Addressing SRGBV in Ethiopia: A scoping study of policy and practice to reduce gender-based violence in and around schools

Jenny Parkes, Jo Heslop, Freya Johnson Ross, Rosie Westerveld, Elaine Unterhalter

UCL Institute of Education

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Acknowledgements

List of acronyms

BoWYCA	Bureaux of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DHS	Demographic and Household Survey
EGVS	End Gender Violence in Schools
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EWLA	Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association
FGC	Female Genital Cutting
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GEQUIP	General Education Quality Improvement Programme
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
HTP	Harmful Traditional Practices
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs.
NEWA	Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PSTAs	Parent Student Teacher Associations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
REWA	Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRGBV	School-related gender-based violence
WHO	World Health Organisation
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labour

Executive Summary

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) describes physical, sexual and psychological acts of violence in and around schools, underpinned by unequal access to resources and power, and inequitable norms and stereotypes. While there is increasing recognition of SRGBV as a major issue globally, rigorous reviews of literature have concluded that evidence about effective ways to address it is lacking. The End Gender Violence in Schools (EGVS) initiative, led by UNICEF with support from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and UNGEI, aims to build evidence to better understand, inform and strengthen the process of policy enactment on SRGBV in Ethiopia, Zambia, Togo and Cote d'Ivoire. Findings from the initiative in these four countries will contribute to global debates on how to address SRGBV.

This summary presents draft findings from a scoping study of policy, practice and evidence on SRGBV in Ethiopia, which was carried out in 2016. The main objective of the study was to analyse responses to gender-based violence in and around schools in Ethiopia, in order to inform future planning of policy and practice initiatives. The study was a collaboration between the Government of Ethiopia, UNICEF, and the UCL Institute of Education.

Several **methods** for data collection were employed: 1) Two interactive workshops led by the Ministry of Education and facilitated by UNICEF and the UCL Institute of Education (March 2016; December 2016); 2) Literature review and documentary analysis of legislative and policy texts, research reports and datasets, and documents describing programmes or interventions addressing SRGBV in Ethiopia; 3) 23 in-depth interviews with governmental and non-governmental experts. The research questions addressed 1) what we know about SRGBV in Ethiopia, 2) what policies, laws and programmes exist and how well they are enacted, and 3) the availability and quality of evidence on SRGBV.

Key findings

There is a good body of research evidence in Ethiopia, which shows that **SRGBV in its many guises is commonplace in Ethiopia**. There is considerable diversity across the country, with girls and boys experiencing physical, sexual and psychological violence in urban and rural locations. In more remote, rural regions, conservative gender norms combine with economic insecurity in perpetuating practices of child marriage, FGM/C, and child labour, though there is evidence that some of these practices are reducing. Trafficking and migration increase vulnerability to violence. High rates of sexual violence from intimate partners are reported by adolescent girls, often occurring within marriage. Many forms of 'everyday' violence are still widely accepted. For example, the ban on corporal punishment (Constitution: Article 6) is often ignored, with teachers, often with very large classes, lacking support to implement alternative discipline approaches. Girls and boys are often reluctant to report violence for fear of repercussions, because they do not recognise particular acts as violence, or because girls' exposure to sex is often seen as shameful. A continuing challenge in some contexts is to engage influential figures such as religious leaders on issues like FGM/C, and local political leaders on issues relating to sexual violence.

There is a strong **legislative and policy framework** in Ethiopia, and clear structures established to mainstream gender across macro, meso and local levels, with SRGBV viewed increasingly as a central pillar of work. This structure provides a good platform for violence prevention, since it recognises violence as underpinned by unequal access to resources and power, and inequitable norms and stereotypes. Many SRGBV interventions are addressed through partnerships between development partners and government. Only relatively recently has SRGBV been integrated within the work of this decentralised structure, yet some interviewees felt that the increased commitment to work in this

area at federal level is having a positive impact on policy enactments at meso and local levels. However, change has been uneven, and the structures may not be as effective beyond federal at regional and woreda levels. Inadequate resourcing, and the need to enhance skills, expertise and commitment of staff are evident particularly at local levels. Careful tailoring of resources and capacity support are needed targeting areas with the biggest challenges.

There have been impressive efforts to improve school based **responses to violence**, notably with the Code of Practice on Prevention of SRGBV, and violence reporting template. However, these are not yet embedded within schools and woredas across the country, and have some weaknesses. The code provides a mechanism for strengthening reporting on gender-based violence, but there are concerns about uneven implementation, lack of local 'ownership', its narrow focus that does not address corporal punishment, bullying or violence occurring off the school premises, or prevention of violence, and weak alignment with other school processes and legal provisions.

Violence prevention work in schools and communities includes multi-component projects in schools, gender clubs, initiatives targeting girls and boys at high risk, interventions with teachers and teacher education colleges on curriculum and pedagogy, community based interventions, and use of mass media and technology. Often creative methodologies are used, with sensitivity to local contextual conditions and perspectives. Though some are short term programmes, reliant on external funding, the close engagement with government especially MOE and MOWYCA, strengthens the longer term sustainability. However, evidence of impact is yet to be empirically established through evaluation studies.

There are a range of data sources providing **evidence on SRGBV** in Ethiopia. These include one-off studies to understand SRGBV in context, regular surveys to monitor trends and patterns across the country, and longitudinal research. There are some structures to enhance the building and sharing of evidence with policymakers, but more work is needed to improve the ways different forms of evidence feed into policymaking at the national level and to strengthen the potential of the Violence Reporting Template. Close collaboration between government ministries, research organisations and NGOs could enhance evidence availability and quality.

The legislative and policy framework, structures to support policy enactment, and the range of initiatives underway in Ethiopia provide strong foundations for further work to address SRGBV. There remain significant challenges however and the **report's conclusion** identifies a number of areas to consider for strengthening the enactment of laws and policies across national, regional and local levels; violence reporting and responses to SRGBV; violence prevention; and research.

1. Introduction and Overview

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) describes physical, sexual and psychological acts of violence in and around schools, underpinned by unequal access to resources and power, and inequitable norms and stereotypes. While there is increasing recognition of SRGBV as a major issue globally, rigorous reviews of literature have concluded that evidence about effective ways to address it is lacking. In particular, the links between different levels of action – from international and national policy and legislation, to practice and projects on a school or community level – have thus far been inadequately addressed. The End Gender Violence in Schools (EGVS) initiative, led by UNICEF with support from the GPE and UNGEI, aims to build evidence to better understand, inform and strengthen the process of policy enactment on SRGBV in Ethiopia, Zambia, Togo and Cote d'Ivoire. Findings from the initiative in these four countries will contribute to global debates on how to address SRGBV.

This report presents findings from a scoping study of policy, practice and evidence on school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in Ethiopia, which was carried out in 2016. The main objective of the study was to analyse responses to gender-based violence in and around schools in Ethiopia, in order to inform future planning of policy and practice initiatives. The study was a collaboration between the government of Ethiopia, UNICEF, and researchers at the UCL Institute of Education. Its core elements consist of: mapping of stakeholders working on SRGBV; analysis of legislation and policy; analysis of programming on SRGBV; and the identification and evaluation of research and data sets. The findings have been used to guide decision making for phase two of the initiative in 2017[1], as well as longer term planning and action on SRGBV in Ethiopia. The findings will provide the basis for reflection and the development of the action plan for the next phase of the EGVS initiative.

The overarching research questions guiding the study are:

1. What is the existing evidence on SRGBV in Ethiopia, and how is SRGBV shaped by contextual features, including social, economic, political and educational structures and norms, in varying contexts across Ethiopia?

2. How is SRGBV being addressed in law and policy in Ethiopia? How are laws and policies enacted at macro (federal), meso (regional) and local (woreda/school/community) levels? What programmes are in place to address SRGBV? How effective is policy and practice, where are the gaps and barriers, and how could they be addressed?

3. What sources of evidence have been used to inform SRGBV policy and practice in Ethiopia? What approaches have been used to collect data, and by whom? How effective have they been, where are the gaps, and how could they be strengthened?

This report begins by detailing the methodology used to carry out this research, before discussing patterns, perspectives and research on SRGBV in Ethiopia. It then presents findings on the enactment of laws, policies and programmes on SRGBV in Ethiopia. After outlining the legislative and policy framework and decentralised government structures to mainstream gender and SRGBV within the education sector, it analyses how these processes operate from macro to meso to local levels; the role of cross-sectoral partnerships and networks; reporting and responses to SRGBV; violence prevention

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[1] Following phase 1 of the EGVS initiative, which included reviewing evidence on SRGBV patterns, policy and programmes globally and in the four countries (Ethiopia, Zambia, Cote d'Ivoire and Togo), during phase 2 each country team has developed and begun to implement an action plan for addressing SRGBV within their country context.

initiatives; and monitoring, evaluation and evidence-based approaches to SRGBV. The report concludes by proposing some possible priority areas for action.

2. Concepts and Methods

2.1 Sampling and data collection

The EGVS initiative overall takes an action research approach to achieving its aim to strengthen evidence-based policy and practice on SRGBV. Action research means research developed through a staged reflective process of problem solving among a team to achieve a longer term goal. It involves actively participating in a change situation, while simultaneously participating in research. Thus the initiative does not define the problem and present ready-made solutions from the outset. Instead it involves stakeholders, UNICEF, and UCL Institute of Education working together to rigorously review evidence, using this to enable stakeholders in Ethiopia to develop action plans that are concerned with strengthening evidence-based policy enactments.

As part of this approach this Ethiopia study maps and analyses patterns and perspectives on SRGBV, including legislation, policy and programmes at national, district and local levels. In order to do this several methods for data collection were employed:

- An interactive two-day workshop led by the Ministry of Education and facilitated by UNICEF and the UCL Institute of Education (March 2016). A range of stakeholders (including experts from the Ministries of Education, Justice, and Women, Youth and Children's Affairs; NGOs and multi-lateral organisations; universities and research teams; and associations e.g. youth, women lawyers', disabilities, teachers, and teacher training organisations) participated to share knowledge and information relating to SRGBV. Participants in the workshop were selected and invited with the intention of spanning the wide range of relevant actors at a national level. The workshops were structured to provide a rich source of qualitative data for the study, contributing to the stakeholder analysis as well as insights into the policy, research, data and programmatic mapping. Each participant completed a short survey, mapping their experience and perspectives relating to SRGBV (Appendix 1).
- Literature review and documentary analysis of 1. Contemporary legislative and policy texts linked to SRGBV in Ethiopia; 2. Research reports and datasets on SRGBV in Ethiopia; 3. Documents describing programmes or interventions addressing SRGBV.
- 23 in-depth interviews were carried out in order to gain a deeper understanding of the processes, strengths and gaps in evidence, policy and practice around SRGBV. The sample for these interviews was devised with the intention of engaging a wide range of key stakeholders, both in and outside of government. The semi-structured interview guides (Appendix 2) were designed to address the research questions, while allowing flexibility to discuss the specific experience and perspectives of each interviewee.

The multiple sources of data were recorded and synthesised by Ethiopian consultants and researchers at UCL Institute of Education, using an agreed template, along with transcribed interviews, workshop reports and field notes. Using Microsoft Office and NVivo (software for qualitative analysis) the materials were organised and analysed thematically. Data was coded in relation to the research questions, and to identify themes and issues emerging from the data which had not been previously anticipated, such as networks and partnerships.

A further source of data was the situational analysis on SRGBV commissioned by UNICEF in 2015 analysing the structures and relationships between macro level (federal), meso level (regional and zonal) and micro level (woreda or kebele) (Hailemariam, 2015). Data was collected in five regions, including focus groups with regional gender unit coordinators, experts in education bureaux and regional UNICEF staff, along with the regional SRGBV data reports. The regions included two large

highland regions – Amhara and Oromia, two emerging, lowland regions with pastoral and agro-pastoral populations – Ethiopia-Somali and Benishangul Gumuz, and an urban area – Addis Ababa city administration. Although the scope of the study did not extend to every region, the selection of these regions aimed to reflect Ethiopia's diversity, including urban, rural and emerging regions. The inclusion of evidence from this study provided valuable data at the regional level, enabling the study to draw on a good range of evidence from experts and national and regional levels. However, not all regions have been represented, and the scope of the study did not enable us to tap into perspectives at local levels.

