LESSONS FROM SERBIA

Addressing Gender-based Violence through the School without Violence Programme
LESSONS FROM SERBIA

Addressing Gender-based Violence through the School without Violence Programme
Violence in Serbia

The Balkan wars of the 1990s, involving violent disputes over the territories of the former Yugoslavia, contributed to the normalisation of violence in Serbian society and affected overall levels of tolerance for violence in society.

One of the most significant social determinants of violence is gender inequality and its associated harmful gendered norms and beliefs. As one of the bases upon which power, privilege and status are exercised and conferred, gender inequality hampers the social, political and economic development of individuals, families, communities and broader society. Gender inequality helps to fuel and embed gender-based violence (GBV) as ‘normal’ and acceptable behaviour.

In 2010, the SeCONS Development Initiative Group carried out a prevalence survey on domestic violence. The findings indicated that more than half of women in Central Serbia have, at some point in their lives, experienced family violence (54.2%), with 37.5% having experienced violence in the previous twelve months. Most of the perpetrators were male partners or husbands, with 96% of perpetrators responsible for severe forms of GBV.

The study – Mapping Domestic Violence against Women in Central Serbia – was conducted as part of a programme by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy and UNDP: “Combat Sexual and Gender Based Violence”.
SCHOOL WITHOUT VIOLENCE PROGRAMME

The School Without Violence (SwV) Programme was started in Serbia in 2005 and continues to be one of the main vehicles for the successful implementation of violence prevention programming in schools. The main aims of the SwV Programme are to:

- create a safe and enabling school environment for children, and to
- protect children affected by violence.

The programme – in its current form – is implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) and UNICEF, among others.

With multiple stakeholders, target audiences and entry points – a ‘whole school approach’ is used, meaning that students, teachers, parents, school governance bodies, wider local communities and the MoESTD work together against violence, and in recent years, against GBV in particular.

In 2007, based on the SwV programme concept, results achieved and lessons learned to date, the MoESTD prepared and adopted a Special Protocol for the Protection of Children and Pupils from Violence, Abuse and Neglect in Education Institutions. This Protocol is the foundation for violence prevention in the education system, specifying roles and responsibilities, including the need for every school to have a dedicated violence prevention and protection team. In 2012, after seven years of UNICEF support, a Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) was established within the MoESTD, effectively shifting management of the SwV programme from UNICEF to the MoESTD and institutionalising the programme and unit.

2.1 Joint Programme: Integrating a Response to Violence against Women

UNICEF, UNDP and UN Women jointly applied for, and received a grant from the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UNTFeVAW). This funding was used to implement an inter-agency Joint Programme (JP): Integrating a Response to Violence against Women in Serbia.

The JP had two main outcome areas to create an enabling social and institutional environment to reduce violence against women in Serbia, spanning prevention and protection interventions:

1) Expanding and improving the quality of existing mechanisms to prevent and end GBV; and

2) Expanding access to, and the provision of a range of services in response to GBV.
Each agency contributed their specific areas of expertise, and through existing relationships and partnerships with NGOs, research institutes and government departments at municipal, provincial and national levels prevention and protection efforts for the elimination of GBV were scaled up considerably.

The JP facilitated constructive cooperation between UN agencies and different sectors of society, including public and private sectors, and between state institutions and specialist GBV service providers, largely women’s NGOs. The JP established solid partnerships with key government departments, including the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Social and Veteran Affairs, the MoESTD, the Provincial Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality, and local authorities including municipalities, district level education and health departments, CSWs and NGO service providers.

As part of this initiative, UNICEF integrated a GBV component into the SwV Programme speaking to both gender-targeted and gender mainstreaming efforts. By integrating gender-responsiveness into the existing programme, tools and resources; and adding a specific module on GBV in the SwV curriculum at schools; and engaging youth at community level, the Programme yielded positive results at all levels.

This gender focus was introduced into the SwV curriculum in 2013. It built on existing work and lessons learned from eight years of programme activities and interventions on violence prevention at school, community and national levels.

By introducing the subject of GBV into SwV, UNICEF’s contribution enabled a significant, strategic step forward for advancing gender equality, opening up space for increased public awareness and engagement on harmful gender stereotypes and GBV among young people. As a result, the education system has become a full partner in reducing GBV, and specifically reducing the perpetuation of GBV in the education system.

