal experiences are honored so that they can better create a supportive learning environment.
- As children’s SEL competencies are nurtured, they are able to exercise their sense of agency and speak out against violence.

The Journeys Approach

Theoretical/Empirical Description

Theory of Change

IF life at school is characterized by
- A positive and supportive school climate
- A violence-free environment
- Effective instruction

THEN pupils
- Enjoy learning
- Participate in class without fear of humiliation and punishment
- Stay in school throughout the primary cycle
- Succeed in their schoolwork

The literature supports an integrated approach to SEL and SRGBV. The Journeys Approach to End SRGBV and Build SEL Competencies is an innovation that adds SEL components as part of the curriculum. The literature is the basis for program development and must be supplemented by evidence from program implementation.

Use of Awareness-Building Social Technology

- Reflection
- Participatory games
- Activities
- Scenarios and drama
- U-Model

The Journeys Approach is innovative in adding SEL components as part of the curriculum. The theory of change is based on a positive and safe school climate, which enables teachers and students to believe that they can make a difference and that their contributions are valued.

The Journey toward Building a Positive and Supportive School Climate

1. Understand Students
2. Lead Schoolwide Initiatives
3. Reflect on School Social Climate

Implementation Strategy and Methodology

Training Cascades

Lead Facilitators

Teacher Trainers

Change Agents

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Approach

Routine M&E through District Support and Supervision
- SRGBV Measurement Framework and Literature Review
- Quasi-experimental longitudinal study design, comparing treatment and control schools on (1) SRGBV experiences; (2) reading gains; and (3) attendance
- A Longitudinal Study
- Action Research Outlier Analysis
- Outlier Analysis

Instruments

- Pupils
  - Survey of Student Perceptions of School Climate
  - Survey of Attitudes Related to Gender Norms
  - Survey of Student Experiences of SRGBV
- Parents or Caregivers
  - Survey of Attitudes Related to Gender Norms

Discussion and Implications for Future Programming in EiE

It is crucial for educational programs in education in emergencies (EiE) to include SEL components as part of their curriculum. While developing the SEL competencies of students, programs must also honor the psychological needs of teachers as well, and equip them with the skills to reflect on their own experiences in an effort to better empathize with and respond to their students. This means, that in order for children to be supported when they speak out against violence or report trauma, schools (teachers, staff and the community), must be equipped to support them. Moreover, programs should identify a limited set of key, actionable indicators to inform implementation. These monitoring data should be used for course correction during project implementation and serve as indicators of the degree to which the program was implemented as intended (fidelity of implementation). In addition, whenever possible, SEL programs should seek to measure the impact of SEL activities on learning outcomes, as improved learning is central to the policy goals of education ministries everywhere.

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