A key limitation of the research design was that it was not possible within the size and scope of the study to collect data from every region, or at local levels. In particular, the voices of girls and boys, and of teachers, are missing. In addition, access to detailed written information on programmes was difficult to get hold of, and this limited the depth of analysis in this area. These limitations were mitigated to an extent by careful selection of interviewees with a range of expertise and experience of work with SRGBV across Ethiopia.

2.2 Key terms and concepts

There are several key concepts central to the present study, and the understandings of which form the basis of the analysis within. Firstly, as introduced earlier, *SRGBV* is broadly conceived and we understand it as describing physical, sexual and psychological acts of violence, underpinned by norms, stereotypes, inequalities and exclusions. Examples might include boys being beaten by their teacher, girls being harassed verbally on their route to school, or pupils bullying each other for defying gender norms. It is recognised that SRGBV violates human rights, and undermines girls' and boys' potential to learn and develop with dignity, confidence and self-esteem.

Gender describes the socio-cultural characteristics of masculinity and femininity as articulated by individuals and through cultural practices, contrasted with *sex* as the biological ascription of man or woman. Gender is also a structuring feature of all societies, shaping political, economic and social institutions, as well as relations between individuals. Thus it is a key lens through which inequalities and power relations can be examined and addressed. Gender is rarely a relationship to be understood on its own, and often needs analysis together with other forms of social division linked to socio-economic status (or class), region, ethnicity, and level of education.

The notion of *policy enactment* is central to the framing of this study. The term reflects how actions relating to policy take place at many levels (international, national, local, school) and involve many different actors and relationships. While the term 'implementation' describes how policy is converted into practice, the term 'enactment' is intended to signal the continuous, interactive nature of activity related to policy. It includes the negotiations involved in developing policies, allocating resources, prioritising and planning across sectors, and in putting plans into practice, which involve a wide range of policy actors at international, national, provincial, district and local level, who may have different positions with regard to promoting or opposing policy initiatives at different moments (Ball et al., 2012). It also involves paying attention to the influence of contexts.

2.3 Ethical considerations

The EGVS research underwent full ethical review and was awarded ethical clearance by the UCL Institute of Education's Ethics Committee. Although not working directly with minors or vulnerable individuals, the themes of the work are undoubtedly sensitive, and the politics around this was something which was considered throughout the study – for example in designing the workshop and interview guides.

Central to the study was ensuring informed consent for all participants – to this end information sheets were distributed to all workshop and interviewee participants (Appendix 3). The workshop included detailed discussions about the aims of the project as a whole and the scoping study specifically. At the beginning of interviews there was another opportunity to explain the purpose and seek consent. It was also made clear that participants were free to stop the interview at any time and not obligated to answer questions they preferred not to. Confidentiality was maintained through ensuring interviews could not be overheard, anonymising interview data and ensuring that data represented in reports could not be attributed to individuals (e.g. by masking identifiers like job titles).

3. Ethiopia: Contexts, Patterns and Perspectives

3.1 Social, political and economic context of Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a large, diverse country, with a population of over 95 million, and more than 90 ethnic and linguistic groups. It is one of the least urbanised countries in the world, with 19% of the population living in urban settings, though there is rapid in-migration to towns and cities (FDRE-MOE, 2015). Agriculture continues to be the main source of livelihood, though there are growing industrial and service sectors. Government figures demonstrate sustained economic growth, concomitant with a reduction in poverty levels (national poverty line of less than $0.6 per day) from 39% in 2005 to 30% in 2011 (FDRE-MOE, 2015). The diversity of the country, with many dispersed communities, including many pastoral and semi-pastoral groups, poses particular challenges for the education sector (FDRE-MOE, 2015).

Since 1991, the transition from a highly centralised, to a decentralised system of governance has been led by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) Government. Many fiscal and decision-making powers have devolved to the regional states (Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Harari, Oromia, Ethiopia-Somali, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) and Tigray) and two city administrations (Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa). The current educational structure was introduced by the EPRDF-government with its Education and Training Policy (1994) and subsequent Education Sector Development Programmes (ESDP) l, ll, lll, lV, V. The education policy increased the duration of primary school to eight years, and secondary to four years, of which the last two years were either academic preparation for university or technical and vocational education and training. Policies of decentralisation to the regions included the right to learn in one's own language at primary level, and by 2006 around a quarter of the 80 languages in Ethiopia were used as language of instruction (Heugh et al., 2007). Amharic and English are taught as subjects during primary school, and English is the language of instruction in secondary schools. School fees were abolished for grades 1-10, but schools continue to depend on contributions from parents in labour and money (Mjaaland, 2013). The long term vision for the education sector is to promote socio-economic development and poverty reduction, with a view to becoming a middle income country by 2025. The stress on increasing access to education is also aligned with global commitments in Education for All, Sustainable Development Goals, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The education sector plans have been closely aligned with Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans, with education viewed as instrumental in contributing to socio-economic development.

3.2 Gender

There is a long history of gender inequality in Ethiopia, with poorer women facing multiple disadvantages. Across a range of different dimensions women's status and experience is curtailed (Kifetew, 2006), this is evident when examining measures including empowerment, gender based violence, health, and employment. The complexity of this picture in Ethiopia is also notable. For example, Kifetew (2006) highlights the divergent attitudes in relation to dimensions of gender equality between 11 different ethnic groups examined in her study.

Within the home, preference for male children has been found (Kifetew, 2006, Koohi-Kamali, 2008), and research examining decision making power, money and negotiation also indicates the lower status of women and girls. For example, data from the demographic and health survey (DHS, 2011) shows that 54% of women compared to just under 100% of men are involved in decision making concerning their healthcare, major household purposes, and visiting friends or relatives. In one study of intimate relationships between husbands and wives, 53% of women reported being able to refuse sex, and 37% to insist on their husband wearing a condom (Head et al., 2014). In terms of reproductive health,

despite significant improvements over the past two decades, access to and ability to negotiate the use of modern contraceptives remains a problem. The contraceptive use prevalence rate is 20% for all women (15-49), 29% for married women, and 57% for sexually active unmarried women (DHS, 2011). The total fertility rate is 2.3 for urban women and 5.2 for rural women (DHS, 2016). HIV remains low, with 1.9% of women and 1% of men HIV positive (DHS, 2011); however, only 24% of 15-19 year old girls have knowledge of HIV/AIDS (DHS, 2016).

Gender inequalities are also evident in relation to health and livelihood outcomes. For example, a study on the impact of food insecurity on adolescents in Ethiopia found that girls were twice as likely to report illness from lack of food as boys (Belachew et al., 2011). In 10.4% of households (12.5% in rural areas) a girl under 15 is usually responsible for collecting water (DHS, 2016), compared to 3.5% of boys. The UNDP reports that there is 78.2% female labour market participation, compared to 89.3% male (UNDP, 2015). Although varying by sector, and difficult to accurately capture across the board due to the prevalence of informal and non-wage labour, one study concluded that on average women's wages represent 66% of men's (Kolev and Robles, 2010).

Evaluating government efforts in Ethiopia to address women's equality within the Millennium Development Goals, Ogato (2013) presents a mixed picture – with positive constitutional and legal reforms, but lack of resourcing for government work on gender. Several articles have examined the women's or feminist movement in Ethiopia's recent history (Biseswar, 2008, Burgess, 2013)– they suggest that although women's involvement and rights were included on the agenda under the leadership of the DERG, what was created in the Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association (REWA) did not extend to broader representation of women across society. The Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association (EWLA) established in 1995, is a current prominent player in the small field of feminist civil society networks in Ethiopia, and the first university gender studies programme was established in 2005.

Poverty reduction plans have recognised that gendered inequalities and gendered dimensions of poverty hinder change. Women's social, political, economic and political participation in society on equal terms with men have been seen as important to growth and transformation, with women's access to education central (Mjaaland, 2013). A number of studies have identified how recent policy initiatives have contributed towards increasing gender equality, through for example, more gender equitable laws on marriage, inheritance, and property and land rights (Kumar and Quisumbing, 2015), and strategies to increase women's political participation (Gebru and Demeke, 2015). Some of these studies have pointed out that policies that emphasise increasing numbers of women, for example in politics (Gebru and Demeke, 2015) or higher education (Molla and Cuthbert, 2014), may have limited impact without at the same time addressing prejudice, discrimination and violence.

3.3 Gender and Education

Although during the twentieth century, education was viewed by consecutive regimes as part of their political nation-building and modernising projects, schools were unevenly distributed across the country, with schooling for girls slower to establish relative to boys (Mjaaland, 2013, Emebet, 1998). Following the 1994 Education and Training Policy, in spite of continuing regional differences, the EPRDF-government has received international acclaim for increasing children's access to education (World Bank, 2005). The government's commitment to improving education is reflected in the allocation 24–25% of public expenditure to the education sector (ESDP V).

Table 1 - Selected education data (sources: 1999 data from UNESCO, 2014; 2015/16 data from Ministry of Education Education Statistics (FDRE-MOE 2017)

	1999				2015/16			
	Total	Male	Female	GPI	Total	Male	Female	GPI
GER Primary	50	63	38	0.61	144.7 (gd1-4) 71.1 (gd 5-8)	152.5 (1-4) 73.3 (5-8)	136.6 (1-4) 68.9 (5-8)	0.91
GER Lower secondary	16	19	13	0.70	44.8	46.2	43.4	0.94
GER Upper Secondary	7	9	5	0.56	12.5	13.4	11.7	0.87

As shown in table 1, at primary level there has been a massive increase in the gross enrolment rate (GER) since 1999, particularly in the early years (grades 1-4), and a narrowing in the gender gap. There has also been an increase in enrolment in secondary schools, and some progress towards gender parity, though disparities disadvantaging girls increase at upper secondary level (preparatory 11-12). ESDP V reports considerable variation across the country in access to secondary education, with gross enrolment less than 10% in Afar and more than 100% in Addis Ababa. Persisting inequalities in access have been attributed to poverty, lack of transport, child marriage, need to work, lack of accommodation near schools, and disability (FDRE-MOE, 2015). Girls and boys seek to combine work with school, with gender differences more prominent with age, as older girls routinely take on household responsibilities on top of school work (Pankhurst et al., 2016a). An increasing proportion of teachers are female, but, according to the 2015 EFA Global Monitoring Report, still in 2012 only 37% of primary and 24% of secondary teachers were female (UNESCO, 2015). As well as gender disparities in access, girls are disadvantaged in learning outcomes. 64% of girls compared to 76% of boys who sat the General Secondary Education Certificate Examination in Grade 10 and scored 2.00 or above. In the Grade 12 Higher Education Entrance Certificate Examination, 45% of boys passed and only 34% of females (FDRE-MOE, 2015). While increasing numbers of women are entering higher education, they remain under-represented at all levels, with 32% of undergraduates female, 19% of postgraduates, and 12% of teaching staff (FDRE-MOE, 2015). The adult literacy rate for women is only 29%, compared with 49% for men (UNESCO, 2015). 71% of women in rural areas are illiterate compared with 31% in urban areas (FDRE-MOE, 2015). Within the education sector plans, gender has been understood in terms of girls and women, with women and girls at the forefront of development efforts.

3.4 Evidence on SRGBV

A good body of research evidence is accumulating in Ethiopia related to SRGBV, though much of this work has focused on child marriage and labour, and less on violence in and around schools. There are however some valuable recent studies, some not yet published, that illuminate practices of violence affecting girls and boys in Ethiopia. Overall, these studies show that many forms of violence are commonplace in young people's lives, that violence operates in gendered ways, and that patterns of violence vary with age, gender, economic and socio-cultural circumstances.