The GBV component of the SwV programme was implemented in 50 schools, and based on these experiences a comprehensive manual for schools was developed and distributed.

Inter-agency collaboration enabled a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder partnership with government at national, provincial and local levels, NGOs working on violence and GBV, and media and academic research institutions as partners. The partnership enabled new relationships, bringing together organisations working on GBV in contact and collaboration with the education system through the VPU in the MoESTD.

UNICEF’s approach to integrating GBV into the SwV programme is aligned with its Gender Action Plan (GAP): to implement programmes at scale in terms of numbers reached and systems strengthened; with design and implementation by experts in

In some of our lectures we focused on relationship violence because we noticed that it is very present at school: emotional violence, physical violence, social violence, psychological violence and economic violence in relationships. It’s all about control and power in the relationship; sexual abuse, abuse of power, jealousy and isolation, threats and insults about appearance.

Student Peer Group Member
their fields (including that children and adolescents are experts in the realities they experience); employing a solid partnership-based approach, involving multiple stakeholders; and to ensure that programmes are well-resourced through local fundraising efforts; coupled with implementation that is measurable and evaluable.

In this way the JP enabled a multiplier effect, increasing the public visibility of the reality of GBV as a social problem through increased media engagement and awareness-raising efforts; meaningful system changes introduced and secured at several levels, including policy change; increased capacity of service providers across sectors to prevent and protect; support for improved service provision to respond to GBV with appropriate services, referral and support structures; and improved mechanisms and protocols for effective service delivery to victims/survivors. All of which reflect the achievement of the two stated outcomes.

This collaboration signalled a shift in relationships between government and civil society, with government acknowledging the expertise of women’s organisations as well as organisations working with men and boys, as specialist service providers and partners. Partnering women’s organisations were able to advance their own GBV prevention and protection efforts within the education system and other government departments, significantly enhancing the overall reach of their work.

Relationships with national and provincial level government departments and CSOs enabled roll-out across several geographic areas through provincial and local government municipalities.

All schools interested in implementing the SwV GBV Programme can participate through a formal agreement signed by all parties to express their interest and willingness to be part of the programme. The agreement includes endorsement from the school management expressing a desire to engage with GBV, and that students and parents express a similar need. Schools in 24 municipalities implemented the programme, with a total of 50 schools participating, of which 35 were primary schools, and 15 secondary schools.

The JP also facilitated UNICEF’s gender transformative approach, which involves working to change gendered social norms, including restrictive and detrimental gendered attitudes, beliefs and practices; and to strengthen systems to become gender-responsive in terms of the quality and availability of services to address structural gender inequality and GBV.
2.2 Implementing the SwV GBV Programme: Key Steps

a. Conduct initial research engaging all staff and pupils in each participating school to assess attitudes, experiences, needs and school capacities regarding GBV. This, to understand the specific situation of the school, and to set a baseline against which to measure shifts in attitudes, prevalence and appropriate responses to GBV at school and in the immediate school community (parents, teachers, peers). Research questions initiated individual reflection on discriminatory attitudes and beliefs regarding GBV. Participation in the research process indirectly contributed to increased sensitisation to GBV in school communities, increasing the public profile of GBV (in this case, further enhanced by UNDP’s support to improve the quality of media coverage of GBV), and public engagement with the practice of GBV. Each school receives a report on findings that serve as a baseline.

Schools receive direct external support from education advisors and school psychologists who act as mentors. Mentors have extensive experience in violence prevention, anti-discrimination and inclusion and received specific capacity-strengthening training from GBV experts to implement the GBV component of the SwV curriculum. Mentors worked with school teams to support implementation, including training teachers and students including those who are part of peer teams. Mentors work with schools to ensure clear internal and external procedures and mechanisms are in place, including access to appropriate referral mechanisms to protect children from violence.

b. Capacity strengthening training for mentors include:
   - engaging with gender, discrimination, gendered social norms and stereotypes;
   - deconstructing masculinity and femininity;
   - violence prevention inside and outside the classroom;
   - understanding GBV, its causes and effects;
   - identifying appropriate response mechanisms in the education system;
   - defining roles and responsibilities in implementing the Special Protocol on protecting children from violence in the education system;
   - and training head teachers on how to facilitate GBV workshops at school, and to work with parents on GBV.

