



Knowledge hub - Collection of best practices

Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) *

Safe Schools Common Approach

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented *

Global - The approach is implemented by Save the Children and its local partners in over 45 countries.

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to *

- Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
- Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
- Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
- Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation
- Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) *

Save the Children

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. *

The Safe Schools Common Approach (SSCA) is an inclusive approach to keep girls and boys safe from violence , hazards and attacks on education in and around school.

6. What makes it a best practice? *

SC's SSCA can be considered a 'best practice' as it was designed based on an extensive review of all relevant evidence-based best approaches documented (to date in 2018) in both (1) evaluation studies available in the global literature (i.e. peer-reviewed, grey literature, the INSPIRE Package, a specific Violence Free Schools literature review and Education Safe from Disasters Research); and (2) promising practices from SC's existing education and child protection programmes. From this extensive evidence review, we can be confident that the interventions included in the SSCA reflect our best understanding of what works in preventing and responding to violence (as well as natural and everyday hazards and conflict in and around schools). There are gaps in the global violence prevention and response evidence and so the implementation of the SSCA is contributing to a timely and critical foundation on which to build a more robust evidence base and ultimately increase the protection and safety of children in and around schools. Evidence gathered through implementation can (and is) being used to inform future program design and research activities - both within SC and externally.

Description of the best practice

7. Introduction (350-400 words)

This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:

- i) Which population was affected?
- ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
- iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? *

The SSCA aims to protect all children from violence, hazards and attacks on education in and around schools. It does so by engaging community members, duty bearers from local to national levels, and other organisations working to anticipate, mitigate, plan for and/or respond to violence, hazards and attacks on education.

When the risks of violence, conflict and hazards in and around school combine, the threats against children's safety, protection and well-being increase dramatically. For instance, between 30% of the worst disasters occurring between 1995 and 2004 happened in countries affected by conflict. There is also significant interplay between inter-relational violence and attacks on education and the impacts of disasters. Girls and women tend to be more vulnerable to GBV than boys and men, and face specific barriers to their education in times of conflict and disaster. For instance, all of the 51 countries affected by conflict since 1986 have reported sexual violence against adolescent girls. Violence in schools is a phenomenon that affects millions of children, families and communities. It occurs in all countries in the world and cuts across cultural, geographic and economic differences in societies.

The SSCA includes four integrated components which have the following outcomes:

1. Authorities develop and strengthen policies and systems for school safety and protection
2. School safety management protect children in and around school.
3. School facilities meet standards of safety and protection.
4. Teachers and children demonstrate knowledge and skills for the safety and protection of children in and around school.

Ensuring participation of all girls and boys in safe schools programming is core to the approach, as is a focus on tackling gender inequalities that underpin violence.

8. Implementation (350-450 words)

Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

- i) What are the main activities carried out?
- ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
- iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
- iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation?

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Save the Children's Safe Schools Common Approach is currently being implemented in both humanitarian and development settings, in more than 45 countries, in partnership with national and local government, civil society partners and networks and with funding from institutional, multilateral, and private sector funding. Main activities include:

Building / supporting partnerships for collective impact to influence Safe Schools-relevant policy influence and development e.g. Safe Schools Declaration, Comprehensive School Safety (Disaster Risk Reduction and Safe School Construction), and School Violence Prevention and Response.

- Capacity building for local and national government, teachers and school management and local CSO implementation partners on preparing for change, identifying and reducing risks, and building sustainable safe learning environments.
- Support to the development of school policies and systems to keep children safe and protected when they learn.
- Empowerment and resilience-building with children and young people.
- Safe School Construction - constructing, refurbishing, remodelling, and retrofitting with a protection lens
- Measuring and evaluating Safe Schools impact.

9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

- i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
- ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
- iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? *

Individual country assessments of different Safe Schools projects can be provided. A topline overview of some concrete results from different locations is as follows:

SC Somalia led on ensuring high level political commitment from the Government to engage in global conferences on the Safe Schools Declaration (SSD) and build upon its commitments to it. SC has built government capacity and support for domesticating and implementing the SSD, training peacekeepers and security personnel and ensuring CSOs have an influential voice in the SSD implementation.