Corporal punishment, though illegal in schools (see section 4.1.1), is commonly practised both at school and at home. At school, boys and girls routinely experience physical punishments, with some studies finding that boys are more likely to be punished physically. For example, a study by Young

Lives of 973 eight-year olds in 20 communities, that were selected to reflect a range of poverty conditions in Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Tigray regions, found that 31% of eight-year-old girls and 44% of boys had experienced corporal punishment in school in the past week (Pankhurst et al., 2016b). While the differences between rates of punishment of girls and boys were not significant in Oromia and Amhara, punishment rates were higher for boys in Tigray, SNNPR and Addis Ababa, with the poorest boys most likely to be punished. Another mixed methods study in the same 5 regions involved 1750 schoolchildren and those in marginalised groups (orphans, street children, children with disabilities and those in care (1223 for the survey). Commonly used punishments included pinching, slapping, beating with a stick and kneeling (Save the Children & ACPF, 2005, Ayode, 2012). Children are punished for giving incorrect answers, or not following teachers' instructions. One recent study identified that corporal punishment at age 8 was associated with lowered self-esteem and cognitive performance, and that 42% of children in the study disliked school because of violence, including teachers' beatings, student fighting and teasing (Portela and Pells, 2015). Children seem to become less tolerant of corporal punishment as they reach teenage years (Pankhurst et al., 2016b). It is not clear whether there has been a reduction in corporal punishment in schools in recent years, as the different research designs used by different studies mean comparisons between studies are not possible. What is clear, however, is that the practice continues to be commonplace. Even where teachers accept the principle that corporal punishment is wrong, many view the ban as unrealistic in the context of Ethiopia, due to large class sizes, lack of guidance teachers or support in implementing alternative discipline approaches (Pankhurst et al., 2016b).

At home, physical punishment is widely used to discipline children. In one study in Addis Ababa, Oromia, Amhara, Tigray and SNNPR, 74% of children reported they were hit with a stick, 73% were hit on their head, 70% were slapped, 69% were punched, 64% were whipped with a belt, and 53% were forced to kneel down (Save the Children & ACPF, 2005). Beatings with sticks, belts, plastic hose, rope, and electric wire were commonplace. Punishments also include depriving of basic necessities, such as food (Ayode, 2012). Punishment is frequently gendered, with girls and boys punished for different reasons or with different levels of severity. Girls for example, may be punished for avoiding housework, while boys may be beaten for letting cattle stray when they are herding (Pankhurst et al 2016). One study with 1,268 students across all 9 regions also found that verbal insults, humiliating, threatening and name calling were commonplace (Save the Children, MoE and MoWA, 2008). Summarising a number of studies, Mulugeta (2016) documents the consequences of such punishments, including physical injury, distress and in some cases running away from home, and so increasing numbers of street children. The beliefs that children are the property of parents, that physical punishment is necessary for child socialisation, along with lack of awareness of alternative ways to discipline children, help to explain the persistence of these forms of physical and psychological violence (Save the Children & ACPF, 2005, ACPF, 2014).

While physical violence is experienced by both girls and boys, and some forms more commonly by boys, **sexual violence** is more common among girls, increasing as they reach adolescence. One study of violence against girls in primary and secondary schools in 9 regions of Ethiopia found that 46% of students spoke of harassment, degrading treatment and sexual attacks, most frequently on the journey to and from school, but also in school compounds, with perpetrators including male students and older men (Save the Children, MoE & MoWA, 2008). Several Ethiopian studies have found verbal sexual harassment, physical harassment in the form of unwanted touching of breasts or genitals, and attempted and completed rape to be commonplace (Save the Children & ACPF, 2005, ACPF, 2006, Children et al., 2008). For example, one study of female high school students aged over 15 in Jimma – an urban location in Oromia - found that 20.4% of girls had their first experience of sex as a result of forced sex or rape (Gorfu and Demsse, 2007). Another study found that girls married under the age of 15 were particularly vulnerable to forced marital sex and intimate partner violence (Erulkar, 2013). A study with 764 female secondary school students in Eastern Ethiopia found that male students readily

admitted perpetrating sexual violence, with 23% saying that they had physically forced sexual intercourse (Bekele, 2012). Another small scale, qualitative study in a secondary school in Addis Ababa found that while most of the girls and boys they interviewed were highly critical of sexual violence, unwanted sexual remarks and touching by boys in school and sexual advances by teachers had been experienced by some of the girls, and often they did not report because of the lack of systems in school to support them (Le Mat, 2016). Both boys and girls in this study expressed the view that more teaching in sexuality-related topics, including sexual violence, would be valuable for them, helping to address taboos in speaking about these sensitive topics. Several other studies have also found that girls are reluctant to speak out about sexual violence. While for young men, sexual knowledge is expected, for young women it may be regarded as shameful (Kebede et al., 2014). Girls may be fearful of being stigmatised or punished by parents if they speak out, they may view themselves to blame or not even recognise harmful acts as violations (Erulkar, 2013) or they may decide not to seek help because of lack of access to support services, or mistrust of the police (Mulugeta 2016).

Reviewing a large number of Ethiopian studies on sexual violence, Mulugeta (2016) traces how poverty impacts on young women's experiences of sexual violence. Living away from families can increase the risk of sexual violence (Mekuria et al., 2015), with young women in domestic labour, commercial sex work, and living in the streets, highly vulnerable to sexual predation (Lalor, 1999). Girls may be coerced into sex with teachers or older men, in exchange for food or grades (Hailemariam, 2015).

Child marriage, female genital mutilation, and bride abduction/*telefa* (Dito, 2015) have been commonplace, particularly in rural areas, the most recent data available shows that 74.3% of women have undergone FGM/C nationally (Yoder and Wang, 2013), though there is evidence that these practices are reducing. The latest Demographic Health Survey identified that 47.1% of 15-19 girls are circumcised (DHS, 2016). FGM/C sees large differences linked to geographical and demographic characteristics, with rates highest in Afar and Ethiopia-Somali regions and in Muslim populations and lowest in the capital and Orthodox communities. FGM/C decreases when level of education and wealth increases, and is lower in urban areas (DHS, 2016). The Constitution (1995) instituted mutual consent as a principle for marriage (Article 34/2), and the federal Family Law in Ethiopia (2000) set the legal age of marriage at 18. However, a number of studies have found that, particularly in rural areas, the law is evaded, and the median age for women's marriage is less than 18 (Head et al., 2014b). A study in Tigray found that parents flouted the law by manipulating their daughters' age. Marriage around age 15 when girls reached sexual maturity, was felt necessary to avoid the risk of premarital sex, since virginity of unmarried girls is seen as important to family honour, and in some cases virginity testing has been used (Mjaaland 2013). Head et al's analysis of Ethiopia DHS data identified a clear divide between age of first intercourse for boys and girls – with 11% of girls as opposed to just 1% of boys reporting first intercourse by age 15 (Head et al., 2014). Teenage childbearing sees large differences linked to geographical and demographic characteristics, with similar patterns as seen for FGM/C.

3.5 Quality and availability of evidence

In Ethiopia, as in other countries around the globe, it can be very difficult to collect reliable data on patterns of SRGBV. A study was undertaken by WHO in 2005 in ten countries across Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe. Although the survey is 11 years old and undertaken only in one rural district, as the most detailed rigorous quantitative research on GBV in Ethiopia the WHO survey highlights very high levels of intimate partner violence. The study used a population-based sample of 3016 women aged 15-49 in Butajira woreda, a largely rural district 130km south of Addis Ababa. Lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner was 59% - the highest of the ten countries included in the study. While in most countries sexual violence was considerably less frequent than physical violence, sexual violence was more frequent in Ethiopia (physical violence was disclosed

by 50% of women). The study highlighted that most violence is perpetrated by intimate partners: only 5% of women reported non-partner physical violence, and 0.3% sexual violence. Numbers were too small to identify perpetrators for sexual violence. 17% of women reported their first sexual experience was forced, one of the highest rates of the ten countries. However, in all sites except Addis Ababa, the younger a woman at first experience of sex, the greater the likelihood that this was forced. The authors conclude that in Ethiopia high levels of forced first sex are likely to be related to early sexual initiation in the context of early marriage, rather than being by perpetrators other than partners.

Carefully designed studies that focus on GBV (such as the WHO study) have been found to be more reliable, and reduce under-reporting on sensitive issues, than adding a small number of questions into a bigger survey. However, the Demographic Health Survey, which started by adding a small number of questions, has started moving towards a full module asking a range of questions on GBV, and has adopted WHO methodological and ethical protocols to improve reliability of data and ensure the safety of respondents (WHO, 2005). The advantage of the DHS, apart from its rigour and large sample representative of the national population (15,683 women and 12,688 men), is its regularity of data collection (once every 2-5 years) and international standardisation, which allow analysis of trends across time, location and demographic groups within countries and between countries. It is thus seen as the most reliable source of regular data on GBV in Ethiopia. Inclusion of GBV in the survey is only recent, and in Ethiopia was only introduced in this year's survey.

Data on the full set of indicators for the 2016 DHS in Ethiopia is not yet available: preliminary results indicate that 35% of married women have experienced sexual, physical or psychological violence by their partner. The data identifies some interesting trends. Regional patterns are different for different forms of violence, with Tigray, Amhara and Oromia seeing highest disclosure of sexual violence and Oromia, Harari and Gambella presenting high physical violence. Unlike seen in some contexts, violence disclosure decreases with level of education and for rural women. However, there is not a clear pattern according to wealth, with violence being highest in the median wealth group and lower for the poorest and wealthiest (DHS, 2016). This starts to point to both the complex drivers of violence and also issues around research methodologies and reporting. Even in robust studies increasing disclosure data may reflect increasing actual violence on the ground and/or increasing awareness, understanding and openness in discussing violence (with a stranger, as is the case in a survey setting), and is often a combination of these issues, so it is difficult to draw firm conclusions on prevalence from data sources. The much lower prevalence rate in DHS compared to the WHO survey could be due to the 'large survey' effect, or could reflect reductions in violence in the past ten years or the different samples and geographical locations used in the two studies. The 2011 DHS identified that half of women know that wife beating is against the law, again showing large variations across the country (DHS, 2011).

Whilst DHS data may give an impression of gender violence patterns in Ethiopia, they do not specifically refer to SRGBV. Data is from women aged 15-49, and the data released from the 2016 survey so far only refers to married or divorced women discussing violence by partners. The full DHS data released may provide more detail on other forms of violence against girls and women who are not married, violence by non-partners, actions taken in response to violence, and attitudes towards gender violence and women's decision making, which are part of the DHS violence module, but the extent to which this is covered is currently unclear. Data on violence against girls in and around schools, discussed in the previous section, comes largely from one-off studies. Most studies do not cover every province, but several have attempted to be broadly representative of Ethiopia's diversity, through including data from all the larger or most populous provinces (Young Lives), or sampling both urban and marginal populations (Save the Children & ACPF, 2005). They are useful for providing evidence on current patterns of violence, but different methodologies and focus on studies makes broad comprehensive assessment of trends and patterns difficult. One of the richest recent sources

of data on violence against children comes from Young Lives, a multi-country longitudinal study of childhood poverty. In Ethiopia the study has been tracking 1,000 children born in 1994/5 and 2000 born in 2000/1. Survey data has been collected from the children and their families in 2002, 2006, 2009 and 2013 so far. Study sites are 20 communities in five regions: Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Tigray, selected to provide a range of socioeconomic contexts. 60 children were selected from the sample for more in depth qualitative data collection (Pankhurst, Negussie and Mulugeta 2016). The study is thus large and rigorous, providing robust and rich data on childhood themes, including education, gender, violence, poverty and sociocultural conditions. Thematic analyses have been conducted on topics such as child labour, corporal punishment and child marriage, although the study has not specifically focused on SRGBV. This analysis has highlighted that, whilst there are a number of rigorous sources of evidence, there is not a regular survey that specifically monitors SRGBV across Ethiopia.

4. Enacting Laws, Policies, and Programmes on SRGBV in Ethiopia

In this section, we begin by summarising key laws and policies, before discussing the challenges in legislative and policy enactment, and the steps taken to address these challenges.

4.1 Legislative and policy framework

Internationally and regionally Ethiopia has adopted several international and regional instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by Ethiopia in 1991), the African Charter on the Rights of the Child (1999), and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (ratified within the Constitution 1995). Most recently, the Sustainable Development Goals Education Goal 4 includes a target on creating child, disability and gender-sensitive education facilities and to 'provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all'.