School advisors in regional departments of the MoESTD receive support to:
   - coordinate regional violence prevention efforts, and
   - advise and support schools in engaging with GBV.

Teachers are trained to:
   - understand gender and GBV and to recognise gender stereotypes and apply gender sensitive approaches in their everyday work as well as in preventing and responding to violence
   - work with students, youth groups and peer support teams, supporting pupils who wish to be more actively involved in organising special events in their communities and at school.

c. At community level, work with local youth groups who work with girls and boys separately to contribute to community activities that promote gender transformative agendas. Informed by the baseline research that, in this instance, found that boys and young men require specific support and engagement regarding gendered attitudes and beliefs including attitudes towards GBV.
   - Activities in communities and schools keep GBV in the public consciousness through workshops with students held by head teachers or peer to peer activities, by organising student debates, using theatre performances at schools and in communities to raise awareness, using social media, and local-level campaigns and activities.

d. Mentors support schools over an eighteen-month period. Completion of the programme results in a school being certified as a School Without Violence, i.e. a school where zero violence is tolerated.
23 Measuring Change

The first GBV prevalence study conducted among teachers and students reached over 24,000 students and teachers across 50 schools, mapping gender norms and attitudes towards GBV. The programme engaged with knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of teachers and students in preventing and responding to GBV. The size and scope of the study also contributed to raising awareness of GBV in Serbia.

Identify clear, measurable results indicators: be realistic about what can change in a two-year programme building on what has already been achieved. The focus of the GBV element of the SwV programme focused on prevention and strengthening institutional responses. As such, key indicators for the output – “new school GBV programmes developed and implemented in schools” related to:

» the number of schools integrating GBV in their violence prevention programme;
» the percentage of girls and boys whose understanding of/attitudes towards GBV had changed, with increased willingness to report cases; and lastly,
» the number of MoESTD provincial branches capacitated to monitor and advise schools in their geographical regions on GBV.

Cyclic action research evaluations take place to reflect on progress and address hurdles if and as they arise. Implementation requires an openness to approaching GBV from different angles and perspectives based on local school and community contexts.

Research undertaken at the end of the JP’s project cycle revealed shifts in attitudes towards GBV among teachers, education specialists and students involved in the programme. They include, but are not limited to:

» Evidence of greater sensitisation, with many teachers now able to recognise GBV, making referrals to school psychologists, some of whom were also mentors.

» 70% of teachers surveyed indicated that they wanted to learn more about GBV and processes and procedures for dealing with GBV. This indicates an openness to engaging further on a sensitive topic.

» There was greater openness on the topic of GBV, including recognition of the existence of GBV in broader Serbian society.

» Increased understanding of gender stereotyping. In some cases, this meant students pointing out to teachers when they were perpetuating gender stereotypes in the classroom. (For example, a teacher who had said that ‘football is not for girls’ was challenged by students.)

» Increased sensitivity to the gender content of teaching; regarding the selection of texts to use in the class curriculum, and ability to identify what...
revisions are needed based on the gendered stereotypes they contain and keep alive.

» From schools sampled in the 2015 final evaluation it is clear that understanding of, and attitudes to GBV improved significantly during the project lifecycle. The table below demonstrates some of those shifts in attitude and belief between 2013 and 2015. (The percentage of boys and girls who do not approve of any form of sexual and gender-based violence increased 2.5 times as a result of their exposure to, and participation in the programme.² In some cases attitude change had improved by 22 percentage points measured against the initial baseline.)

Distribution of responses: questions concerning gender based violence in the two studies (in %)

² Final report of the JP.
2.3.1 What students retained and what changed for them

Adolescent girls interviewed spoke of their deeper engagement with GBV in multiple forms. They all mentioned having previously understood GBV to refer only to a physical attack or assault, but that through the peer training, they became aware of many different types of GBV, including peer violence in and out of school. This knowledge was shared with their peers, along with insights into GBV on social media as a significant form of peer violence for Serbian adolescents.

