ASSESSING SCHOOL-BASED SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN ZAMBIA: A Baseline Survey of Knowledge, Attitudes & Practices in 8 Schools

Girls are more vulnerable

GREATER RISK OF:
- Social isolation
- School-drop out
- Low-income
- HIV-infection

LESS CONTROL OVER:
- Educational choices
- Income
- Sexual debut

Source: 2007 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey Data
Objective: Reduce sexual and gender-based violence among adolescent girls

Uses the ‘safe spaces’ model

4 partners, 6 schools

600 girls, 60 junior mentors, 12 senior mentors

Girls meet once a week after school

Topics covered: SGBV, rights awareness, financial education, reproductive health
Rationale for KAP Survey

• Monitoring activity for the Safe Spaces intervention schools
  – Provides a “baseline” of students’ perceptions & experiences of sexual violence in school

• First methodologically rigorous research into the extent of school-based sexual violence in Zambia

• Testing an innovative approach to, and providing a precedent for, conducting sensitive research in developing settings
METHODOLOGY
Study Design

- **Baseline & end-line cross-sectional study**
- **Survey self administered** carried out in exam-style with facilitator reading questions to male or female group

- **Proposed sample** of 1600 students
  - Random selection of 800 boys & 800 girls
  - 8 schools (100 girls/100 boys each)
    - 4 basic schools (3 intervention; 1 control)
    - 4 high schools (3 intervention; 1 control)

- **Inclusion criteria**: girls and boys in grades 8, 9, 10, 11 (14-18yrs)
Ethical Issues

• Approval sought and obtained from:
  – Population Council IRB
  – University of Zambia Research Ethics Committee

• Greatest concern regarding how to avoid increasing vulnerability of potential victims
  – Need for parental consent for minors
  – Need to have appropriate institutional approvals
  – Need to ensure victims of GBV not placed at further/additional risk arising from participation
Key points arising…

- Neither parents nor school teachers provided explicit details of survey content.
- Parental consent forms, student assent forms and completed surveys linked by a unique identifier.
- Data collectors & facilitators, guidance teachers and survey coordinators trained to recognise and intervene in cases of student distress.
Limitations

• Cross sectional design
• Smaller than desired sample size
• Self-reporting bias
• Some missing data
Implementation
Multi-Step Process

1. Ethics
   • Pop. Council IRB
   • UNZA REC

2. Training
   • Guidance Teacher
   • Data Collectors

3. Tools
   • Parent consent
   • Student consent
   • Survey

4. Pilot Consent / Survey

5. Sampling
   • Obtain class lists
   • Enter electronically if poss.
   • Generate sample frame

6. Deliver Sample Frame to Guidance Teacher & ID space & time

7. Small Group Parental Consent Session

8. Collation of Returned Consents / Coding

9. Final Participant List to Guidance Teacher & ID space & time

10. Large Group Student Assent

11. Large Group SURVEY

12. Data Entry / Analysis

10. Large Group Student Assent
Summary Lessons for Implementation

- **Relationship with principal** essential for access to students / classroom space
- **One-on-one, on-site preparation with school point-person** essential
- **Significant over-sampling** (300%) necessary particularly for high-school boys
- **Human / computer resources** to enable sampling & regeneration of student
SELECTED RESULTS
## Socio-Demographic Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Demographics</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>443 (61.3%)</td>
<td>280 (38.7%)</td>
<td>723 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age</td>
<td>14.93</td>
<td>15.63</td>
<td>15.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or Both Parents Dead</td>
<td>128 (17.7%)</td>
<td>116 (16%)</td>
<td>244 (33.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently Earning Money</td>
<td>21 (4.8%)</td>
<td>46 (16.95%)</td>
<td>67 (9.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running Water in Home</td>
<td>94 (33.8%)</td>
<td>190 (43.2%)</td>
<td>284 (39.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Feel at risk of sexual violence in school

- Boys: 15.8%
- Girls: 16.9%

Fearful walking to school

- Boys: 9.2%
- Girls: 21.6%

Fighting / violence in school

- Boys: 20.5%
- Girls: 22.2%

Theft / Stealing in school

- Boys: 46.5%
- Girls: 59.1%

Perceptions of School Environment
Who are you most afraid of committing sexual violence against you at school? (%)

- **Male Student**: 23.4% (Boys: 7.7%, Girls: 18.3%)
- **Female Student**: 13.4% (Boys: 1.8%, Girls: 2.5%)
- **Male Teacher**: 18.3% (Boys: 1.9%, Girls: 9.2%)
- **Female Teacher**: 7.7% (Boys: 5.3%, Girls: 2.5%)
- **Principal / Head Teacher**: 7.7% (Boys: 5.3%, Girls: 2.5%)
- **Cleaner / Janitor**: 0.4% (Boys: 0.5%, Girls: 0.5%)
- **Guards**: 1.9% (Boys: 0.8%, Girls: 1.1%)
- **Office orderly / Clerk**: 1.1% (Boys: 1.5%, Girls: 1.5%)
- **Another adult at school**: 3.5% (Boys: 0.8%, Girls: 1.8%)
- **Other**: 3.1% (Boys: 1.8%, Girls: 1.3%)
- **Choose not to answer**: 20.7% (Boys: 10.3%, Girls: 10.3%)
Experiences of Peer Violence & Victimization
By Gender (%)