Nationally, the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (1995)includes articles on rights including rights to life, security and liberty (Article 14, 16, 17); rights to equality (25) and marital, personal and family rights (34). Article 35 on Rights of Women supports affirmative measures to enable women "to compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in political, social and economic life as well as in public and private institutions". Article 36 on Rights of Children stipulates that children should free of corporal punishment or cruel and inhumane treatment in schools and other institutions responsible for the care of children. Article 9(4) declares that all international agreements ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the law of the land, with implications for the enforcement of international provisions referred to above.

4.1.1 Laws and codes

The *Revised Family Code* (2000) has provisions and protections to protect the rights and dignity of women, boys and girls at household level. It sets the legal age of marriage at 18 years, with full and free consent of both partners.

The *Criminal Code* (2005) specifies crimes and penalties prescribed by law, including early marriage, abduction, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) (3 months imprisonment/500 birr fine) and child trafficking. It criminalizes various forms of violence against children, including ill-treatment, neglect or beating children by those responsible for them (up to 3 months imprisonment – Article 576.1) or if resulting in grave injury to health or well-being of a child (minimum one year imprisonment- Article 576.2). Sexual intercourse with minors aged 13-18 sustains a penalty of 3-15 years imprisonment (13-25 years if victim is under 13 years), or if the victim of sexual acts is their pupil the penalty is 5-20 years imprisonment (Article 626).

4.1.2 Policies, Plans and Guidelines

National Policy on Ethiopian Women (1993) aimed to institutionalize the political, economic, and social rights of women by creating appropriate structures in government offices and institutions so that public policies and interventions are gender-sensitive and equitable. It was this policy that created the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. The policy aims to: 1. Facilitate conditions to increase equality between men and women so that women can participate in the political, social and economic life of their country on equal terms with men and ensure that their right to own property as well as their other human right are respected and that they are not excluded from the enjoyment of their fruits of their labour or from performing public functions and being decision makers; 2. Facilitate the necessary conditions whereby rural women can have access to basic social services and to ways and means of lightening their work-load; and 3. Eliminate, step by step, prejudices as well as customary and other practices that are based on the idea of male supremacy and enabling women to hold public office and to participate in the decision making process at all levels.

Education and Training policy (1994), MOE, addressed gender parity in access to education and training, along with mainstreaming gender equality in national curricula. As well as addressing access, relevance, quality and equity in education and training for girls and boys, it includes gender responsive principles such as mainstreaming gender equality in national curricula (Article 3.1.3).

The *School Leadership and Administration Guidelines/Educational Management, Organization, Community Participation and Finance Guidelines* (2002), MOE, (commonly known as the 'blue book') is a manual for schools that specifies roles and responsibilities of education officials at different levels, including specifying that teachers should not use corporal punishment, or violate student rights by insults or intimidation, nor engage in sexual relationships with students.

The *National Strategy and Action Plan on Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs) against Women and Children* (2013) (MoWCYA) emerged from the *Growth and Transformation Plan*, a national strategic framework that aimed to improve the country's economic growth from 2010-2015, with targets to reduce child marriage, abduction and FGM/C as part of broader gender and equity goals. The strategy aims to establish mechanisms and systems to prevent and eliminate HTPs, including a national communication strategy, harmonised legal framework, enhanced effectiveness of law enforcement and service provision, and improved monitoring and evaluation.

The *HIV/AIDS Policy* (1998) sets the framework for 5 year strategies. The current one (2015-2010) highlights the links between HIV risk, gender inequalities and gender based violence. Many initiatives it sets out echo those in other policies, such as supporting girls' clubs and SRH education in schools, improved GBV survivor support across health, social care, police and judiciary, community-based collaborative action against sexual violence and FGM/C (FDRE-MOH 2014).

The *Preferential Support Guidelines* (2014), MOE, establish a support system for vulnerable students, including financial support, with 70% of support targeted to female beneficiaries; tutorial classes for slow learners; and minimum standards and eligible criteria for hostels and boarding schools.

The *National Action Plan on the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) in Ethiopia* (2014) aims to eliminate WFCL, and to create a conducive environment for addressing all other forms of child labour. It proposes interventions on sexual violence, including rape and defilement, trafficking, child prostitution, child pornography and early marriage. Interventions identified include legislation and enforcement; education and vocational training; socio-economic empowerment; creating knowledge-base, awareness raising and community mobilization; and monitoring and evaluation.

The *Gender Strategy for the Education and Training Sector* (2015), MOE, provides a roadmap to ensure gender equality at all levels of the education and training sector. Its specific objectives include: 1. Enhance collective and concerted effort of key stakeholders and development partners on gender equity and equality in the education and training sector; 2. Eliminate gender disparity at General education sub sector; 3. Support women and young females in technical and vocational education and training to gain working skills and competencies; 4. Improve the competitiveness and competency of female students and improve their enrolment and graduation rates in higher education. Among a range of strategies to enhance gender equality (e.g. scholarships for girls, hostel provision, capacity building of teachers for gender responsive pedagogy), the policy promotes "zero-tolerance" culture to SRGBV in all school environments and surrounding communities through school festivals, community mobilization, and public and education media outlets; and empowering girls and boys with information and skills on SRGBV prevention through expanded co-curricular modalities, and modular approaches in colleges, TVET institutions and universities. The policy is also concerned with implementation of the *Anti-Harassment Code of Conduct for Technical Vocational Education and Training* (2013), and *Code of Conduct on Prevention of School Related Gender-based Violence in Schools* (2014) (discussed further below in 4.5.1). Capacity building in gender mainstreaming through training and dialogue should also be intensified at all levels of the education system.

The recent *Growth and Transformation Plan II* (2015-20), which sets out the government's five year development plan, explicitly refers to addressing gender-based violence in the MoWCYA sectoral plan, through establishing shelters for survivors of violence and expanding the one stop centres (UN Women, 2016).

ESDP V (2015) aims to have no child out-of-school during primary school years, and that "there will be fair treatment for each child and no child will be discriminated against because of low income, gender, creed, race, location or disability". Gender is one of the cross-cutting issues, with the plan aiming to address barriers to girls' participation in education, including creating accessible, safe and healthy school environments, and monitoring and enforcement of the Code of Conduct. In each school, a set of 'student services', that support students' life skills development and promote a healthy and safe school environment, will be offered. The plan also sets out to increase female staff in teaching and leadership positions, and includes affirmative action programmes to increase female enrolment. New programmes, such as working with school science, technology, mathematics and English teachers to improve students' success in general and gender-sensitive teaching for females at that level will be initiated. However, although SRGBV features in the plan, none of these measures are reflected in the Results Framework.

General Education Quality Improvement Programme II (GEQIP ll) (2013-18) aims to improve learning conditions in primary and secondary schools and to strengthen institutions at different levels of educational administration. Led by MoE, with support from development partners, it has six components: (i) curriculum, textbooks and assessment; (ii) teacher development program (TDP); (iii) school improvement program (SIP), including school grants; (iv) management and capacity building, including Education Management Information Systems (EMIS); (v) improving the quality of learning and teaching through the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT); and (vi) program coordination, monitoring and evaluation, and communication. Equity is addressed through mainstreaming of cross cutting issues, including gender, special education needs, and school health and nutrition. Attention has also been paid to focusing more support on the four most under-served regions.

4.1.3 Perspectives on the legislative framework

Ethiopia's legislative and policy framework since the Constitution has laid emphasis on promoting equality, including gender equality, and in recent years has paid increasing attention to SRGBV. Most interviewees felt that the legislative framework and the associated policies and plans, are quite comprehensive. However, a few interviewees identified specific gaps or weaknesses, that for example, marital rape is not criminalised, and intimate partner violence is excluded from the Criminal Code in extenuating circumstances (gross provocation, shock, surprise, emotion or passion) (CEDAW/C/ETH/CO/6-7, 2016), and that an integrated legal instrument covering all dimensions of violence against children was needed (Mulugeta, 2016). The main concerns identified by interviewees related mainly to problems with policy enactment. Many were critical of the unevenness in the ways policies were implemented at local levels, and of local resistance to taking action to prevent or respond to SRGBV. There have, however, been considerable efforts to address these complex challenges, through the creation of governmental structures, the mechanisms for implementing policy across macro, meso and micro levels, and across sectors, and through the initiatives to strengthen reporting and responses to SRGBV, along with violence prevention.

4.2 Mainstreaming gender and SRGBV in decentralised governmental structures

Ethiopia's diversity poses huge challenges to policy enactment on SRGBV. With varying socio-cultural norms and socio-economic conditions, forms of violence, perspectives on the causes, solutions and even what is violence, vary. Decentralisation can be a means both to ensure national policies reach across populations, and to ensure responsiveness to this variability through meaningful policy dialogues at all levels. The Ethiopian government has addressed these challenges through

mainstreaming gender at macro level (federal), meso level (regional and zonal) and micro level (woreda, sub-city or kebele). Increasingly SRGBV has become a central focus of the gender work.

At **federal** level, responsibility for work on SRGBV within the Ministry of Education rests with their Gender Unit, which has been responsible for developing plans and guidelines relating to SRGV, annual reporting on SRGBV, and advising on the inclusion of gender equality into the civic education curriculum. These units work closely with the Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs (MoWYCA), which coordinates, supports and monitors the work on gender across sectors.

At **regional** level, key structures mandated to implement directives and regulations to address SRGBV are the Regional Education Bureaux and their Gender Units/Departments, and the Bureaux of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs (BoWYCA). Through their membership of regional and woreda administration councils, heads of BoWYCA ensure that issues relating to gender, youth and children are incorporated within regional and local development plans. GEQUIP ll involves regional education bureaux producing directives on safe learning environments in schools and colleges, and they have to varying extents used the new SRGBV code of conduct for this purpose (Hailemariam, 2015). Their Gender Units coordinate, implement, and oversee effective implementation of girls' empowerment and gender equality in the education system, providing capacity building for and supporting their counterparts in the woreda education bureaux.

At **local** levels, woreda education bureaux also have staff designated to be gender focal points, who are the key people supporting school administration on SRGBV work. They may for example, collect data from schools on the SRGBV monitoring tool (see below 4.5.2) and liaise with schools on support for the most vulnerable students, and promoting awareness on girls' education and safe, secure learning environments in schools and communities. Often they work closely with international and local development partners, from whom they may negotiate funding support (interview with civil servant – local). Serious incidents of violence against girls may be reported to woreda women's affairs bureaux, with their interventions including financial assistance or advice to victims, and reporting to police or justice bureaux (Hailemariam, 2015).

Only relatively recently has SRGBV been integrated within the work of this decentralised structure, yet some interviewees felt that the increased commitment to work in this area at federal level is already having a positive impact on policy enactments at meso and local levels. Locating responsibility for work on violence in schools within a broader gender mainstreaming framework has the potential to forefront preventive work, as we discuss further below (section 4.6). However, change has been uneven for a number of complex reasons to which we now turn.

4.3 Policy enactment from macro-meso-micro levels

A concern raised by many interviewees was that the laws and policies are not taken up at local level – that they "evaporated during translation" (civil servant - national). While technical expertise is high at national levels, it varies across the regions, and reduces at more local levels, where gender is 'added on' to the already busy workload of civil servants, who may have had little training on gender or SRGBV (Hailemariam, 2015). Regional control of budgets and guidance means that if regional leadership commitment to addressing SRGBV is lacking, then implementation may be severely hampered (CEDAW/C/ETH/CO/6-7 2011). Staff deployment also varies from region to region, with for example 5 gender specialists in the Addis office (civil servant – regional), but only one staff member in Ethiopia-Somali and Amhara (Hailemariam, 2015). Several interviewees expressed concerns that there was insufficient budget allocation for staff to implement initiatives. While gender is mainstreamed at all levels, gender specialists at all levels face resistance to their work from colleagues whose support for

gender equality may be tokenistic, or who may actively undermine their initiatives (civil servant - national). Reluctance to acknowledge the need for this work may be associated with anxiety about exposing the extent of violence in their areas (development partner). Resistance may be highest at local levels, where local political and religious leaders could subvert SRGBV efforts. This creates an unsatisfactory situation in which the level of challenge is inversely related to the level of expertise and resource. Where expertise on gender and violence is most needed, it may be least available.