All of the adolescent girls interviewed noted that they had witnessed positive change at their school over the three years they had been involved. They saw a reduction in gender stereotypes as the school community became more aware of the harm of gender stereotypes.

Knowing how to recognise GBV and how to react in a situation of violence, means that they can support someone who is exposed to violence, especially about who to turn to for further support, encouraging students not to be silent about violence.

An enduring insight from students was that often when a fellow student is violent toward peers, it is likely that they are experiencing or witnessing violence at home. This has helped to deepen students’ understanding of intergenerational cycles of violence.

Each of the adolescent peer group members told of personal changes as a result of their involvement as peer leaders. These changes relate to increased understanding and knowledge of GBV, empathy for victims; an ability to recognise violence, and intervening sensitively to direct victims to accessing support.

Student peers also highlighted their discovery that their new skills and understanding can be used outside their school environments, engaging with GBV in their community environments. Able to identify signs of violent victimisation, help victims to recognise when they are in a violent situation, and how to access available support and services, effectively functioning as social resources in their communities.
2.3.2 Societal attitudes: media

Through media campaigns and the work of NGO partners such as Centar E8 through its ‘Be a Man’ clubs (BMK), the Incest and Trauma Centre (ITC), and the Autonomous Women’s Center (AWC), along with UN agency partners, and the multi-sectoral nature of the intervention, the broader public have come to a greater understanding of what constitutes GBV. This includes a shift from perceiving GBV as a private, family matter, to recognising it as a matter of public interest.

Supported by the regular release to media of research findings on GBV, relating to attitudes, prevalence or analysis of media coverage of GBV with the objective of contributing to shifting the public discourse, and raising the profile of the issue, contributed to increased visibility of GBV in the public sphere.

A significant achievement of the JP contribution is broader public acknowledgement of the problem of GBV in Serbian society.

---

3 ‘Be a Man’ clubs are spaces where young men learn to promote gender equality and non-violence to change notions of Balkan masculinity from showing significant adherence to violent behaviour and practicing active homophobia, to gender-equitable, caring, non-violent men. See www.e8.org.rs

4 This shift in public discourse was in part facilitated by UNDP’s investment in training journalists in gender sensitive reporting, to engage with GBV as a social and societal problem.
2.3.3 System-level change

A key result of the SwV investment for UNICEF was the institutionalisation of the Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) within the MoESTD and the subsequent integration of gender sensitivity and GBV into the SwV curriculum.

» The VPU is now able to support schools to implement gender-responsive violence prevention activities across the education system, advancing gender equality in the education system.

» At both the MoESTD and school levels, a previously taboo topic was opened up for engagement and action. It was through the integration of GBV into the SwV programme that sexual assault was placed on the school and education agenda for the first time. This signals an openness to engage with GBV at a system level, reflecting political will to address GBV in schools.

» A referral system is in place for dealing with cases of GBV at schools and in communities.

» Lessons learned from this initiative are being integrated into revisions to the Special Protocol for the Protection of Children and Pupils from Violence, Abuse and Neglect in Education Institutions.

» As part of integrating GBV into the school curriculum, GBV-specific indicators are now included in the package of instruments that measure school safety.

» This GBV initiative has resulted in strengthened capacities across the education system, at the level of specially trained school and education advisors, mentors, teachers, students and parents.

» New resources and tools are available including specific procedures and protocols, and a manual to support and enable replication by other schools.

» Programmes have been developed by GBV experts working with the VPU to enable system-wide change, resulting in accredited, in-service training resource on GBV for teachers.

» With school advisors from regional offices of the MoESTD capacitated on GBV there is increased capacity within the Ministry at national and provincial levels to support schools to work against GBV.
Monitoring and reporting systems – both multi-sectorally and within the education system have been strengthened with linkages forged between the education system and anti-GBV activists for the first time.

The AWC has continued to implement peer programmes on GBV in local communities with funding from the UNTFeVAW while Centar E8 currently collaborates with UNFPA and UN Women on follow-up GBV projects that build on results of the JP.

Several participants in the programme who were involved with the BMKs have remained involved in the initiative and have shifted from being participants to becoming leaders of clubs.

