

Partnerships for Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls in Southern Africa

South Africa: Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention in Schools

Confronting the Challenge

In Southern Africa, gender-based violence against women and girls (VAWG) is among the most severe and widespread human rights violations. The prevalence and acceptance of VAWG is high in international comparison. According to Moul et al (2014), South Africa is facing extremely high rates of gender-based violence perpetration and victimisation of young children and adolescents, with the following facts realised:

- Girls tend to be the victims of GBV in schools (e.g. rape, harassment and sexual assault), while boys tend to be victims of physical violence and bullying.
- Assault, rape and sexual violence are 'endemic' in South African schools. It impedes girls' path to learning and adversely impacts school attendance and school completion.
- LGBTI learners are facing physical and verbal violence at their schools. In 2016, 56% of South African LGBTQ youth (≤24 years) indicated that they had experienced discrimination based on their LGBTQ status at school.

The prevalence of GBV and other forms of violence within the schooling environment creates a barrier for learners to enjoy a conducive environment of learning, free from violence and crime, with young girls being more vulnerable to victimization.

Schools are recognized as an **important entry point** for the implementation of **GBV prevention** interventions, primarily focusing on prevention of violence such as sexual violence, sexual harassment, sexual abuse as well as bullying. These interventions can also have a positive influence on the community through teachers, learners and parents.

Building Partnerships

"Power in collaboration": at the center of the project is the formation of a multi-stakeholder platform for GBV prevention in schools. The flagship engages government, civil society and research institutions in a multi-stakeholder process to jointly develop and implement GBV prevention interventions in selected schools.

Flagship name	GBV Prevention in Schools
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Eastern Cape and Gauteng Province, South Africa
Key stakeholders – Eastern Cape	Provincial and District Departments of Education and Social Development, REVIVE, Masi-funde, Doxa, Nelson Mandela University, FAMSA, Alternatives to Violence
Key stakeholders Gauten Province	Families South Africa (FAMSA), Sonke Gender Justice, People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA), Provincial and District Department of Education
Duration	12/2017 – 11/2020



In Eastern Cape, the flagship builds on already existing platforms – the NMB Safer Schools NGO Forum and OASIS, a community of practice on after school and in-school activities. The District Departments of Education champion the flagship project.



Photos page one and two: Learners participating in "Stronger Together" intervention © GIZ



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Taking Action

The flagship project will be implemented in selected schools in Port Elizabeth (Eastern Cape) and Soshanguve and Mamelodi (Gauteng Province). The flagship will promote schools as safe environments; applying a whole society approach and therefore working with the broader school community (management, educators, parents, learners, community leaders) towards a culture of non-violence. In addition, it aims at introducing GBV prevention into education (curriculum/extra-curricular) by supporting local civil society organisations to improve their GBV prevention activities in schools.

In **Eastern Cape**, the flagship follows three complementary approaches:

1. GBV prevention in 10 High Schools

Learners will be capacitated on topics such as GBV, positive masculinity, alternatives to violence and personal growth. Then they will design and implement their own campaigns to prevent violence in their schools.

2. Creating a safe space for LGBTI learners

As part of a joint initiative with the GIZ Sector Programme “Human Rights”, PfP implements several activities to reduce discrimination of learners based on their sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics by providing a supportive environment. Activities not only target learners, but also civil society organisations to strengthen their role in preventing GBV against and discrimination of LGBTI learners.

3. GBV awareness building in 20 Primary Schools

The “Strong Together: Stopping violence in its tracks”-methodology for GVB prevention in primary schools was adapted from the GIZ programme: “Combating Violence against Women in Latin America” and will be implemented with young learners.

In **Gauteng Province**, the flagship plans to do the following:

4. GBV prevention in 10 Schools

A narrative approach will be adopted to reflect on gender norms that build up the system of patriarchy and contribute to the high rate of GBV. This approach supports girls and boys to reauthor their stories.

Sharing Evidence

Despite progress over the past years, knowledge on the effectiveness of prevention interventions, especially those implemented in schools, is still much needed to inform policy-making and programme development. The flagship project will be closely monitored to create robust evidence on how the process unfolds and how it could be further replicated.

Findings and lessons learnt will be documented and shared amongst practitioners in Southern Africa (research uptake). Specific formats for regional exchange to promote replication in other regions or countries will also be supported.

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