There have, however, been efforts to address these challenges, with concerted work on awareness raising and capacity building at regional and local levels, often led by the gender offices. The decentralisation of structures and resources has meant that guidelines and strategies for mobilisation can be tailored for specific needs of emerging regions (civil servant – national). There is much to be learned from examining success stories, as in this example, where the new policy on SRGBV committees in schools is viewed as having an impact on students speaking up about the violence they have experienced:

Previously, no victim dared to come and report such cases and this might have given the wrong message that SRGBV do not exist or less manifested. However, nowadays people are reporting such cases as there is a committee that is tasked with listening to such grievances. To answer your question, yes SRGBV is happening in the town and the issue is very critical to bureau as well as the nation at large (civil servant - regional)

Analysing examples of good practice in which regional and local structures are supporting schools, and girls and boys, to implement policy successfully, could help to identify the types of resources, strategies and expertise needed to address local resistance.

4.4 Cross-sectoral policy enactments and networks

Reviews of evidence globally have identified the need for more effective cross-sectoral work on SRGBV (Leach et al., 2014, Parkes et al., 2016). Interviewees expressed concerns that there can be duplication of efforts in different sectors, and that some sectors lag behind others in mainstreaming gender in their action plans (civil servant – national). However, Ethiopia has developed good coordination mechanisms at federal and regional levels. These structures cut across sectors, and engage development partners with initiatives led by government.

The **National Coordinating Committee** has recently been established, in partnership with UNICEF, to address violence against women and children in an integrated and holistic way. Membership includes the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), along with other stakeholder organisations working on violence prevention and response. The **Girls Education Advisory Committee,** co-chaired by the Ministry of Education, Gender Directorate, and MoWYCA, also includes cross-sectoral membership along with development partners (civil servant – national). The **National Committee to Stop Harmful Traditional Practices** (HTPs) provides a national platform and taskforce to implement strategies to protect girls from various forms of violence, including FGM/C and child marriage. The national platform is a cross-sectoral ministerial group addressing strategic issues, co-ordinated by MOWYCA, with the taskforce facilitating the implementation of the national strategy through action plans tailored to each sector.

These national level cross-sectoral mechanisms map on to regional structures, but at local levels interviewees spoke of a need for better coordination across sectors on SRGBV work. One interviewee, for example, felt that in urban areas easy availability of alcohol and "khat" (plant containing stimulant drugs) for young people was fuelling incidents of violence against girls, and that more collaboration between education, trade and law enforcement was needed to address this:

The problem is that when a school is built other businesses including the problematic ones such as 'khat' and shisha and alcohol business and houses soon invade the vicinity of the school. In fact there is a provision that prohibits the establishment of such businesses in the immediate vicinity of schools but it is not being implemented. There is little or no cooperation between the schools and the trade department and other government law enforcing agencies. The lack of cooperation has made students vulnerable and victims of bad habits. (civil servant - regional)

There have however, been local structures set up explicitly to bring together services, such as the one stop centres, which are discussed further in 4.5.3.

There are also a number of networks and fora bringing together individuals and organisations working on SRGBV. *Network of Ethiopian Women's Association* (NEWA) is a network or umbrella organization bringing together members from CSOs, NGOs and professional associations as a common platform focused on women's rights, with members from all regional states and the 2 city administrations. The *Youth Federation* works with over 50 stakeholders on issues relating to the social, economic and political life of young people, working alongside government ministries, development partners and CSOs. The *Teachers' Association* since 2015 has partnered with UNGEI in creating a forum to discuss issues of SRGBV, involving education personnel, and links with colleagues from other African Countries (development partner). The *Human Rights Commission* has established a Human Rights Forum in each regional state, with membership of government line bureaus, religious leaders and local civic associations. Some of the projects linked to these networks are discussed further below.

4.5 Reporting and responses to SRGBV

One of the key challenges in enacting policy on SRGBV is the silence surrounding violence. As one interviewee eloquently put it:

Commencing from political leaders, the society to the grass root level should shoulder their own respective responsibilities. For instance, if a woman is beaten in the street by someone it has become a norm that people keep quiet. People don't interfere. So, the society has to be willing to shoulder its given responsibility. Schools ought to play a big role as they are shouldering big responsibilities, the government as well has to be willing to shoulder its responsibility. (civil servant – national)

Silences operate, therefore, at multiple levels. Girls and boys are often reluctant to report violence, for fear of repercussions, or because they do not recognise particular acts as violence:

Schools reinforce violence. School children accept violence by their teachers. Teachers are also not punished for acts of physical and emotional violence against children. (development partner)

There were reports of collusion, in which teachers stayed silent about violence perpetrated by colleagues (development partner). Interviewees were also critical of the referral pathways and services in the community, including poor health facilities, unsupportive police, and judicial systems that fail to sanction perpetrators of violence. One interviewee criticised the failure to rehabilitate offenders, so that they may reoffend with sexual offences against girls and boys "and the same cycle continues" (development partner). Some interviewees were concerned that though there was legislation on psychological violence and domestic violence in the home, judges and prosecutors were often reluctant to follow up these cases, refusing to intervene on 'family matters' (civil servant – local). A focus group of regional experts in Benshangul Gumuz reported that corruption takes place in terms of law being applied differently on political or economic grounds, with for example, sexual abuse by local politicians being ignored, or with local political leaders making arbitrary decisions on which cases to follow up and which to hide (Hailemariam, 2015). In schools, cases were often dropped because it was difficult to prove, where for example a teacher awards lower grades to a student who has refused

to have sex with him (Civil servant – national). Underlying many of the concerns raised by interviewees was that routine acts of harassment were taken for granted and seen as normal and acceptable, as in this incident that was recounted by one interviewee:

Let me tell you what I saw with my own eyes on the road one day. Someone was twisting the hands of a female student. It happened to be that there was a police station in front of that scene. I asked him to stop as he was hurting her. He told me to mind my own business. But I explained to him that the girl was asking him to leave her. Angry at my reaction, he slapped her on the face. Then, I started fighting with him. Some policemen came to us and one of them said: 'There is nothing wrong about him trying to convince her to accept his request. He does not mean to hurt her and you are exaggerating things". I told the policeman that he is not living up to his duties and responsibilities as a policeman and he should be ashamed not to be conscious about harassment issue unlike many of his colleagues. You know, the policeman was still adhering to the old traditional belief that the male have the right to exercise force-if need be- on girls and girls should always be passive and submit.

There have, however, been recent policy initiatives to strengthen reporting and responses to SRGBV in schools and universities, to which we now turn.

4.5.1 Codes of Conduct

The **Code of Conduct on Prevention of School Related Gender Based Violence in Schools** was developed with UNICEF's technical and financial support, and endorsed in 2014. It is now being rolled out, with each school to receive at least 10 copies across Ethiopia. The Code addresses gender based violence by school staff or students, including light (eg. Verbal gender discrimination, or sexually provocative behaviours) and grave forms (e.g. coercive sex for grades or money, attempted rape), sets out penalties, and the terms of reference for the SRGBV Committee. It supplements the administrative disciplinary guidelines in schools, which lacked guidance on areas like sexual harassment. It has now been translated into various local languages, including in Amharic, Oromiffa, Tigrigna, and Somali, and training has been underway for staff of regional and woreda education bureaus, and awareness raising training for school administrators, teachers and gender club coordinators (civil servant – national). Led by the MoE, working with UNICEF, the development of the Code involved consultation with development partners, universities, legal bodies, regional gender reps and some teachers. Regions were invited to adapt the Code, and Oromia, Ethiopia-Somali and Tigray have adapted it to local context and language, and begun to operationalise it. UNICEF have also supported awareness raising activities from national to regional and local levels.

The code specifies that seven-member committees are to be put in place in each school, representing gender clubs, other students (Grade 5 and above), teaching, parents, administration and leadership, to review, investigate and take action on reports of violence in line with the guidelines. The committees are expected to meet twice a month and review reports, which must be submitted in writing according to a template detailing people involved and witnesses, place and description of event and evidence available. The code also sets out that Gender Clubs should be established in every school, and that Committees should raise awareness about the Code of Conduct.

One regional civil servant explained that in her area, committees had been formed in each school, and awareness raising on the use of the code has taken place with teachers, administrators, guidance and counselling officers, and in gender clubs. Suggestion boxes were in place for students to comment, and gender units were monitoring the use of the Code in schools (civil servant – regional). However, implementation across the country has been uneven. Distribution of copies to schools has been described as patchy (Development Partner).

Views about the Code of Practice were mixed among interviewees. Some felt that its focus is too narrow, since it addresses only violence that takes place on the school premises, and not in communities or on the journey to school. Nor does it address some forms of commonplace violence,

such as corporal punishment or bullying. Though these forms of violence may not appear to be obviously gender-related, in reality there is often a gendered dimension in their manifestation (for example, boys and girls may be punished for different reasons or with different levels of severity). Its focus is on defining SRGBV and punishment, but not on prevention or support for victims, and it does not address ethical issues. The Committees, for example, are mandated to determine sanctions for different kinds of violence, but perhaps their role could be extended to recommendations for how schools could better manage and prevent violence. For example, if discriminatory remarks are frequently being reported to the Committee, it may be more effective to consider how to address these through broader school management/leadership directly or the curriculum than only through individual punishments. The code is not aligned with the legal system, and, although there is an attempt to distinguish minor and severe offences, there appears to be an equal choice of punishments for those classed as severe. These range from criminal cases, such as rape, and those that may not be police matters, such as young people kissing or sending explicit photographs, being treated equally and with punishments (within a range of guidance) decided by the committee. For example, for teacher perpetrators punishments would range from having pay docked to dismissal, but do not mention criminal conviction.

One interviewee, who had been working on raising awareness of the code in schools, explained that high levels of staff turnover meant that knowledge about the code was not being sustained in schools. The key problem, she explained, was "that the school management did not own the work" and therefore did not implement it fully. Nor were parents engaged and involved (civil servant – regional). Another civil servant from a different region also referred to the lack of ownership within schools:

In most cases when a SRGBV incident happened at the school compound, especially by teachers or admin staff, the school community often tried to hide the issue or solve through local level reconciliation, rather than timely reporting to justice system in their area. (Civil servant – regional)

A further interviewee complained that the Code was not changing practice because it did not impact on the referral systems outside school:

Though there is a claim to have a school code of conduct on SRGBV, it is no more than token. Nothing is changed in practice. When school children particularly girls are harassed measures or solutions are not there. While facilitating a training … for high school students, we learnt that these days SRGBV reports are coming forward to schools; but the follow up actions are poor and cases not reaching to the justice system. So the absence of system or lack of commitment to apply the existing rules and regulations make schools a reinforcing space or a breeding ground for SRGBV. (civil servant - local)

Other interviewees were more positive about the potential of the Code of Practice to have an impact over time, with more awareness raising through the media and school-based mini-media, and PSTAs. As one interviewee put it: "they are talking about it; it's a good start" (civil servant -national).

In addition to the Code of Conduct, discussions are underway within the MoE regarding the introduction of a more comprehensive **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** on addressing SRGBV in the education system. The SOP addresses some of the criticisms of the narrowness of the Code, by addressing SRGBV issues out of the school compound, and by addressing support for victims (civil servant - national).

The code of conduct in schools built on a similar code developed by MOE in 2013 that addressed GBV in Ethiopian universities: the **Anti-harassment code of conduct**. The code establishes an Anti-Harassment Committee (with representation from teachers' association, students' association, female students, dean office, president's office and support staff) to take appropriate measures when GBV is reported.

4.5.2 Violence reporting template

This section examines how one initiative to gather data across schools has been implemented, and feeds into the broader discussion on SRGBV evidence use in policy and programming in section 4.7. The Violence Reporting Template was introduced alongside the Code of Conduct in 2014 as a system for schools to record violence occurrences. The template is designed to capture number of incidents of different forms of SRGBV, perpetrators, details of actions taken and survivor wellbeing. The introduction and roll out of the template is a strong step forward, and its detail on types of violence has helped to highlight the acknowledgement of more everyday and unchallenged occurrences, such as sexual harassment, corporal punishment or humiliating treatment as unacceptable violence. As has been discussed earlier, it is extremely difficult to develop robust systems for collecting reliable data on SRGBV, and this template has a good balance between detail and simplicity.