Some teachers who were not aware of how they were promoting gendered stereotypes and negative attitudes in the classroom have adjusted their behaviour as a result of engaging in the GBV programme.

Schools now prepare action plans and identify future GBV-related activities at school level.

Interagency collaboration was found to be an effective mechanism for high-impact programming, ensuring a multiplier effect by each agency bringing their GBV technical expertise to the table to ensure a multi-sectoral, multi-level, partnership-based approach to addressing GBV at national, provincial and municipal levels.

Using its considerable convening power to assemble partners and interest groups, including partners who had resistance to working together, UNICEF facilitated a process through which organisations who don’t sit together comfortably, were able to contribute their expertise, and collaborate with government departments. This required strategic negotiations to find common ground that would enable different organisations to work together towards a common goal.
3 Lessons from Implementation

3.1 Working with Teachers and Mentors

» Mentors and teachers require ongoing contact and support to sustain motivation, encourage ongoing learning, capacity development and knowledge exchange, including sharing creative ways of engaging with GBV and gender stereotypes. Without this support to teachers and mentors, the effectiveness and sustainability of the programme could be negatively affected.

» Work with teachers who are interested in participating. Recognise that teachers could themselves be in violent relationships (as victim or perpetrator), and are likely to also need psychosocial support, or be resistant to engaging on GBV.

» Teachers also need encouragement for their work on this programme, by formally recognising the additional work that they do in performance reviews. How best to incentivise teacher participation requires careful consideration.

» Choose mentors carefully: The programme benefitted from mentors with a thorough, institutional understanding of the education system. Mentors were largely school psychologists and education advisors.

» Mentors need mechanisms that enable ongoing contact and support. They received training every three months to sustain focus, engagement, motivation, and explore creative approaches for absorption of learning.

3.2 Working with Parents and Communities

⇒ Similar to teacher readiness, the community around the school also needs to be prepared to engage on these issues, bearing in mind that assumptions and social behaviours will be challenged by the programme. Communities and parents require support to take them through the process of shedding harmful attitudes, patterns of behaviour and thought, toward setting a new blueprint for social engagement and development.

⇒ In order for the systematic integration of non-violence to become part of the social consciousness, and integrated into the school curriculum, strategically framing it in the context of child protection and child safety for every child (whether girls or boys), increases the likelihood of reluctant parents and teachers coming on board.
3.3 Overall Lessons from Implementation

3.3.1 Approach

⇒ Sustainable change is only possible with a holistic approach, such as the ‘whole school’ model that includes both boys and girls, the school community, parents and the broader community.

⇒ The questions asked in the research questionnaires opened up thinking, and encouraged respondents to reflect on and engage with their personal attitudes and beliefs regarding gender stereotypes and GBV. The questionnaire itself was a powerful tool for reflecting on attitudes and beliefs.

⇒ Ensure that teachers feel competent and comfortable engaging with GBV. Do not force teachers to participate if they are resistant.

⇒ Do not assume that women’s organisations and organisations working with men and boys will be willing to collaborate. This was a point of tension in the project, requiring negotiation, to result in successful participation. Choose partners well, and ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for each partner to contribute optimally.

3.3.2 Schools

⇒ Effective implementation requires that a school be prepared for working on GBV. The project works best in schools that have been already been actively involved in violence prevention work, where existing structures and processes are already in place.

Be prepared: It is essential that in every locality where the initiative is implemented there is a clear pathway for child victims of GBV to access support and services. This requires recognising that child victims of GBV can be identified, or can identify themselves, at any point of the process, including during research phases.

3.3.3 Sustaining Motivation with Students

⇒ Keep it exciting: be innovative, provide examples for activities and campaigns involving teachers and students to include GBV content in their annual plans for classroom teaching activities and thematic work across different age levels and subject areas.

⇒ Organise open days and other opportunities to showcase work done (e.g. drama performances for fellow students, parents and/or broader community; showcase self-defence lessons by trained teachers and students). Inter-school sharing of experiences can open up new ways of thinking and new ideas for addressing GBV through peer groups.