SC Nepal implements the SSCA at both the national and sub-national level to influence scalable government plans and policies, working with local CSOs, media entities and child-led movements. Successes include influencing the government to approach a 'schools as zones of peace' directive that includes violence prevention in schools at national, district and school level and to secure schools as safe spaces for children free from political interference. SC Nepal played a key role in integrating DRR and school safety into the national Education Sector Plan with an allocated funding requirement of \$1 billion (5% of the total budget) over seven years.

SC oPt has supported the establishment of crisis cell committees made up of teachers, parents, community members and students. These committees conduct school risk mapping, develop school disaster management plans, practice drills to prepare for attacks, establish referral procedures linked to the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), and undertake stress release and psychosocial support sessions for head teachers, teachers, counsellors and children. The SSCA was endorsed by the Palestine MoE as a strategy for school preparedness and emergency response - a commitment to ensure all 2400 schools were safe – and established and trained a core team on all technical components relating to the SSCA. The adaptation of Safe School Declaration to fit the local context, and the updating of the anti-violence policy was led by SC together with the MoE.

SC Guatemala has implemented violence awareness and response training with teachers, students and parents, on topics including positive discipline, psychosocial support, peace and conflict resolution, SGBV and comprehensive risk reduction. Recent feedback from schools in 2 regions showed an average 92% application of the modules.

SC Philippines works at sub-national levels, supporting a network of Disaster Risk Reduction Coordinators (18 at regional offices and 219 at divisional offices). SC supported the development of e-Learning Modules for the Coordinators to ensure a consistent capacity building programme. SC has also developed the RADaR tool - a rapid damage and needs assessment tool now being used by the Department of Education during disasters. SC and other child rights organisations successfully lobbied the government to enact the Children in Emergencies Relief and Protection Act - the only law of its kind on the Asian continent.

10. Lessons learnt (300 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

- i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
- ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
- iii) What did not work – why did it not work? *

Some lessons shared from different countries include:

- Ensuring participation of all girls and boys in safe schools programming is core to the approach, as is a focus on tackling gender inequalities that underpin violence.
- An all-hazards approach will support long-term education continuity as it considers all potential issues which can prevent access and development of safe learning environments.
- Risk and capacity mapping needs to engage adults and children.
- Violence in and around schools cannot be addressed without addressing and challenging pervasive gender and power dynamics between adults (teachers) and children (students).
- Teacher training needs to be embedded as much as possible into ongoing professional development of teachers as possible to be sustainable.
- To achieve true integration of child protection and education, and achieve maximum impacts for children, implementation teams and donors need to be committed and on board to 'get out of their silos' and make practical changes to implementation.
- Safe Schools interventions require allocated resources in education sector plans.

Specific to Safe Schools Advocacy:

- A commitment to collective impact by all stakeholders is vital.
- High level political engagements are key for Safe Schools Declaration advocacy and success - working closely with strategic partners such as GCPEA will support national government accountability to deliver its promises.
- Connecting the dots between the situation of Children Associated with Armed Conflict and the Safe Schools Declaration will enhance impact of advocacy outcomes.
- Heavy investment in capacity building for duty bearers and education actors is required for the first few years of starting implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration.

Specific to Safe Schools Construction:

Safe School Construction to ensure child friendly, safe quality learning environments requires hardware (funds, materials) and software (quality standards, community participation, community resource mobilization and children's participation to decide what they need and why)

11. Conclusions (250 words)

Please describe why may this intervention be considered a “best practice”. What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented “best practice” or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? *

SC’s SSCA can be considered a ‘best practice’ as it was designed based on an extensive review of all relevant evidence-based best approaches documented (to date in 2018) in both (1) evaluation studies available in the global literature (i.e. peer-reviewed, grey literature, the INSPIRE Package, a specific Violence Free Schools literature review and Education Safe from Disasters Research); and (2) promising practices from SC’s existing education and child protection programmes. From this extensive evidence review, we can be confident that the interventions included in the SSCA reflect our best understanding of what works in preventing and responding to violence (as well as natural and everyday hazards and conflict in and around schools). There are gaps in the global violence prevention and response evidence and so the implementation of the SSCA is contributing to a timely and critical foundation on which to build a more robust evidence base and ultimately increase the protection and safety of children in and around schools. Evidence gathered through implementation can (and is) being used to inform future program design and research activities - both within SC and externally.

12. Further reading

Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional information on the “best practice” for those who may be interested in knowing how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. *

<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/collection/safe-schools-common-approach/>