The template is designed to be completed by gender club mentors and/or head teachers in each school, and collected every 3 months by the Gender Focal Points at Woreda level. Data is compiled and then sent to regional level where it is further aggregated before being sent to the national level. There are a number of challenges affecting full implementation of the new system. Distribution and training to woreda and school level has been good in some regions, but patchy in others: 'Even though we have the reporting template on SRGBV aspect, the template has been distributed only to about 10-20% schools in the region. Even in those schools the template is not fully utilized and reports are not timely coming to regional level.' (civil servant – regional).

In some schools there is insufficient understanding of the form that results in it being filled incorrectly or partially. In some places this is linked to a lack of support or monitoring at woreda level, and lack of accountability and ownership at the school level. Woreda gender focal points may be themselves overloaded or insufficiently trained (Civil servant – regional). But some seem to be more actively supporting the process, including working with schools to take action in response to the violence reported, such as linking to counselling services, running training and carrying out awareness raising work (civil Servant – local). High turnover of staff – for example the gender club mentors who often complete the form – can mean that the knowledge of how to monitor is lost, and sometimes data is too (civil servant – regional).

Other challenges are related to the template itself. It is not clear where the data comes from and it seems that a basic register form with each case as a unit is needed, that is completed as an ongoing basis whenever a case arises, that can then be compiled into the Violence Reporting Template accurately and timely at the 3 month interval. If this does not already exist it may help schools in basic record keeping. Another difficulty in the format is the combination of quantitative data compiling a number of cases with qualitative data on actions that may differ for different cases. Whilst it can be more meaningful at a local level to explain in writing what happened in response to the case (this is indeed very difficult to do in a meaningful quantitative way) it is not easy to see how the qualitative data could be compiled when there are a number of cases. Another challenge is that, once compiled at woreda level and above, cases from the level below are summed together. This number of cases may also reflect the effective roll out and coverage of the template than violence prevalence. For example, a region with data from 100% of schools would have generated much larger numbers of cases that a region where only 10% of schools completed the form. This also makes the data difficult to interpret and use for decision making at levels above the school.

The template would benefit from having accompanying guidance, which explains the purpose of the tool and how to use it. Its accuracy but also its potential beyond a data source could then be maximised – and indeed it is in some places, as discussed above, where woredas are supporting schools in

responding to cases. Clear guidance on this may help schools that are less responsive to find ways to reflect on data and use in planning, potentially increasing ownership of the process and improving responses to SRGBV.

The purpose of the tool as regards data source can be useful in providing information on what actions are being taken, as an indicator of school responses to SRGBV. But this tool should not be seen to provide data on prevalence of SRGBV. As discussed in section 3.5, accurate data on prevalence is difficult to capture with the best purposely designed research, and evidence on prevalence is more accurate from population-based surveys than from institutions that record reported cases, which are only a fraction of violence actually occurring. There are a number of reasons why data would be inaccurate, some linked to definitions and taboos around violence. One relates to what counts as a violence case. Do cases need to be formally reported as per the code of conduct guidance (i.e. a detailed written report containing specific information submitted to the SRGBV committee) or does knowledge of a case by the person completing the form count? It is likely that the more accepted and common forms of violence, such as corporal punishment, are particularly likely to be underreported to the school. There can also be high levels of stigma about violence, in particular sexual violence, in some communities, which can prevent cases from being recorded. Head teachers may avoid reporting to superiors that violence is occurring in their schools for fear it would reflect badly on their school or themselves. Although one local civil servant highlighted that the committee system prevents head teachers burying cases, where there is a common perception that a case of violence is acceptable it may not be recorded and followed up. For example, in his study Hailemariam (2015) found that some school administrations in more conservative areas saw the SRGBV reporting template as disclosing traditional secrets to others and blaming their own culture. The study also identified that some female teachers acting as gender clubs mentors recording cases have faced teasing and occasionally threats by male teachers, students and school administration. In a region where template completion was high it was explained that programmes linked to DFID and Population Council on gender norms and child marriage may have raised awareness on issues related to SRGBV which supported effective data reporting. High reporting may thus actually reflect openness and schools willingness to tackle SRGBV, rather than that there is actually higher SRGBV occurring in that school. In this sense the data on responses can be more useful in giving a sense of how schools are responding to cases. But currently the format does not allow quantitative analysis of response.

Part of the challenge of the SRGBV reporting template is that it is seen as laborious additional data monitoring on top of the extensive requirements to collect and record data for the Education Management Information (EMIS) system. This school year the tool has been integrated into EMIS as a pilot. Advantages are likely to be increased accountability and completion of the template and improved coverage of data recording. However, only the data on violence prevalence (and whether cases of school dropout resulted) has been incorporated into EMIS so far. It is not clear whether this will replace the SRGBV template or be an additional reporting requirement. Replacing it would risk constraining the potential of using the data to inform action at local levels, and also would mean that the important data on how schools respond would be lost. New guidelines may be needed to explain how recording of cases may change with the new system (which involves annual rather than 3-monthly recording).

In short, the Violence Recording Tool has great potential to improve monitoring and provide evidence on SRGBV, but there are challenges linked to its effective roll out and also the quality of data.The EMIS road-map includes cloud based EMIS plans. Interestingly, the EMIS unit of the Ministry of Education, is currently designing an electronic database system for education in emergency settings in 12 woredas. Woredas will enter data directly onto a cloud via internet-enabled tablets on a monthly

basis, enabling much faster and more accurate data recording which can be instantly compiled upon data entry. This approach, although requiring a significant outlay, has enormous potential for work on SRGBV and education data in general.

4.5.3 Referral pathways linking to justice systems

A number of approaches have been developed to address the concerns about referral systems outside school, including lack of follow up by police and judicial systems, or costs to victims seeking reports from hospitals to provide evidence for the police (Development Partner).

'Women and children units' have been established in some police stations (UN Women 2016). If cases do reach court, in a few cases:

Some courts have assigned separate rooms and provisions for children and youths victims to hear their cases in special manner and attention with legal support through dedicated attorneys and trained psychologists. (civil servant – national)

The Ethiopian Women Lawyer's Association (EWLA) provides legal aid, as well as public education and capacity building, research and advocacy. Operating in five regions (Oromia, Amhara, Benishangul, Gambella and SNNPR) and the two city administrations, its professional members (lawyers, prosecutors and judges) train para-professionals to help with legal advice. While much of their work is concerned with following up cases, one interviewee commented that their influence could be stronger if they had more opportunities to focus on public education, capacity building and research (Development partner).

The Federal Attorney General (former Ministry of Justice) has also worked with other sectors to improve reporting and referral pathways, but our evidence was not clear on the extent of engagement with the Education Sector. These collaborations have been established at macro level, regional capitals, and some regions have referral systems in place at zonal and Woreda level (UN Women 2016). UNICEF supported the development of referral pathways in Amhara, Ethiopia-Somali, and SNNP as a pilot. These referral mechanisms intend to provide comprehensive services by linking justice, health and psychosocial support, among others. There are other examples in other regions of promising collaborations. For example, in Afar the Justice Bureau, Police, Sharia court, BOWCYA and Women's Associations have been working together on referral mechanisms.

However, systems are not consistent or coordinated across regions. The quality of services is constrained by capacity gaps in personnel. Lack of awareness about the referral linkages and the services delivered was also identified by interviewees. Other concerns are insufficient budgets: even when funding is available to run the services, there is no additional support to girls or women to enable them to follow the referral pathway, for example transport to access the services often located in major centres some distance away.

The first **One Stop Centre** was opened in May 2012 in Ghandi hospital in Addis Ababa, and adapted from a model in South Africa. It provides a comprehensive service including medical and psychological treatment, legal service (by police and prosecutor) and shelter:

Victims come to the centre by themselves for the service. Then they get the medical service straight. Next, the medical staff refers victims for psychological treatment. (civil servant – local).

The free service also includes a laboratory, relevant emergency medication (to prevent pregnancy and HIV infection), emergency medical services, and a child friendly room. It is able to provide shelter when needed for 24 hours, after which women or girls are referred to shelter houses run by government or NGOs. These were reported to be insufficient to meet demand (civil servant – local). The police under the guidance of the public prosecutor compiles the evidence collected at the centre and forward the case to a sub city police who will undertake further investigation on the case and then will forward the case to the prosecutor at the sub city level who will ensure compliance with the technical

requirements to institute the case at a court of law. The Prosecutor similar to other cases of criminal nature will follow up on the case though they might not update the victim unless requested for update. In a 3 month period in 2016, 17 women and 101 girls received both medical and legal services (the number attending the centre is higher, as many females do not continue with legal services). The Centre provides an excellent example of strong collaboration at the service level to help girls report in a safe, friendly environment and help them receive the care, support and access to justice they need (UN Women 2016). Whilst UNICEF played a key role in supporting and funding the setup of the centres, and continues to provide capacity building support, the centres are funded and run by the government. However, there are only three of these in the country so access is very limited. GTPII includes expanding services to open 10 more centres in other parts of the country (UN Women 2016).

One interviewee reported that there is also a free of charge telephone helpline called 992 for children to seek help on violence, with legal and psychological support for SRGBV victims across the country (civil servant – national). Further evidence is needed on whether there is data to substantiate popularity and usefulness of the helpline, as well as demographics of the callers.

Whilst the One Stop Centres appear to have robust monitoring on following cases, we were not able to access this data to for example, identify the proportion of cases reported that were investigated, charged, and resulted in conviction. We have even less information about outcomes of cases across the country, and for example, what support girls received. Health facilities play an important role in gathering evidence and providing care and support to survivors, but the scope of the study has not enabled a thorough investigation into how recoding and monitoring of cases is working across the sectors involved in reporting. A template was developed by Bureau of Justice with input from the police, health providers and attorneys to strengthen monitoring and the referral pathway. It is not clear the extent to which it has been implemented, but if done so properly the template could track the use of services by individual survivors and outcomes of cases (UN Women, 2016). Whilst there is evidence of intersectoral collaboration to improve responses to GBV on the ground, there is little evidence available on if and how these structures are formally linking with the education sector.

4.6 Initiatives working to prevent violence

The initiatives discussed above (section 4.5) aim to address SRGBV through improving reporting and responses following violence. Other initiatives have focused on preventive approaches, which try to change the attitudes, relationships, practices and contextual conditions that underpin violence. Echoing the views of several interviewees, one person explained how difficult it is to change practices in schools when: "*The teachers however are products of the community and reflect the culture and attitudes of the community*" (civil servant - regional). Several interviewees stressed the importance of violence prevention, with some expressing concern that their work tended to be steered towards responding following incidents at the expense of crucial preventive work, a point also raised by regional focus groups (Hailemariam 2015). Some of these initiatives include SRGBV as a component of a broader project addressing gender inequalities in and around schools. The global review of evidence found that many violence prevention initiatives were short term initiatives involving external 'experts'; were not well integrated into school systems or policy processes; and lacked longer term evaluations (Parkes et al 2016). The findings in Ethiopia differ somewhat, as we discuss in this section. Although there may be fewer projects than in some other countries, the projects described were carefully planned and implemented in collaboration with government and with local implementing partners. The violence prevention initiatives underway usually entail partnerships between organisations, with larger NGOs or INGOs focused on capacity building or provision of support for government or for local CSOs and CBOs, who are authorised by the government to undertake implementation. These linkages have strong potential for sustainability, but very little written documentation was available on these initiatives, with most of the evidence gathered through interviews. Detailed information on for example, budgets and project size, was lacking and

most appear not to have been evaluated. Our findings are therefore tentative, and more information may be needed to corroborate key points.

4.6.1 Building capacity and awareness in schools

Several of the interventions to improve responses to violence in schools also had preventive components, often as part of a multi-component package to build capacity and awareness across the school community with the aim of improving schools as enabling environments. The Gender Directorate within the MoE has produced a manual on *Gender Equality and Life Skills of Students in Ethiopia*, in which three of the six chapters reportedly address SRGBV related issues (civil servant – national). Training on the manual has been undertaken with students, teachers, gender clubs, and regional and zonal education bureau staff (civil servant – national).