⇒ Organise competitions within and among schools (essay writing, debating, art work); hold exhibitions of creative work done on the topic of GBV and gender stereotypes.

⇒ Provide national platforms where schools can participate and contribute to local and national level activities and campaigns to enable young people’s participation in ‘bigger picture’ efforts, emphasising their
contribution to a national or global campaign, fostering linkages and a sense of inclusion.

3.3.4 Curriculum

⇒ Start early: Implementation of the GBV programme in schools saw the most successful results in elementary schools. Recognising that children start defining themselves, their identities and their values at an early age, the need to break down gender stereotypes and develop zero tolerance of violence has to start early. Strategic partners argued that awareness and understanding of GBV and gender stereotypes needs to start at kindergarten, continuing throughout the school curriculum across all subject areas and grades.

⇒ GBV is one issue among many, and is often implemented as part of life skills and extra-curricular activities. Deeper integration is required across subject areas and age groups to systematically integrate content and challenge gender stereotypes.

⇒ The SwV programme engaged with gender stereotypes in the process of engaging with GBV in schools. This proved strategic for learners’ understanding of how unequal gender relations and gendered attitudes impact behaviour, choices and opportunities. High school students found engagement with gender stereotypes in the context of GBV to be a powerful entry point for challenging the status quo inside and out of school.

The education system already had protocols and mechanisms in place to support violence prevention efforts, as well as access to support and mechanisms for reporting of incidents. These mechanisms and protocols had not previously considered the gender dimensions of violence, and how GBV at school can be affected by children’s exposure to violence at home, replicating a cycle of violent behaviour.

5 The MoESTD and ITC are currently working on resources for integrating GBV across subject areas and grades.
4 Effective Strategies for Change

4.1 Building on strong foundations

Utilising the cumulative gains of the SwV Programme within the education system, the success of UNICEF’s involvement in the GBV programme could be ascribed to building on the strong foundations of the SwV programme, the institutionalisation of the VPU with committed expert staff; and already committed and active partners receptive to engaging with GBV. This included buy-in of mentors and education advisors within the education system.

4.2 Expert Implementation and Partnerships

The SwV GBV initiative benefitted from the expertise of local civil society partners including academics in the Institute of Psychology in the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade and the Centre for Gender Studies and Policy in the Faculty of Political Sciences at the same university. Academics undertook research design, were involved in developing curricula tools and resources, and undertook research studies to support the GBV component of the SwV initiative.

The Incest and Trauma Centre (ITC), an NGO with more than two decades of experience in psychological assistance to child and adult survivors of sexual violence was an ideal expert partner. The ITC designed educational programmes accredited by the MoESTD and the Ministry of Health (MoH), and coordinated the Network of Trust Against GBV. The ITC conducted training on preventing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) with peer teams.

With the support of the MoESTD, the ITC is working with teachers to integrate an understanding of GBV into the general curriculum across subject areas and grades, from kindergarten to the final year of school completion. For example, Physical Education teachers received training in self-defence in situations of sexual assault, to teach self-defence at their schools.

Centar E8, another strategic NGO partner, worked with young men and boys in 10 communities, creating ‘Be a Man’ Clubs (BMKs) that actively promoted gender equality, challenged violent expressions of masculinity, and mobilised men and boys against GBV with a focus on prevention. Participants in the programme were linked up to other local, provincial and national networks of BMKs and become part of the broader

---

6 This network consists of an intervention team of trained practitioners from 15 GOs and NGOs, who provide assistance to child and adult survivors of all forms of violence. See more on the ITC at www.incesttraumacentar.org.rs including current work (2016) on resources for learning about sexual assault in the classroom within the national pre-school curriculum and relevant textbooks (incl. opening 1st Sexual Assault Peer Prevention Club that has been working with the VPU).

7 ‘Be a Man’ clubs are spaces where young men learn to promote gender equality and non-violence to change notions of Balkan masculinity from violent behaviour and homophobia, to gender-equitable, caring, non-violent men. See www.e8.org.rs
network of BMKs engaged in promoting gender equality by promoting positive, non-violent masculinities.