- Schoolmate made sexual comments
  - Boys: 28.4%
  - Girls: 30.5%

- Schoolmate touched you in a sexual way
  - Boys: 17.5%
  - Girls: 17.9%

- Schoolmate forced you to have sex
  - Boys: 0.7%
  - Girls: 0.2%

- Made sexual comments to a schoolmate
  - Boys: 24.5%
  - Girls: 15.9%

- Touched a schoolmate in a sexual way
  - Boys: 23.1%
  - Girls: 10.5%

- Forced a schoolmate to have sex with you
  - Boys: 1.8%
  - Girls: 0.5%
Experiences of Teacher Violence & Victimization, By Gender (%)

- Teacher made sexual comments:
  - Boys: 10.8%
  - Girls: 4.3%

- Teacher touched you in a sexual way:
  - Boys: 4.4%
  - Girls: 1.4%

- Have had sex with a teacher:
  - Boys: 6.2%
  - Girls: 2.5%
# Student Attitudes

## VALUE STATEMENTS – **EXPLICIT RIGHTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women should have the same rights as men</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married woman has right to refuse sex to husband</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A girl has the right to refuse sex</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>90.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can say no to a teacher who wants to have sex</td>
<td>92.8%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>89.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men can do things to prevent sexual abuse against girls</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Student Attitudes (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VALUE STATEMENT – <em>IMPLIED RIGHTS</em></th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is a girl’s responsibility to avoid being raped</td>
<td>59.8%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is often a girl’s fault if she is defiled</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only ‘bad girls’ get teased sexually by boys</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A girl who has been raped brings shame on her family</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls often lie about rape/defilement to punish men/boys</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Study Conclusions

- Risk of peer-to-peer violence is high in schools
- Lower than expected rates of sexual violence by teachers & focused on younger, boy-students
- Intellectual understanding of GBV messaging good but not yet internalised
- Sensitive nature of the research means self-selection and under-reporting likely
- Cautious interpretation / generalisation due ethical obligations & implementation constraints
Acknowledgements

Ending violence and discrimination against women and girls around the world.

www.equalitynow.org
THANKYOU
Perceptions of Most Common Form of Violence Against GIRLS

- Sexual comments or teasing about sex
- Someone exposing themselves
- Touching
- Trading sex for grades
- Rape and defilement

Perceptions of Most Common Form of Violence Against BOYS

- Sexual comments or teasing about sex
- Someone exposing themselves
- Touching
- Trading sex for grades
- Rape and defilement
Example of Tracking Checklist

1. School name
2. Guidance Teacher name / contact
3. Class lists received
4. Sample frame generated & delivered
5. Space/time ID’d for small-group sessions (Parent Consent forms)
6. Due-date for return of Parent Consent forms
7. # students received Parent Consent forms (M/F)
8. # complete forms collected (M/F)
9. Final list of students with Parent Consent generated & delivered
10. Space / time ID’d for survey
11. Student Assent & Surveys pre-coded to match Parent Consent
12. # students who provided Assent (M/F)
13. # students who completed Survey (M/F)
Traps for the Unwary

Planning

Personnel

Communication

Logistics
Consent Process

1. Random, over-sized sample (150 girls/150 boys) selected from class lists
2. Students provided short, non-specific introduction to survey & given a parental consent form to take home
3. Students return signed parental consent forms to a box in guidance teacher’s office within set time
4. All students with parental consent invited to participate in survey at set time/date
5. Immediately prior to survey, students given specific details of the survey and asked to provide assent in order to participate
6. Students who provide assent complete survey
Planning & Personnel

• Each school required significant time investment

• Establishing buy-in from the Principal (not just Guidance Teacher) saved time and effort in some schools

• The survey was the easiest part of the process!

• Where time is limited, and consenting needs to be done in different schools concurrently, consider budgeting for more data collectors & good transport
Communication

• 8 schools – 8 guidance teachers – 8 different communication styles!
• Time constraints and geographic spread of schools limited our pre-survey, in-person communication
• Two-day sensitization for guidance teachers but limited time spent on logistics which led to some misunderstandings & assumptions
• Varying levels of engagement by guidance teachers and principals
Logistics

- 8 schools

- Reliable transport

- Plan implementation to fall outside busy end-of-term and exam periods
- Student sampling / reducing attrition
Experiences of Teacher Violence & Victimization, By Grade (%)

- Teacher made sexual comments:
  - Grade 11: 5.1%
  - Grade 10: 6%
  - Grade 9: 8.3%
  - Grade 8: 9%

- Teacher touched you in a sexual way:
  - Grade 11: 4.3%
  - Grade 10: 2.5%
  - Grade 9: 2.1%
  - Grade 8: 1.7%

- Have had sex with a teacher:
  - Grade 11: 5.7%
  - Grade 10: 3%
  - Grade 9: 4.6%
  - Grade 8: 4.6%

Legend:
- Purple: Grade 11
- Green: Grade 10
- Red: Grade 9
- Blue: Grade 8