GEQIP ll (see 4.1.2 above) is a government led core programme to improve the quality of general education, with gender a cross-cutting issue. One of its components, the School Improvement Programme, has a domain on creating safe and friendly school environments. *National WASH Guidelines* (2016) have been produced by the MoE to provide guidance to schools on water and sanitation facilities, and hygiene education, including menstruation.

Create Enabling and Supportive Environment for Children in Amhara Region (Save the Children/BOWYCA/local organisations, funded by the European Union) worked in 60 schools in 6 woredas of Amhara in 2015, carrying out training in schools on SRGBV (including the Code of Conduct), provided psychosocial support to SRGBV victims and vulnerable school children, and established and strengthened child friendly centres in primary schools. The project has not been evaluated (development partner).

Improving Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) practices of young girls in Amhara region (UNESCO, funded by Packard Foundation) is a pilot project aiming to improve SRH information and services for adolescent boys and girls in Amhara. It works through helping to build strong girls' education forums (GEFs), providing resources to enable economically challenged girls to continue their education, and providing age and culturally appropriate communication interventions in schools. Though not yet fully evaluated, one interviewee reported that particular challenges for the project included weak monitoring and the need to strengthen GEFs through better links between regional and local levels (development partner).

Work linked to the national HIV/AIDS Strategy. A key HIV prevention objective of the current HIV/AIDS Strategy is strengthening a women centred 'health development army'. These include community members and professionals and exist at community and governmental level. The HDAs along with health extension workers lead 'community conversations', a community empowerment programme, where members discuss and develop action plans addressing issues underlying HIV vulnerability, in particular sexual violence. They aim to bring together women's group leaders, traditional and religious leaders and CBOs. The government reported that in 2012/13 these community activities were conducted in 15,319 kebeles, reaching about 7.6 million people (3.9 million the previous year). Kebele administrations organise social mobilization conferences to discuss and build on the local plans and build into the kebele development plan. Similar HIV prevention activities are taking place in schools, with 29% of all schools in the country implementing Community Conversations, 28% delivering life skills education, 30% all students reached through peer education, over 900,000 students participating in school clubs and over 1000 functional youth centres (FDRE 2014). We have not accessed any evaluations or further details of the methodologies of these programmes but potential synergies with SRGBV interventions are worth further investigation.

4.6.2 Interventions with girls and boys – gender clubs

Gender clubs have been part of the government's gender mainstreaming strategy within schools across the country (ESDP V). While in the past these were commonly girls clubs, more recently they

have engaged girls and boys, in recognition of the value of involving boys in preventing violence against girls, and in the awareness that boys too experience gender based and sexual violence (development partner). In Oromia and Addis Ababa, gender units have provided training on girls' empowerment and SRGBV for teachers, school administration and students in the clubs in their regions (civil servants – regional). Hailemariam (2015) found that although girls/gender clubs were operating in all the regions, they were well established in schools in Amhara, Oromia and Addis Ababa, but their status and coverage was much more patchy in Benishangul-Gumuz and Ethiopia-Somali. Overall, they appeared to be more active where there were committed school administration and strong gender focal persons (Hailemariam 2015). In some regions and districts, development partners are providing support for these clubs. Plan International, for example, is working with the MOE and FAWE to support gender clubs in Amhara, Addis Ababa, Oromia, SNNP, and Gambella (development partner). The Human Rights Commission has aimed to build awareness of human rights through developing clubs in 36 primary schools in Addis Ababa, SNNP, Tigray, Benishagul Gumuz, Gambella, Ethiopia-Somali and Afar regional states (development partner).

FAWE's *Let's speak up!* methodology involves pupils in project design and management. The school based intervention is based on girls themselves collecting initial data, through completing a checklist that helps to identify problems in schools, such as peer pressure, sexual harassment, insufficient books, or girl friendly toilets etc. This is used to develop an action plan, and club members can select a range of approaches from a manual, such as using theatre to advocate with the community on girls' empowerment (development partner).

Safe Space Ethiopia is a new initiative by Girl Effect in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, which will establish clubs for 11-14 year old girls, in safe spaces where they can discuss issues freely, develop critical thinking, and be supported to challenge early marriage and other HTPs (development partner). The project will be piloted in three districts of Amhara and three districts of Oromia regions, with a view to scaling up by the Ministry of Health.

Gender clubs are also in place in universities, including the University of Addis Ababa, where girls clubs (also known as the Yellow Movement) organise 'Table Days', bringing out tables onto a field near the road so that female passers-by can join the biweekly discussion forums on gender equality, harassment and GBV prevention. Males Partnership is a club established in 2015 to engage male students in discussions on these issues. Both are supported by the university's gender directorate, which also provides counselling and support for economic, social and psychological difficulties. One interviewee reported that, though the gender mainstreaming activities within the university were helping to increase awareness about GBV, female victims are still reluctant to report, partly for fear of retaliation, and because it is very difficult to prosecute cases of violence when there is no tangible evidence, as when a member of staff makes sexual advances in a private space (civil servant – local).

4.6.3 Initiatives targeting children at high risk

Another school based violence prevention approach is to target children who may be particularly vulnerable to gender based violence. As discussed in section 3.4 above, rates of sexual violence may be particularly high where there are high levels of economic insecurity, conflict or mobility. A key government initiative is to identify and address the needs of the most vulnerable girls and boys is the *Preferential Support Guidelines* (2014) (see section 4.1.2). These guidelines are used by woreda education unit staff to establish which students in each school need additional material or academic support and why, and to liaise with PSTAs, communities and NGOs/development partners on the provision of necessary support (civil servant – local).

UNICEF's initiative to *End Child Marriage* by 2025 is a multi-sectoral programme (MoWYCA, MoE, Attorney general) with a focus on empowering girls in and out of school and influencing social norms through community and religious, CSO and government structurers. The project is now implemented in five regions (Amhara since 2015, Ethiopia-Somali, Afar and Oromia in 2016).

Ethiopia Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment is a UN flagship programme that has been working on empowering women and girls across all regions in Ethiopia through a wide range of activities, including access to credit, scholarship programmes for students (in secondary and tertiary) tutorial classes and life skills education. Phase ll of the programme (2012-15) is currently being evaluated.

A recent evaluation of UNICEF's *Social Cash Transfer programme* in SNNPR identified the valuable role social workers play in working with families to ensure girls enrol in and attend school (Roelen, Devereux and Kebede 2017). Families participating in the programme appreciated the support of social workers, who visited them at home, working with parents to bring children back to school.

Other initiatives address the needs of particular groups of children. For example, *When Mum is Missing: Safe Family, Community and School Environment for Children* is a 3 year programme (2014-2017) by Save the Children/ Organization for Social Services and Health Development (OSSHA)/ Amhara BOWYCA/BOE) implemented in three districts in Amhara. The project targets girls and boys who are living without parental care, including orphans and child headed households, and offers psycho-social support as well as training for school staff and community para-social workers. *Improving the lives of vulnerable migrant young women* (UNESCO/Nia Foundation) aims to reduce social, health, and economic vulnerability of girls and young women who may be vulnerable to migrating to the Middle East and other countries, and from rural areas to cities. The project aims to promote community engagement and collaboration, and also works directly with girls, for example, providing information on sexual and reproductive health services, linking them to job opportunities, and mentoring. In one sub city in Addis Ababa, in collaboration with the police department, the first Model Safe Centre for Migrant and Vulnerable Boys and Girls was established. *Strengthening systems for prevention and response to unsafe child migration* (SAVE/MOWYCA) is a programme in Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Addis Ababa (2014-16) that aimed to provide direct psychosocial and education support to 1580 migrant or trafficked children, and worked to establish more effective and accountable mechanisms for referral and response by services. Plan International, in collaboration with MoE and MoH, support sponsorship programmes for girls at risk of dropping out of school because of poverty in Amhara, Oromia, SNNP, Gambella and Addis Ababa; works on emergency response for children following drought in Amhara; and provides education for refugee children in Gambella region, using mobile schools (development partner).

Most of these programmes are multi-layered, providing direct and indirect support for children in particularly vulnerable situations, with protection from violence one aspect of a broader programme. The careful targeting of particularly vulnerable populations is impressive, but we found no evidence of how the programmes were monitored and evaluated, and more evidence is needed on their efficacy. Future work could also focus on SRGBV experienced by children with disabilities. Though internationally the evidence base is slim, some studies have found that girls with disabilities may be particularly vulnerable to sexual violence (Devries et al., 2014). Ensuring that SRGBV initiatives address the concerns of these children is an important, and often, neglected area.

4.6.4 Interventions in teacher training institutions

Interventions addressing gender and SRGBV through the curriculum and pedagogies have been focused mainly on teacher training institutions, as part of governmental initiatives to mainstream gender in education. A pilot project on *Gender Responsive Pedagogy* was implemented in six colleges of teachers' education, through a collaboration between the MoE Gender Directorate and FAWE, and has now been scaled up in all teacher training institutions. A government official explained how the causes and effects of SRGBV are embedded within the approach:

In fact, Gender Responsive Pedagogy has contents to address SRGBV causes and manifestations in relation to class room arrangements, teaching and learning approaches, verbal and language of

teachers and students, teaching and learning materials, school administration, GBV and Human Right issues, sexual maturity of students and their special needs. (civil servant – national)

A programme led by UNESCO (funded by Chinese Hainan Foundation) is on *Enhancing the Quality and Relevance of Education for Adolescent Girls in Ethiopia*. This is a four year project (2015-19) in collaboration with three higher education institutions in Amhara, SNNP and Addis Ababa, as well as 12 upper primary and secondary schools in the three regions. Through capacity development with teacher trainers, teachers and PTSAs, the project aims to increase girls' retention and transition in education, to improve life skills and the quality and relevance of the curriculum, as well as provision of safe learning environments. The project has not yet been evaluated (development partner).

It is not clear whether any of the interventions taking place in teacher training institutions follow newly qualified teachers into their first teaching posts, to find out whether and how they are able to use their training on gender and violence in practice in classrooms. Further evidence on gender-sensitive pedagogies, SRGBV in teacher education colleges, in-school teacher training and school improvement planning would be valuable, as these entry points have considerable potential for strengthening responses to and prevention of SRGBV in Ethiopia's schools.

4.6.5 Engaging communities outside school

Many interviewees spoke about the difficulties of changing deeply held customary attitudes and practices, particularly in more remote, rural communities, including child marriage, FGM/C and abduction. However, some also recognised that communities are shifting their practices, with a range of community based interventions working on these issues. This can be highly challenging work, entailing working with influential community members, including religious leaders. Save the Children, NORAD, BOYWCA and several local organisations have worked with religious leaders on *Addressing FGM/C in Afar, Ethiopia-Somali and Harari*. With religious leaders exercising considerable influence across Ethiopia, engaging them in interventions on SRGBV can be extremely valuable, and have reportedly led to changes in practice, though these have been uneven, with conservative attitudes to gender in the family in some cases endorsing female submission (development partner).

Promote the Survival and Development of Children in South Omo Zone of SNNPR (2015-17 Save the Children/MOWYCA) aims to empower children and work with parents and community members on improving child care, health and protection from harmful traditional practices, including 'mingi' (abandonment or killing of children believed to bring bad luck because of being born out of wedlock or whose front teeth come out earlier than the rest), as well as FGM and early marriage. Though not yet evaluated, one interviewee reported that local communities have already abandoned 'mingi' (development partner).

Improving the SRH status of young people by combating harmful customary practices and norms (UNESCO) is a project (not yet evaluated) in one zone of Oromia, which aims to address practices like dowry, polygamy and FGM/C, through working directly with young people on reproductive health and life skills and through strengthening local services and reporting systems (development partner). FAWE has also concentrated attention to GBV interventions in emerging regions, including in Benishangul-Gumuz and Amhara, using a range of methodologies to influence community perspectives and practices, such as community meetings, training for *idir* leaders (traditional civil society organisations), and peer-to-peer trainings for young people (development partner).

While their targeting of high risk communities, multi-faceted approaches, and creative methodologies for engaging influential members of communities appear to have strong potential for violence prevention in communities, the lack of information about project evaluations makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions about the effectiveness of these approaches.