The **Autonomous Women’s Centre** (AWC), a women’s NGO that had been actively working on domestic violence issues since 2002 assisted with developing resources for peer education on GBV in the 10 selected communities. The AWC cooperated and provided capacity strengthening support for professionals from the CSW, police and judiciary as part of the inter-agency, multi-sectoral approach to addressing GBV.\(^8\)

### 4.3 Media

Young people in high schools initiated additional community awareness and **social media campaigns** to raise the **profile** of the problem of GBV, reaching approximately 20,000 people.

Strengthening and improving media coverage of GBV required **strengthening journalists’ awareness** and understanding of gender inequity and gender stereotypes towards more responsible reporting of GBV. UNDP supported media capacity-strengthening to improve the quality and perspective of reportage of GBV. Regular qualitative analysis of media coverage of GBV was undertaken over the duration of the project, with research findings reported in mainstream media, increasing the profile of GBV in Serbian society, and keeping GBV in the national consciousness.

The final evaluation of the JP found that progress had been made towards **gender sensitive media reporting**. Specific changes in GBV coverage related to a change in vocabulary, and a shift from sensationalism to increased sensitivity, and greater victim-centred reporting.\(^9\)

---

\(^8\) The AWC states in its mission that “a life without violence is a basic human right”. As NGO partner, the AWC contributed expertise on SGBV and women’s empowerment, working with women’s organisations toward non-violence and gender equality. See [www.womenngo.rs](http://www.womenngo.rs)

\(^9\) Final evaluation of Joint Programme, 2015
N. of media outlets on VaW
N. of media outlets on murders of women
N. of femicides registered through media reports
5 Conclusion: Preparing for Greater Change on GBV

WHAT TO DO

✓ **baseline research** Conduct whole-school research to understand and measure the attitudes of students, parents, teachers, school management and community members towards violence, gender stereotypes and GBV; assess the needs and capacities of the school community to prevent and respond to GBV. This will inform programme design and ensure that each intervention is designed according to the circumstances, needs and situations of the particular school and community. Be specific in your questions. The information gathered at this stage will be used to measure progress toward goals.

✓ **choose partners strategically** Identify CSOs and CBOs already working successfully on GBV. Partner which research institutions who have long-term experience in the fields of behaviour change, violence, gender and education. Their expertise, knowledge and experience of the local context will impact on the quality and effectiveness of interventions and approaches with different target groups. These efforts will speak to two GAP principles: implementation by experts, and partnership-based approaches.

✓ **assess available resources** Ask two questions: 1. What resources do we have (human, material, financial, physical tools)? and 2. What resources do we need in order to achieve our goals? This would include partners’ human, capital and physical resources as well. Where the baseline research shows a need for specific interventions that require additional funding, undertake active fundraising to ensure everything is in place before the start of programme activities. Since the purpose is to achieve sustainable change, resources required to achieve the goals must be used strategically to ensure this programme lays a foundation or builds on what has already been done.

✓ **set achievable goals** If the programme has clear, measurable goals, with indicators informed by the baseline study, the framework for monitoring and evaluating progress and end-term evaluation is in place from the outset. Tangible goals will be specific with measurable qualitative and quantitative changes stated that tell us whether we are moving towards achieving our goal. Achievable goals are based on the resources at our disposal, time frames, our sphere of influence and the local context. They answer the question: *what can we realistically accomplish in this programme cycle?*

✓ **monitor & evaluate** The questions asked in the initial study, combined with the analysis of the findings in a repeat of the first study will provide clear answers to the question: Have the objectives we set at the beginning of the programme been met? In order to answer this question, another has to be asked: What did we, in our goal-setting, identify as indicators that the stated changes have occurred?
HOW TO DO IT

✓ analyse research findings  Findings of the whole-school research will determine programme design, specific needs and interventions. Orient local partners to the findings and elicit interest to undertake aspects of the programme where they have a particular advantage and expertise.

✓ broad-based multi-sectoral participation  Using UNICEF’s convening power, bring together a range of actors who represent key government ministries and sectors (education, health, social welfare, justice), and civil society, including NGOs and research institutions to hone the detail of the programme. Partner with other UN agencies to address the issue of GBV from multiple entry points to ensure that stated goals are achieved within the programme period.