4.6.6 Using the media and technology to address SRGBV

Interviewees expressed mixed views about the role of media and technology. Some interviewees viewed mobile phones and TV as increasing risk, through for example, easy access to pornographic websites. Others viewed media and technology as important ways to share information on SRGBV across large numbers of people. One interviewee acknowledged both views:

"*We need to strengthen medias to give priority for SRGBV. They have also limitations in reporting SRGBV cases. It is not uncommon to see gender biased commercial advertisements that undermine the role of women in the society. I don't think they have gender experts that assist them in producing programs. It lacks professionalism*." (development partner)

There are several examples in Ethiopia of the media being used in SRGBV prevention. EWLA's project on *Advancing Access to Justice through Legal Aid and Awareness Creation* (2014-16 funded by Ethiopian Human Right Commission and UN agencies) uses radio broadcasts, and a TV show, *Chilot* (Amharic word for 'court') that attempts to sensitize the wider public through true story based dramas on legal cases, including sexual harassment (development partner). *Yegna* (Amharic word for 'ours') is an edutainment radio programme created through Girl Effect that uses drama, talk show and music to address concerns of adolescent girls in Amhara and Addis Ababa:

The dramas and music are based on different themes. For instance, the popular music called 'Tayitu' (Tayitu wife of king Menilk II who played a major role in the victory of the battle of Adawa against the colonial Italy) is all about females' leadership role. This is a new kind of approach in this country. Based on the audience survey done in Addis Ababa and Amhara, we have reached over 3.5million listeners and over 8 million people knew about the program. (development partner)

Although we have not identified evidence of impact in Ethiopia, findings from the global review of evidence found that mass media can be an effective component of SRGBV intervention, when it is carefully researched with relevant and engaging outputs (Parkes et al 2016).

In schools too, the use of 'mini media' has been promoted, in which children are encouraged to produce poems, posters and theatre to be shared with their peers at break time (development partner).

These media-based approaches have strong potential for advocacy to prevent SRGBV, though it is important to take into account the unequal access to technology in more remote regions, and to gather more evidence on their efficacy.

4.7 Monitoring, evaluating and evidence-based approaches to SRGBV

Developing rigorous ways to monitor SRGV is a major challenge globally. Ethiopia is taking the challenge seriously and has started to develop initiatives to improve SRGBV monitoring, in particular the Violence Reporting Template (discussed in detail in 4.5.2). The focus of energies has tended to be towards aiming to measure violence prevalence. However, surveys with young people or children are the most reliable methods of gaining accurate data on this. DHS contains some relevant data, but only on over-15s, and not focused on violence at school (see section 3.5 for more in depth discussion about quality of evidence from surveys). The Violence Against Children survey is being rolled out in several other countries, and if introduced in Ethiopia as a regular survey, could be the most effective way to monitor changing patterns of violence across the country.

ESDP V provides an encouraging framework with which to develop this work, as discussed above in section 4.1.2. In fact, there is scope to develop a set of SRGBV indicators that cover not only prevalence (related to forms of violence in schools as well as related issues like child marriage and FGC/M), but also related attitudes and knowledge, and the efforts and effectiveness of institutions in terms of prevention and response at multiple levels. This could include areas such as teacher training on SRGBV

and GRP, school infrastructure that promotes safety and gender equality, functioning and activities of SRGBV committees and focal points, existence of plans and budgets and so on. Data on some of the areas are already collected, but could be pulled together into an overarching framework that connects with policies including ESDP. There are also opportunities to work closely with other ministries. For example, the Ministry of Women and Children have been collaborating with the Statistics office to design a set of indicators on GBV for inclusion into DHS (civil servant – national).

Although some NGO-led programmes have collected useful data, capacity and broader institutional constraints have limited their ability to compile, analyse, share and use data for decision making on SRGBV programming. This may be in part linked to the curtailment of some NGO programmes and funding linked to the Civil Society Act. However, synergies between NGO and government programmes – whether formal partnerships or not – are and have the potential to enhance SRGBV evidence and monitoring. For example, it was reported by some informants that in areas where there were NGO programmes addressing gender norms and adolescent girls' completion of the Violence Reporting Template was better. FAWE's 'Speak Out' intervention involves collecting rich data collected by young people at school level that are turned into action plans to make schools safer places for girls, and this has potential to complement formal information systems on SRGBV.

The opportunities to develop work in enhancing evidence and monitoring in Ethiopia is significant. There is high interest and motivation from government sectors in developing research and the evidence base to inform decision making. The Child Research and Practice Forum acts as an important forum for government ministries and development partners working on issues related to childhood meet monthly and share evidence and learning. There is scope for building on these initiatives to develop partnerships between government research organisation and NGOs to develop national evidence and monitoring approaches.

5. Conclusion and Possible Priority Areas for Action

A recent global review of evidence on policy and practice on SRGBV found that there is limited research evidence on policy processes around SRGBV (Parkes et al 2016). The existing evidence points to a need for strengthened dialogues between national and local policy actors, with more attention needed to supporting policy implementation at the meso levels, with for example teacher training institutions, teaching unions and district officials across sectors. The review also found that many SRGBV programmes were small scale, short term interventions with little long term follow up, and that often these programmes were not well integrated into governmental education structures. It found that globally there is a need for strengthening quantitative and qualitative data collection to provide evidence to inform policy and practice. This scoping study adds to the limited evidence on policy processes through looking in depth at policy enactment on SRGBV in Ethiopia. It has involved the examination of a wide range of primary and secondary sources, the collection of new data including from stakeholders, and the analysis of existing legislation and programming in Ethiopia with relevance to SRGBV. The study addressed three research questions:

- What is the existing evidence on SRGBV in Ethiopia, and how is SRGBV shaped by contextual features, including social, economic, political and educational structures and norms, in varying contexts across Ethiopia?

There is a good body of research evidence in Ethiopia, which shows that SRGBV in its many guises is commonplace in Ethiopia. There is considerable diversity across the country. In more remote, rural regions, conservative gender norms combine with economic insecurity in perpetuating practices of child marriage, FGM/C, and child labour, though there is evidence that some of these practices are reducing. Trafficking and migration increases vulnerability to violence, and in cities too girls and boys experience physical, sexual and psychological violence. Many forms of 'everyday' violence are still widely accepted. For example, the ban on corporal punishment is often ignored, with teachers, often with very large classes, lacking support to implement alternative discipline approaches. Girls and boys are often reluctant to report violence, for fear of repercussions, or because they do not recognise particular acts as violence. A continuing challenge in some contexts is to engage religious leaders on issues like FGM/C, and local political leaders on issues relating to sexual violence.

- How is SRGBV being addressed in law and policy? How are laws and policies enacted at macro (federal), meso (regional) and local (woreda/school/community) levels? What programmes are in place to address SRGBV? How effective is policy and practice, where are the gaps and barriers, and how could they be addressed?

There is a strong legislative and policy framework in Ethiopia, and clear structures established to mainstream gender across macro, meso and local levels, with SRGBV viewed increasingly as a central pillar of work. This structure provides a good platform for violence prevention, since it recognises violence as underpinned by unequal access to resources and power, and inequitable norms and stereotypes. Partnerships between development partners and government infuse all work on SRGBV. The structures that have been established in Ethiopia go some way to addressing concerns about policy enactment identified in the global literature review. Only relatively recently has SRGBV been integrated within the work of this decentralised structure, yet some interviewees felt that the increased commitment to work in this area at federal level is having a positive impact on policy enactments at meso and local levels. However, change has been uneven, and the structures tend to weaken from federal to regional to woreda levels. Inadequate resourcing, and the need to enhance skills, expertise and commitment of staff are evident particularly at local levels. Resourcing does not

match level of need, so areas with the biggest challenges may have the weakest capacity or resourcing to respond.

There have been impressive efforts to improve school based responses to violence, notably with the Code of Practice on Prevention of SRGBV, and violence reporting template. However, these are not yet embedded within schools and woredas across the country, and have some weaknesses. The code provides a mechanism for strengthening reporting on gender-based violence, but there are concerns about uneven implementation, lack of local 'ownership', its narrow focus that does not address corporal punishment, bullying or violence off the school premises, and weak alignment with other school processes and legal provisions.

Violence prevention work in schools and communities includes multi-component projects in schools, gender clubs, initiatives targeting girls and boys at high risk, interventions with teachers and teacher education colleges on curriculum and pedagogy, community based interventions, and use of mass media and technology. Often these use creative methodologies, with sensitivity to local contextual conditions and perspectives. Though some are short term programmes, reliant on external funding, the close engagement with government especially MOE and MOWYCA, strengthens the longer term sustainability, addressing some of the weaknesses relating to programmes identified in the global literature review. However, very few programmes have evidence of their impact and improved monitoring and evaluation is needed to demonstrate their effectiveness in addressing SRGBV. This means that it is not possible to provide a comprehensive response to the research question on the effectiveness of programmes on SRGBV in Ethiopia.

- What sources of evidence have been used to inform SRGBV policy and practice? What approaches have been used to collect data, and by whom? How effective have they been, where are the gaps, and how could they be strengthened?

There are a range of data sources providing evidence on SRGBV in Ethiopia. These include one-off studies centred around understanding SRGBV in context, regular surveys such as DHS that can monitor trends and patterns across the country, and longitudinal data from Young Lives that can track how children's lives develop over time and can tap into issues linked to SRGBV. There is interest from central government, and structures to enhance the building and sharing of evidence with policymakers, but we do not have enough information about how and the extent to which different forms of evidence feed into policymaking at the national level. At present there is very limited data collected routinely across the country on SRGBV to inform policy and practice. In this sense, the findings in Ethiopia echo the weaknesses around SRGBV data collection identified by the global literature review. However, there are important initiatives being piloted to address this. The Violence Reporting Template has been designed to provide data to help inform decision making at multiple levels. This does seem to be happening in some areas, for example with some woreda gender focal points supporting schools, but it is very patchy, and some weaknesses in the template itself limit the conclusions that can be drawn from the data. A broader set of indicators on SRGBV addressing prevention, response and changing norms, institutions and acts of violence could provide a framework to build evidence on a more holistic picture. Close collaboration between government ministries, research organisations and NGOs could enhance evidence availability and quality.

Priority Areas for further discussion:

The legislative and policy framework, structures to support policy enactment, and the range of initiatives underway in Ethiopia provide strong foundations for further work to address SRGBV. The challenges are immense, and the study findings identify a number of areas for further discussion in order to inform future planning for research, policy and practice on SRGBV in Ethiopia:

Enactment of laws and policies across national, regional and local levels:

- How to support and increase technical expertise on gender and SRGBV, particularly at local levels, including issues relating to budgets, resources, skills, training and workloads
- How to ensure that cross-sectoral committees and networks provide effective coordination and collaboration at all levels (national/regional/local)
- Inclusion of SRGBV within key performance indicators when reviewing the Education Sector Plan and its results framework

Violence reporting and responses to SRGBV:

- How to address the uneven implementation of the SRGBV Code of Conduct and to strengthen linkages with violence prevention work in schools
- How to ensure more effective application of the Violence reporting template, and clearer alignment with other reporting systems and national monitoring frameworks
- How to build on and scale up more effective responses to violence, such as the One Stop Centres, and to ensure support in more rural, remote areas.

Violence Prevention:

- How to improve understanding of the effectiveness of violence prevention initiatives, through improving M&E
- How to equip teachers in training and in service with skills, understanding and confidence to prevent SRGBV, through, for example, gender-sensitive pedagogies, non-violent discipline, and addressing gender and SRGBV in the curriculum
- How to engage young people in policy dialogue on SRGBV, learning from participatory approaches such as FAWE's Speak Up methods and peer-to-peer dialogue
- How to strengthen dialogue on SRGBV with religious leaders and other influential female and male community members, using approaches tailored to local contexts.
- How to strengthen the role of the media in sensitisation on gender and violence, and to monitor the effectiveness of media based interventions

Research:

- How to ensure national data systems are able to document and monitor patters of SRGBV, responses to violence in and out of school, and violence prevention
- How to strengthen evidence-based policy and practice through sharing research and programme evaluations, e.g. through the recently established Child Research and Practice Forum
- How to conduct research to provide a stronger foundation for policy and practice on how SRGBV is understood, practiced and resisted in local contexts

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