✓ apply gender-transformative guidelines  to create an enabling environment for successful implementation, taking into account the socio-cultural determinants of masculinity, femininity and sexuality that partners come with, based on the realities of the contexts in which they find themselves.

✓ stay the course  Effective programming requires active and ongoing engagement on GBV from different perspectives, ensuring that it remains in the consciousness of the school community for sustainable change. This means maintaining active contact with all stakeholders, with a particular sensitivity to ongoing adolescent participation. Teachers themselves are likely to require support to integrate gender transformative approaches and challenge gender stereotypes. Teachers, parents and the broader community need to know that the programme is not a short-term, once-off intervention, but a process of incremental change towards the long-term societal goal of ending discrimination and enjoying equality and safety for every child.*

✓ platforms for engagement  As part of its core roles, UNICEF is well-placed to facilitate public dialogues on GBV, by bringing together and sustaining knowledge and experiential exchanges between all stakeholders. These platforms should include various kinds of media, including social media spaces for different age groups and to encourage young peoples’ active participation.

*Adolescents need integrated learning that is relevant and challenging, engaging their minds and imaginations, stimulating them to discover and build on their own strengths, and sharing their own stories. The same applies to ‘teaching’ anti-violent behaviour, stimulating them to think before acting. “There has to be an exchange of personhood” between all members of the team – students, teachers, parents, other service providers – for establishing trust, opening the way to change. This can only happen in a learning environment in which everybody feels safe; where nobody is invisible. (See: Reach Them to Teach Them, The Adolescent Learner, pp. 8-15, April 2005, Vol.62, no.7). Age-appropriate and subject-specific strategies are needed to keep students involved and motivated to participate in creating the schools and communities they need to live out their full potential.
6 Sources

6.1 People

Ana  High school student: Peer Group Member
Andjela  High school student: Peer Group Member
Branko Birač  Centar E8
Dragana  High school student: Peer Group Member
Dušica Popadic  Incest Trauma Centre
Jelena Zajeganovic  UNICEF Serbia CO
Marina Bunčic  School Psychologist and Mentor: SwV Programme
Medenica Gordana  Violence and Discrimination Prevention Group, MoESTD
Melita Randjelovic  Education Specialist: SwV Programme
Milica  High school student: Peer Group Member
Smiljana Grujic  Violence and Discrimination Prevention Group, MoESTD
Sonja Banjac  Institute of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy Belgrade
Teodora  High school student: Peer Group Member
Vesna Jaric  UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women

6.2 Documents

Connect with Respect: Preventing GBV in Schools, UNGEI, 2016
Evaluation of School without Violence Programme, 2009, Belgrade
Gender Aspects of Life Course in Serbia seen through MICS data, 2015 at
It Takes a Community to End Violence Against Women, 2014 at
http://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/en/home/presscenter/articles/2014/03/17/number-of-criminal-charges-against-perpetrators-doubled/
Media Coverage of VaW in Serbia: Qualitative Analysis, 2013 at
National Strategy for Preventing and Combatting VaW in Family and Intimate Partner Relationships, 2011
Number of Criminal Charges against Perpetrators Doubled, 2014 at
http://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/en/home/presscenter/articles/2014/03/17/number-of-criminal-charges-against-perpetrators-doubled/
On Violence: A New Approach in Serbia with the New School, 2014 at
Prevention of SGBV among young people – community based component, Final Report, Centar E8 and AWC

Prevention of SGBV among young people – school based component, MoESTD, 2014

Programme School Without Violence: Towards a Safe and Enabling Environment for Children, UNICEF Serbia (undated)

Project Proposal, Start with Yourself – be active in prevention of gender based violence, Autonomous Women’s Centre, Belgrade, 2013

Qualitative Analysis of Public Discourse on VaW Baseline: 2010 – 2012


Research on School Without Violence, UNICEF, Belgrade, 2006

Research on the Concept of GBV and attitudes towards GBV, Centar E8, 2012


Serbia MICS IV Survey: Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women, Belgrade, 2010


Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Serbia, UNICEF, 2014

Survey on Gender-based Violence in Schools, UNICEF, 2014


UN Country Team Narrative Report, 2015

UNTF Final Narrative Report, UNDP, 2016
